✔ Customisation ✔ Security ✔ Multimedia ✔ Google Play

# Samsung Galaxy

## Tips, Tricks, Apps & Hacks

Unlock the potential of your Samsung Galaxy device

**624 essential hints and tips inside**

# Welcome to Samsung Galaxy

## Tips, Tricks, Apps & Hacks

In the span of a few years, the Samsung Galaxy range of devices have mushroomed into the most popular Android arsenal around. We've reached a stage where there's a Samsung Galaxy phone or tablet at almost any size and almost any price point. The plethora of apps offered by the Google Play Store and great devices by Samsung makes for a winning combination. In Samsung Galaxy Tips, Tricks, Apps & Hacks, you'll learn to harness the power of both to attain endless possibilities on your device. We've featured the best apps to cater to your every need, be it for entertainment, productivity, shopping, holidaying or even when you want to just sit back and enjoy the universe from the comfort of your home. We've also explained every feature of your Samsung Galaxy so that you can get the most from it. The Hacks section features easy ways in which you can transform your device, change its appearance, boost its performance and even use it as a videogame controller. We've ended with a guided tour of each of the 24 categories in the Play Store and our pick of the best apps from each of them. Here's hoping you enjoy the book!

# Samsung Galaxy

## Tips, Tricks, Apps & Hacks

Imagine Publishing Ltd
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset BH2 6EZ
☎ +44 (0) 1202 586200
**Website:** www.imagine-publishing.co.uk
**Twitter:** @Books_Imagine
**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/ImagineBookazines

**Head of Publishing**
Aaron Asadi

**Head of Design**
Ross Andrews

**Production Editor**
Sarah Kingsbury

**Senior Art Editor**
Greg Whitaker

**Design**
Sarah Bellman

**Photographer**
James Sheppard

**Printed by**
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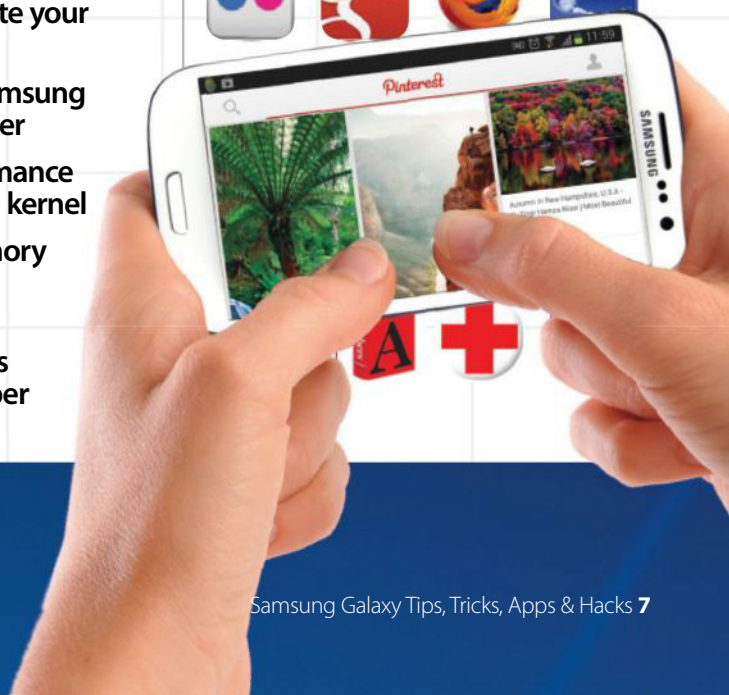
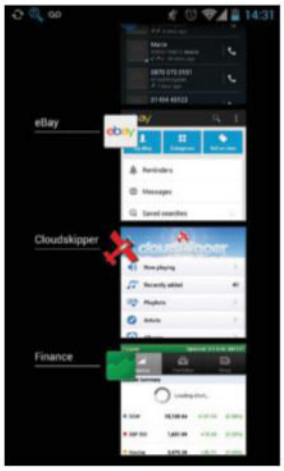


# 50 EXPERT TRICKS & TIPS

## Take your Galaxy to the next level with our in-depth guide

Your Galaxy device is merely a bare bones solution out of the box, despite being fully functional and incredibly flexible. That sounds contradictory, but when you realise what exactly you can do to your Galaxy smartphone or tablet, you start to see that there is virtually no limit to how you can customise it, or how powerful you have the ability to make it. Simply finding and understanding what many of the hidden settings do will be a good start and then you can build on this with third-party additions and extra customisations to make the device truly work for every aspect of your life and the tasks you need to accomplish everyday. Hopefully by the end of this eight-page feature you will have a far greater awareness of what your Galaxy device is capable of and will be able to make many changes to improve your mobile experience. We've rundown 50 of our favourite tips and tricks to get you going.

# Enhance system performance

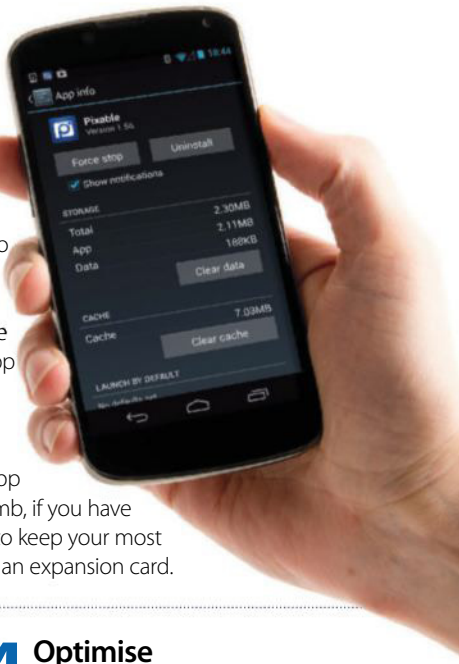


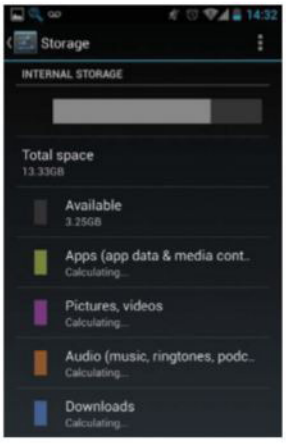

## 1 Kill select background apps

One of the quickest ways to give your Galaxy device an immediate performance boost is to kill some of the apps that are currently running in the background. You can either do this manually or enlist the help of a third-party app such as Task Manager which is available from the Google Play Store. It can kill tasks automatically and also enables you to select applications in bulk for quick manual adjustments. Only close apps you don't need, though, and not system ones as your Galaxy will simply open them again.

## 3 Use the internal memory

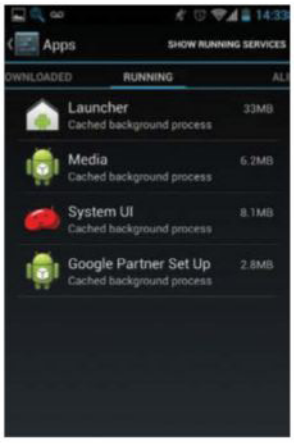
If your device includes expansion card capability, it is very tempting to just move every app to the card to save on internal memory. This will offer some performance benefits thanks to the extra memory, but if you use an app stored on the external card a lot, you could be forgoing these improvements with reduced performance when opening the app each time. The general rule of thumb, if you have enough internal memory, is to try to keep your most often used apps stored away from an expansion card.




## 2 Background syncing

By default, many of the Google apps, and indeed many third-party services, will attempt to synchronise in the background as often as they can. This is useful for some apps like email and calendar, but not for everything. Go to Settings> Accounts and select one of your accounts which will show how it is currently set up. You can then, for example, go to the Calendar app, hit the menu button and choose Settings. Here you will be able to define exactly which calendars will sync and when, Repeat the process for other services.




## 4 Optimise your RAM

Just like desktop PCs, Galaxy smartphones and tablets will benefit from defragmentation from time to time. One quick way to clean things up is to simply turn your device off and back on, but for more serious tweaks an app like Memory Booster (available for free on the Google Play Store), will do the trick. It will not offer significant improvements for the more powerful high-end devices, but for slower models, the benefits will quickly become clear.

## 5 Understanding developer options

**Developer options let you access parts of Android you would otherwise be unaware of. In the latest version of Android they are hidden very well. You have to go to Settings>About phone and tap the Build number section seven times for them to appear.**

### 1: USB debugging

This feature lets you connect an Android device to a desktop computer to transfer data and to install apps directly.

### 2: Show CPU usage

Though this is designed for developers, you can also use it to show the current CPU usage at any time. Useful for finding apps that are using your processing power.

### 3: Stay awake

Stay awake performs an obvious task and that is to keep the screen awake when charging. This is useful if you need an onscreen clock running.

### 4: Background process limit

If you own a device that is lacking in processing power, you can use this feature to limit the number of background process that can run between nought and four processes.

### 5: Allow mock locations

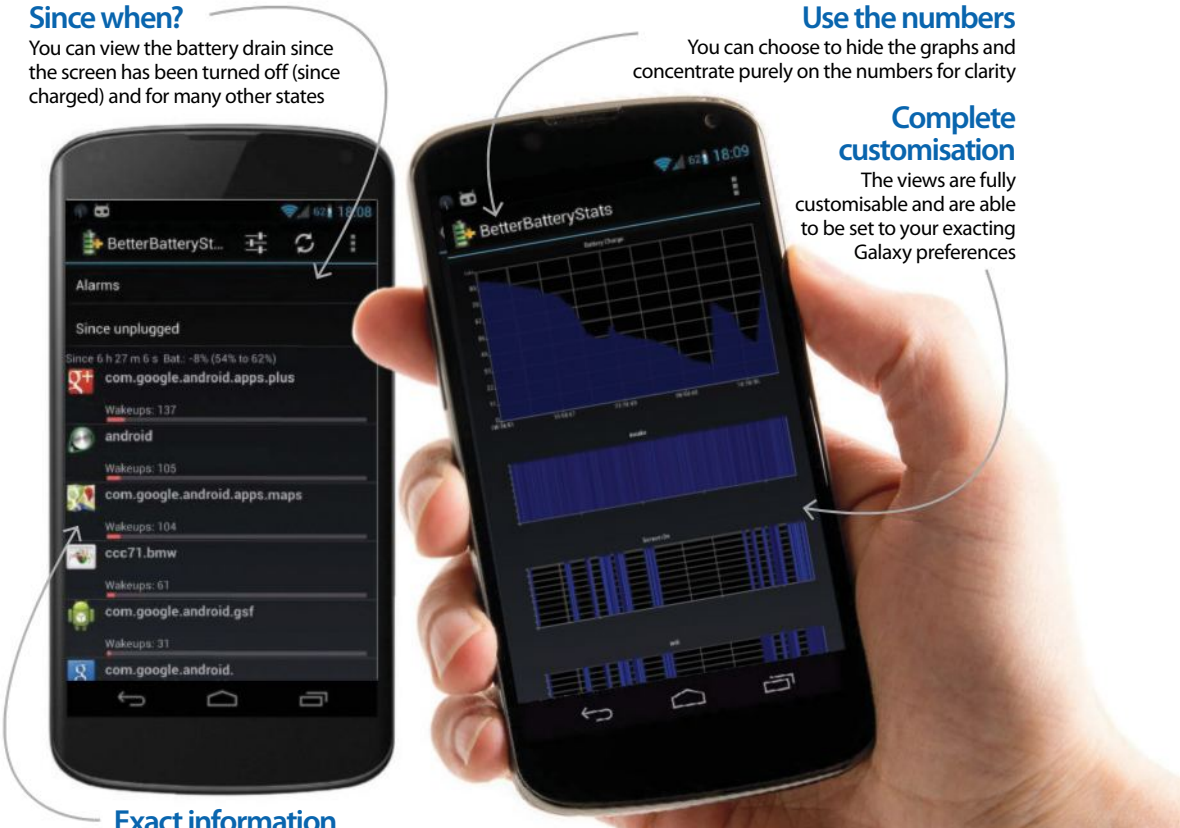
This feature allows you to fake your location and to not be stuck with your current GPS co-ordinates.

### 6: Show touches

A simple option that will visually highlight each point on the screen as you touch it. It is designed for development, but is actually useful for normal day-to-day tasks.

## 6 Boost your battery life

BetterBatteryStats is an app, available from Google Play, that is designed to help you understand exactly what is using your battery life. It includes multiple customisation options and a myriad of statistics and results that will lead you to varied and accurate conclusions. You will need to install the app and leave it running for some time for it to build up the necessary data, but once you have done this you can use the Since options on the front screen to show how the battery is being used. You can also read the exact drain for a number of states such as CPU and Alarms using the top option. From these, you will be able to use the knowledge base to fix any battery drainage problems you have.



## 7 Make sense of your Galaxy's battery screen

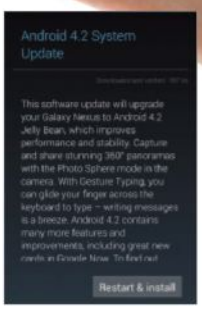
**1:** Tap the graph at the top and you will be shown a more detailed screen with all the extra information included.

**2:** Behind each section below the graph is a lot more information such as exact timings and the specific services using the battery power.

**3:** The stats update automatically, but you can manually refresh them using the arrows icon at the top.

## 8 Wait to update

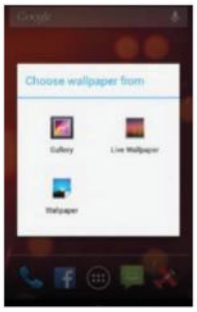
It is all too easy to hurriedly download the latest update for the Android OS as soon as it is available for your device, but sometimes it will make sense to wait. Check online to see what the feedback is from those who have already updated their devices to make sure it doesn't have bugs. Updates will improve performance, but they can use more memory as well.




## 9 Change the launcher

Manufacturers often like to add their own software and launchers to devices, but these can sometimes slow down the overall performance. If you do not need all of the extras that are bundled, take a look on the Play Store for a replacement launcher with less features. Some of these are designed to work efficiently, but still include a number of different options and features that could be beneficial to you.

# Power up your phone




## 10 Avoid live wallpapers

Try to avoid using live wallpapers. There are many available in Google Play and also a selection built-in to each Galaxy device. But besides offering a more engaging experience on home screens, they offer little. Expect battery drain and slowed performance if you use one.

## 11 Turn off Location access

Location access is very useful for a number of apps and services, but if you are struggling with battery or general performance, you can temporarily turn it off in Settings>Location access to save juice.

## 12 Selective sounds

You may not need all of the sounds that are set by default on your Galaxy device. Go to Settings>Sound and choose only the ones you need. The benefits are minimal, but they will make a difference.

## 13 Speed up data entry

Performance can be down to you as well as a tablet or smartphone, and so speeding up your typing will have a dramatic effect. Apps like Swype let you input data without moving your finger from the screen and can greatly speed up your typing in text messages, emails, etc.

## 14 Reduce the brightness

Automatic brightness is useful and shown in Settings>Display, but is not always ideal in every lighting situation. You can untick this setting and choose your own lower level which will extend battery life.

## 15 2G only

3G uses a huge amount of battery power and on many phones you can select to use 2G only. Data will be much slower, but battery performance will be increased.

## 16 Cut the widgets

Widgets can provide a lot of useful information at a glance, but remember that they are technically background processes. If you use one rarely, you will be better off just jumping to the associated app instead and removing the widget from the home screen altogether.

## 17 Sync intervals

You can adjust the synchronisation intervals in many applications, such as your email, and lowering it to one-hour intervals will help improve the performance and battery life of your device markedly.

## 18 Quick locking

Try to use a quick security method such as pattern locking so that you can get into your device very quickly. The pattern lock is also extremely secure.

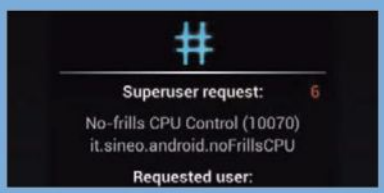
## 19 The correct time

The date and time must be fairly accurate or you may be barred from accessing the Google Play Store. This is a common problem for many Android users.

> "Alternative keyboards can speed up typing"

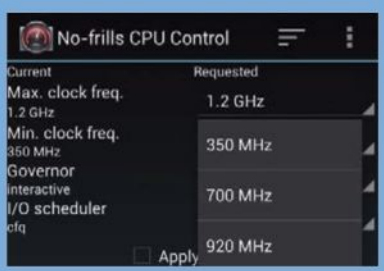
## 20 Overclocking and underclocking

If you have rooted your phone or tablet you can overclock it to improve performance and underclock it to increase battery life. Experiment with which settings work for you, but don't push things too far.




### 1: Grab an app

Search for 'Overclock' on Google Play to find a suitable app. We are using No-frills CPU Control to demonstrate how clocking works. Accept any permission requests before continuing.




### 2: Set your speed

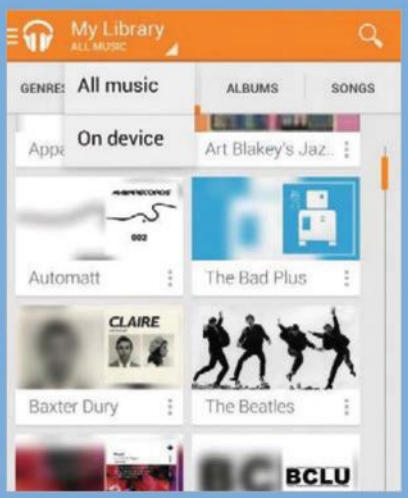
Tap the Max. clock freq. option and then choose the maximum allowable speed. The app is designed to not let it be overpowered which may - in some cases - cause damage. Do the same for the minimum speed.

### 3: Meet the governor

The Governor option lets you quickly change the profiles of the maximum and minimum speeds with just one tap. These are useful when trying to undertake specific tasks.

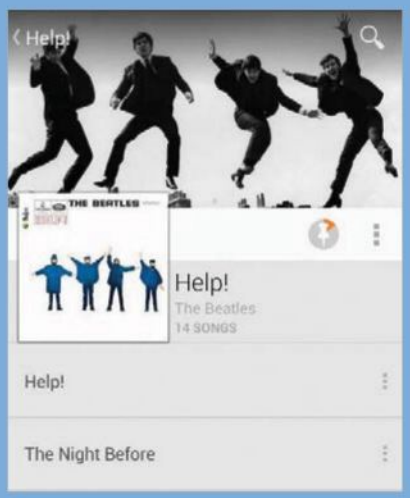
# 21 Download your playlists

## Make your Google cloud music playlists available offline



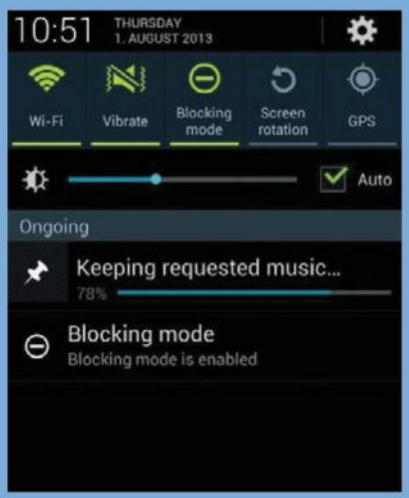

### 1: Set Library to All Music

Open the Google Music app, click the three dots at the top left of the screen and click on My Library. Click the dropdown and select All Music.




### 2: One small pin

All your offline music will now appear in your music library. Navigate to an album you want and click the pin which is located below the album banner.




### 3: Time to download

The pin will now change direction and start filling up with an orange colour. Pull down your dropdown to see what percentage of your album is complete.

## 22 Full screen movies

You can change the way movies are displayed on a mobile screen by tapping the small icon in the top-right hand corner when playing a movie. It will show widescreen by default, which highlights blank bars above and below the screen, but a quick tap will fill the screen and hide the edges. Find which is most comfortable for you and your device and stick with it.

## 23 Closed captions

The closed captions can be displayed during a movie by tapping the 'CC' icon in the bottom-left hand corner. A dialog will pop up which lets you choose the language and whether you want them on or off, but the display may not always be suitable for you if you are watching on a small screen. Tap the menu button and then select the Caption font size option. Here you can change the captions from small to huge with one further tap. It's a simple setup procedure and perfect for those of us that struggle with our eyesights.

## 24 Boost your device's volume

Not all Android devices come with external speakers that make the most of the audio components inside. This is tricky to resolve because it is a hardware limitation, but there are apps that can help to get around the problem. Volume+, available from Google Play, is a good example and is known to work with the Galaxy Nexus, which does not have the best speaker in the world.

## 25 Instagram everywhere

The latest versions of the stock Galaxy camera let you add various special effects to all of your photos as soon as you have snapped them. When you are in the default Gallery app, select one of your photos and the tap the three circles at the bottom of the screen. You will now be presented with a selection of varied effects to apply and one tap will do all of the work for you. Once complete, you can select the photo again and share it on any social network you care for. It's like the popular Instagram service without using the actual app.

## 26 Video codecs

Home-made videos and those available on the web can be formatted using various codecs and this can be problematic if you just want to load it up and play it straight away. There are tools available that let you convert your movies to different formats, but the quickest way around the problem is to look for apps that play all of the most popular codecs. MX Player is a good one to try.

"Keeping the Wi-Fi antenna on isn't a big battery drain"

## 27 Streaming data

If you stream movies or music often, you will need to ensure that your data plan allows you to do this. Go to Settings>Data usage and you can set a data limit to make sure you do not receive any expensive overuse charges. You can also check to see what exactly is using all of your data in this screen and the general rule of thumb is to try to watch movies that are stored on your device if possible or use a connected Wi-Fi network when it is available. Keeping the Wi-Fi antenna on all of the time is not a huge battery drain.

# 28 Using the Equaliser in Google Music

## Get the perfect sound with a few simple tweaks

### Markers

You can change any of the markers on screen and see how each affects the overall tone of the music

### Turn on!

You need to turn the equaliser on before you make any changes. It is set to off by default

### Experiment

Take time experimenting with each frequency until the music sounds just right

### New effects

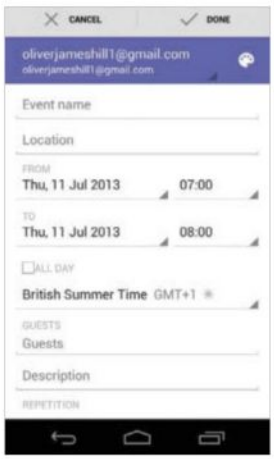
The Bass boost option is one that most people tend to dive straight for. It'll likely cause distortion if you push it too far though

### Audiomaster

If you want greater control over the audio output of your device get the AudioMaster app from the Play store, which is far more powerful

## 29 Use live widgets

There are many live widgets available for Android devices that are constantly updated in the background. Whether you want to see your latest emails or calendar entries or anything else, there will be a solution available. They will enable you to quickly glance at your device and see what you need with no further interaction, which can be a huge time-saver if you are checking information many times a day. Remember that battery and performance can be affected if you use too many of these.




## 30 One calendar

Try to set up just one calendar to synchronise with your Galaxy device and use this one every day.

The temptation to create multiple calendars and to have every entry colour-coded in the right category is great, but ultimately all it will do is slow you down when you enter new appointments, which no one wants. Sometimes a simple list of appointments in the same colour works best and will make the synchronisation process much quicker as well. Multiple calendars only work well if you have a 'very' busy schedule.

# Increase your productivity

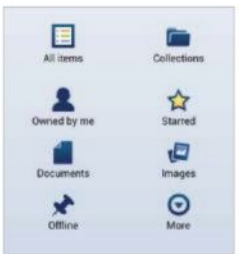
## 31 Organised folders

To be really productive, you will likely be using many apps and services on your Galaxy device every day. If you drag one on top of another you can create a bespoke folder, but the real trick is to keep your most-used apps in a couple of folders on your opening home screen for quick and immediate access.

## 32 Stick with what works

If you find a solution that works for you and your device, try to avoid spending lots of time searching for better apps that do the same job. If it isn't broken, why fix it?

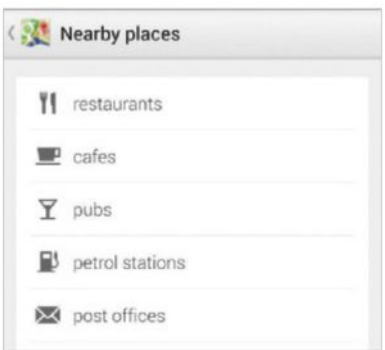
## 33 Use Google Drive




Google Drive lets you share files with anyone you wish while retaining all of the security you need. It is simple to use, free and very easy to set up. Head on over to the brilliant Google Play Store to pick it up.

## 34 Files are important

As you become more productive, files and documents will play an important part in your mobile life. File Manager, from Google Play, lets you explore every part of your device and enables you to move files or to share specific entries with anyone. It really does let you under the hood of your Android device.




## 35 Know what's local to you

Whether you need to quickly find a venue for a meeting or a coffee shop to entertain clients, using the included Google Local app will ensure that you can find everything you need in seconds. Just a few taps and you will have directions and full contact details for each establishment.

## 36 Super-quick contacts

In the Contacts app, you can hit the menu icon when you have a contact selected and then choose Place on Home screen to have shortcuts available for quick calls. This is a particularly useful function for important business contacts and close family members whom you regularly call.

## 37 Quick settings

In Android 4.2 (Jelly Bean), you can pull down the notification bar and tap the top-right hand icon to bring up a series of quick settings. These let you adjust brightness, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi with single taps. It sounds simple, but is without doubt a productive time-saver.

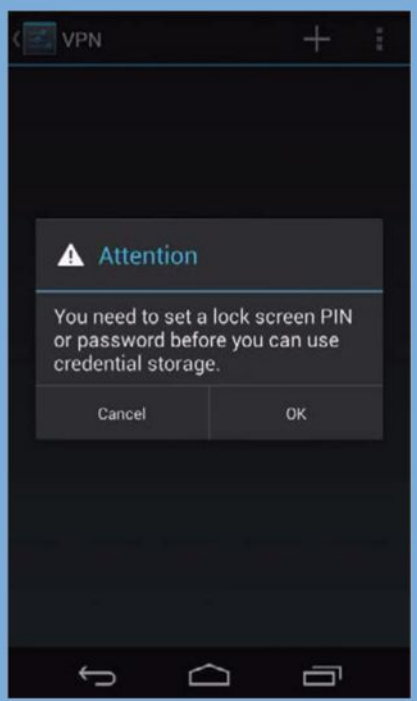
## 38 Unique notifications

You can easily set unique ringtones for different contacts on your device. Simply upload some new sounds to your device or SD card and place them in the Ringtones folder. In the Contacts app you can now assign different tones to different people which lets you quickly decide who to take calls from.

# 39 Set up a VPN

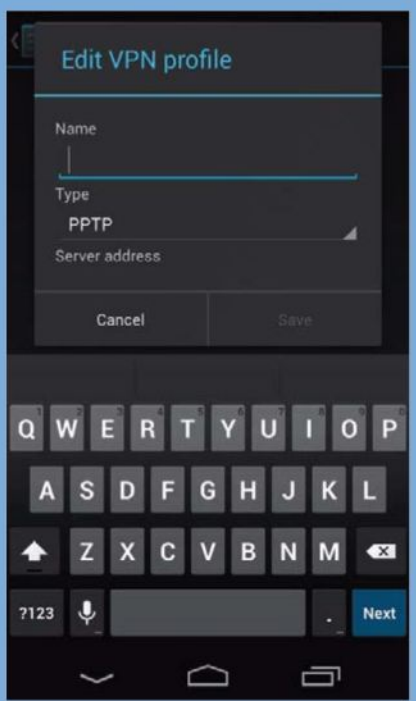
## Securely connect to a work or home network

You can use the VPN feature in Android to securely connect to a work network or even a home LAN that you want to keep as secure as possible. Here's how to do it…



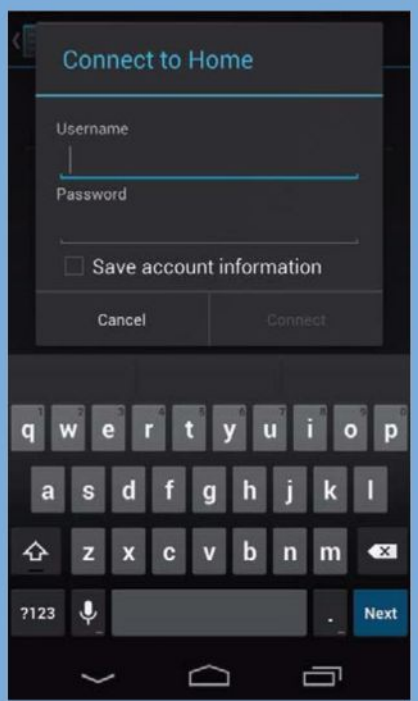

### 1 Setting up

Go to Settings and tap the More option in the Wireless & networks section. Tap VPN. You will be prompted to set up a lockscreen PIN before you can use VPN.




### 2 The exact settings

Tap the '+' icon at the top and enter the network name followed by the type of connection and server address. You need to be as exact as possible with this info.

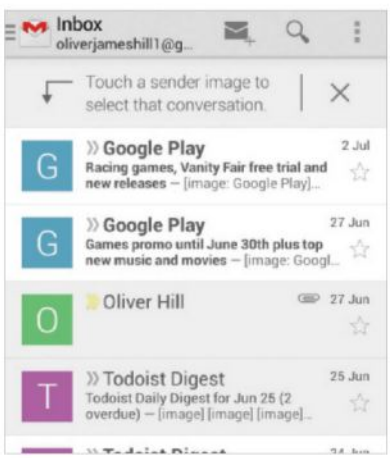



### 3 Time to connect

The account will be saved and when you tap it, you will be asked to enter a user name and password. You will then be able to connect securely without any worries.

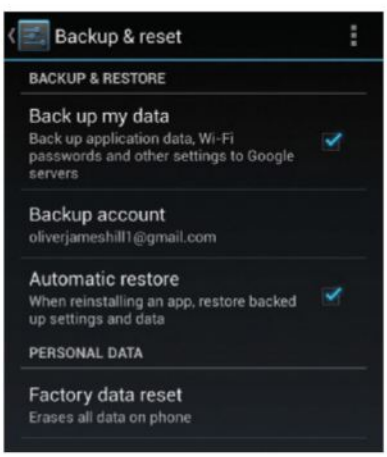
# 40 Email labels

Try to assign labels to important emails to make viewing your inbox more logical. Within Gmail you have a variety of options that let you assign categories to each email you receive, and with the colour-coded highlighting available, you will be able to see what needs to be dealt with next and what can wait. Once you start seeing your inbox like this, you'll use it often!




# 41 Backup!

There are many different methods for backing up your data and apps. For starters, you can go to Settings>Backup & reset and tick a box to have all of your app data backed up by Google. There are also third-party apps like Titanium Backup which offer all of the reassurance you need. Along with your device, don't forget to back up your expansion card from time to time as well.



# 42 Keyboard shortcuts

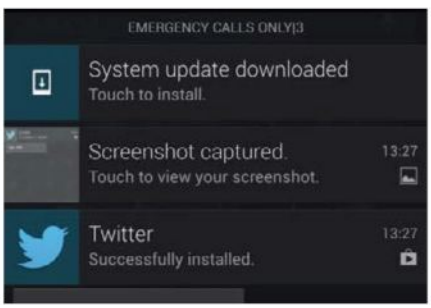
| Shortcut (what it does) | Keys to press (or gesture, combination of buttons etc) | Keyboard (eg stock Android) |
|---|---|---|
| Show software keyboard | Hold Menu icon | Stock Android on selected phones |
| **Reply to email message** | **R** | **Stock Android** |
| Compose new email | Menu + C | Stock Android |
| **Open SMS app** | **Search + S** | **Stock Android** |
| Refresh email inbox | Menu + U | Stock Android |
| **Quick punctuation** | **Hold down full stop key** | **Stock Android** |
| All capital letters | Make a circle above the keyboard | Swype |
| **Page down in web or document view** | **Spacebar** | **Stock Android** |

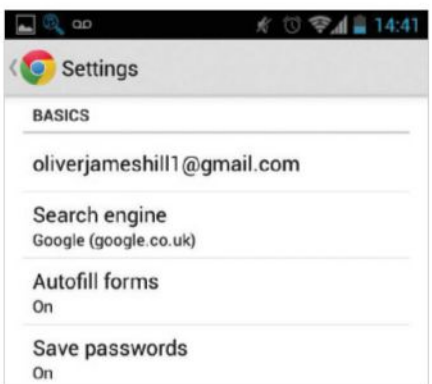
## 43 Quick file transfers

When you are moving large selections of music, movies and photos to your Android device from a desktop Mac, you want the process to be easy and quick. Android File Transfer (available from here: **http://www.android.com/filetransfer**) is an official tool that will immediately open when you connect your device and which acts like the Finder app software. Simply drag what you need over to the right directory and all of your installs will be done in one painless go. Windows users do not need a tool like this.

## 44 Clever notifications

The notifications that are accessible by tapping the top bar on the home screen are not merely designed to tell you what is happening. They can be used as shortcuts and to potentially let you spot problems. If you see a notification and are not sure which app it is from, hold your finger down on it and an App info dialog box will appear. Tap this and you will be taken to the settings screen for that app where you can uninstall it immediately if required.



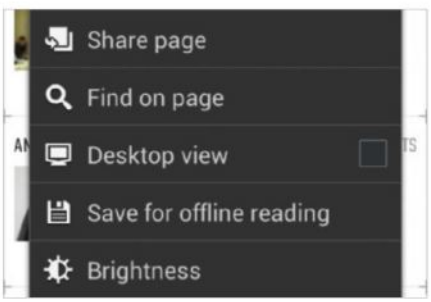




## 45 Ignore the default

You don't have to accept the default Android browser because there are a huge range of third-party options available that have specific focus on different types of usage. For example, Opera Mini is designed to be as fast as possible, while the Dolphin Browser has its main focus on accuracy and page presentation.

## 46 Read webpages offline

You can save any webpage you like in the Android browser. The option is held under the main menu and is called Save for offline reading. It's a facility that may seem strange at first, but for those times when you have trouble gaining a signal, such as on a train, or for when you just want to be offline, this is a simple and effective way to create a store of reading material that you can read whenever you like, regardless of where you are in the world.



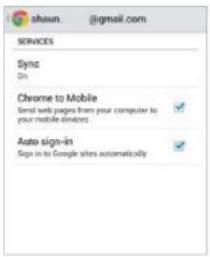
# Web

## 47 Sync Chrome between PC and phone

You can easily sync your bookmarks and open tabs between a desktop and Galaxy device which are both running Chrome. Once set up, it all happens automatically in the background.

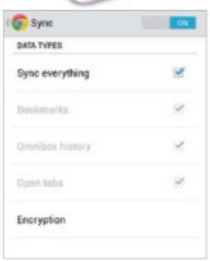
### Android settings

Go to Settings>Data usage on your Android device and tap the menu icon. A pop-up box appears – make sure the Auto-sync data option is ticked.



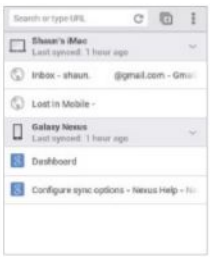

### Chrome settings

When you have installed Chrome on your Galaxy device, hit the menu button and choose Settings. Select your Google account and then tap Sync.




### What to sync

Choose to sync everything or just your bookmarks and tabs. Ensure you are signed in with your Google account in Chrome on your desktop.

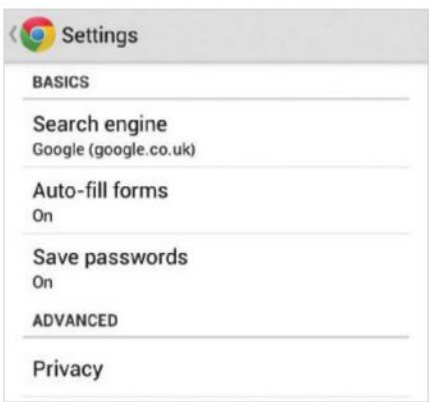


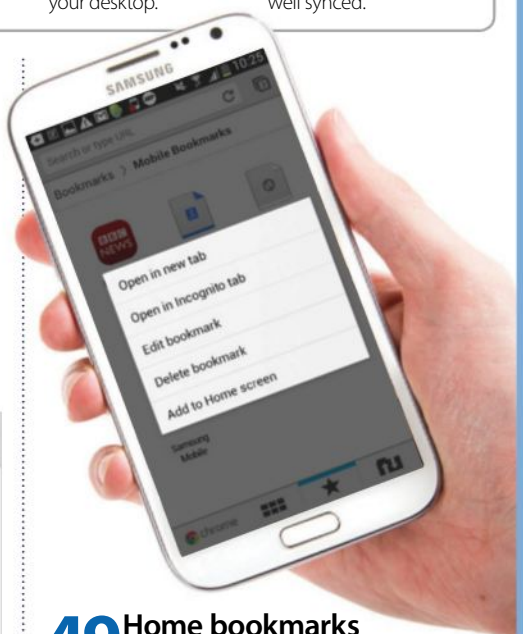

### The end result

You can select Bookmarks to view the desktop bookmarks or check the open tabs on your desktop via the Tab option. They're always well synced.

## 48 Automate your forms

One problem with virtual keyboards, smaller screens and web browsing is that you often have to fill out forms and the process is not always easy using this combination. In the stock Android browser you can go to Settings>General>Auto-fill text and add all of your information to be automatically inputted the next time you have to complete a web form. It will save you a huge amount of time in the future and brings Android browsing one step closer to the desktop version.




## 49 Home bookmarks

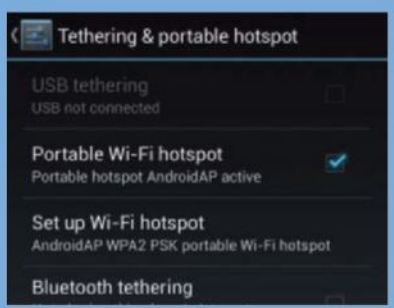
Go to your bookmarks and hold your finger over one of them. A menu will subsequently pop up. Choose Add shortcut to home screen from the list and a new icon will appear on your home screen with a direct link. This will give you instant access.

## 50 Tether with your phone

You can use your phone as a hotspot for laptops and other devices using a few simple settings. Make sure your mobile contract allows tethering first.

### 1: Find the settings

Go to Settings and tap the More option in Wireless & networks. Select Tethering & portable hotspot to proceed. Some phones do not have the option, but most should show it as available.




### 2: Bluetooth or Wi-Fi

You can now choose if you want to allow other devices to connect via Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or both. On most occasions, Wi-Fi will work best as it's powerful.

### 3: Time to connect

Tap Set up Wi-Fi hotspot. Input the security type (WPA2 recommended). Tick the Portable Wi-Fi hotspot option.

# Tips

Get the very best from your Samsung device by exploring its full range of functions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Different types and the best apps for it

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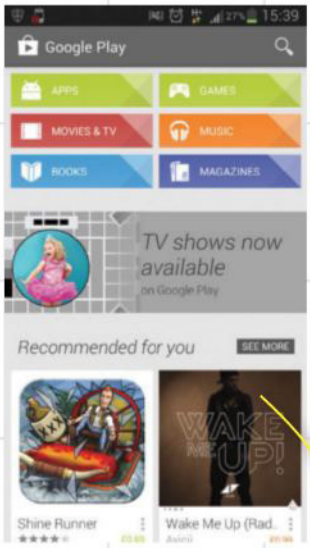


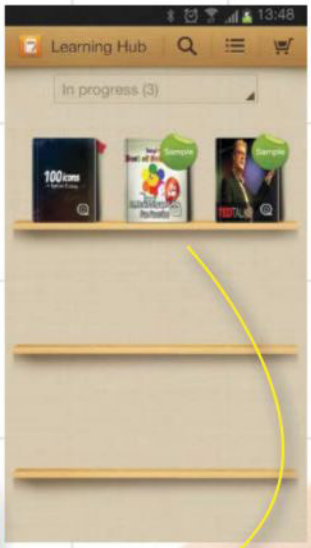

**44 Using the Play Store**

**52 Learn something new with Samsung Hub**

**68** Photography Masterclass

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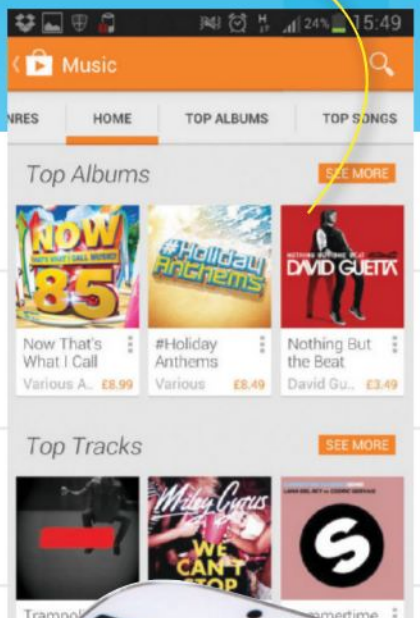
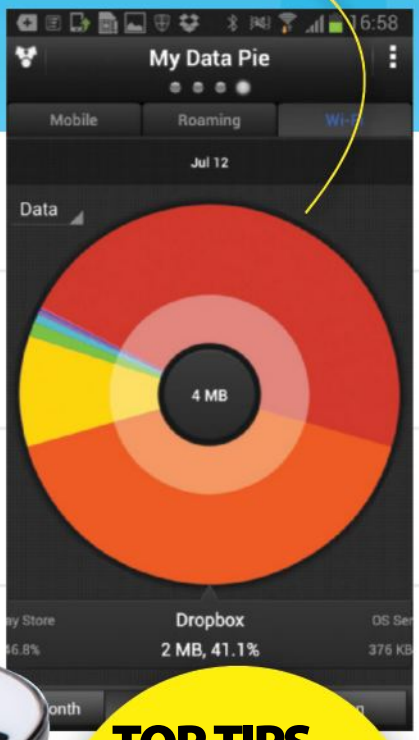
**80** Data and Security



## TOP TIPS

- ✔ Personalisation
- ✔ Google Play
- ✔ Social networks
- ✔ Photography
- ✔ Data & Security

**88** Optimise performance

"Update your contacts with images from your gallery or Facebook"

# Setting up

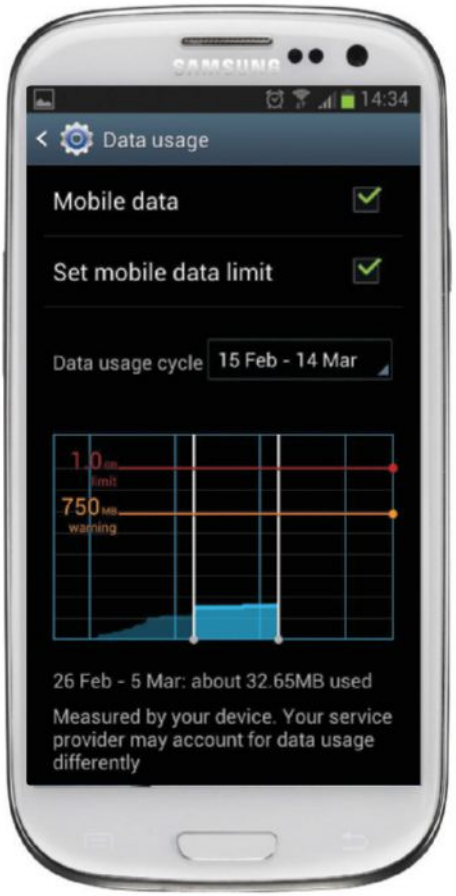
Increase your phone's efficiency by learning to tweak your settings

**Samsung Galaxy devices are made to work the way you do.** That means that there are endless ways to customise your device - from the most basic functions to the way it looks, feels and operates. The basic settings cover features such as connections, data usage and email accounts. It's important to understand how to adjust basic settings as they can help you keep your monthly bill down and extend the time your battery lasts. Smartphones perform multiple functions and even when you're not using them they're performing tasks such as syncing data, downloading updates and searching for connections. Left unchecked, your phone will become overloaded with things to do and its efficiency will suffer.

The first group of settings we look at are connections, particularly 3G, GPS and Wi-Fi. Keeping all the settings turned on unnecessarily is a big battery drain, especially when you get no benefit from having them available when you're not using them. It is good practice to keep only the settings you're using turned on. When you pick 3G as your connection, any data you use will form part of the monthly allowance you have on your contract. If you go over this allowance, charges per units of data are pretty high. To safeguard against extra data charges, the Settings menu includes a data limit function. Once set up, your phone will warn you when you're reaching the upper limit and cut off all connections once you do. Unlike 3G, connecting to Wi-Fi uses data from the connection provider rather than from your own mobile. Many coffee shops and eateries offer free Wi-Fi and if you're in a busy area, you will most likely be able to connect to a hotspot too.

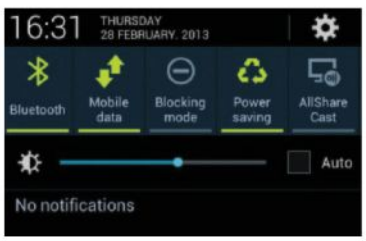
Moving on from connection settings, we take a look at using the Block function on your phone. This function allows you to turn off all notifications from calls, emails and messages. It's especially handy for bedtime and when you want a break from the hyperconnectivity your smartphone offers. We show you how to make a list of contacts that you want to hear from even in your downtime and how to set up the Blocking function to automatically switch at a scheduled time everyday.

Lastly, we look at how to sync your Google accounts. If you're a Gmail user, you've more than likely linked your accounts to a few different services such as Play Books, Play Magazines and Google+. By performing a sync of your accounts, you'll update all the info you have online directly to your phone.



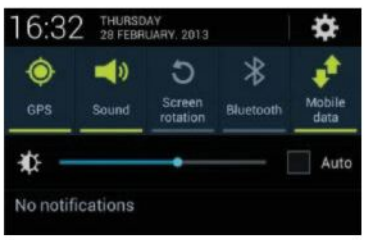

## Control your connections

Turn off 3G, GPS and Bluetooth when not in use



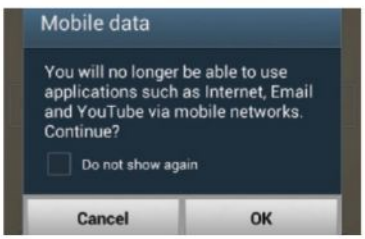

### Disconnect Bluetooth

The quickest way to access basic connectivity settings is to pull the drop-down menu from the top of your device. Scroll left to view the Bluetooth option. If it's highlighted, the feature is on. Tap once to turn off.




### Disable GPS

When GPS is enabled, your device is constantly sending and receiving location signals which can drain your battery. As with Bluetooth, locate the setting in the top bar and tap once to switch off. Tap again to turn on.




### Switch off 3G

3G is not only draining on your battery but also eats into your monthly allowance if you use a lot of data. To switch off, tap the highlighted icon and then tap OK to acknowledge that this will affect your connectivity.

### Is it better to connect via 3G or Wi-Fi?

When you connect to 3G you start using the data allowance on your mobile plan, whereas Wi-Fi is usually free. Connect to Wi-Fi where you can and rely on 3G only when there's no other option available to you

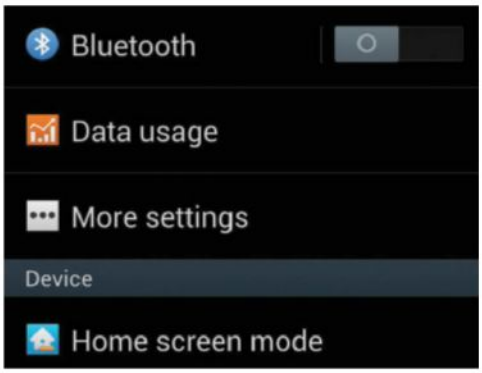
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Limit your data usage

## Control your monthly data usage by setting up a limit

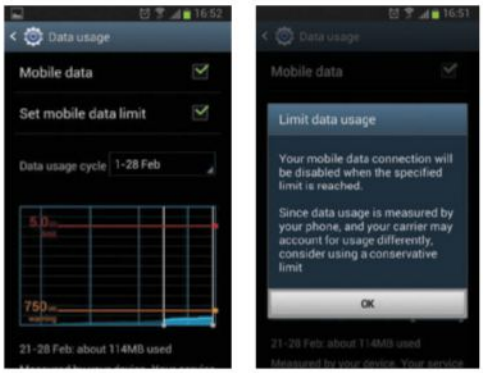
**No one likes a surprise when the phone bill arrives, especially not for data that comes at a high premium once you've gone over your contract allowance.** To prevent data charges piling up, go into your Settings menu and choose a monthly limit. Your phone will tally up your usage, send you a warning when you get close to the ceiling limit and stop any data being downloaded once you hit it. As it's a phone setting, you can change it at any time.

### Set a limit | Choose a monthly data cap



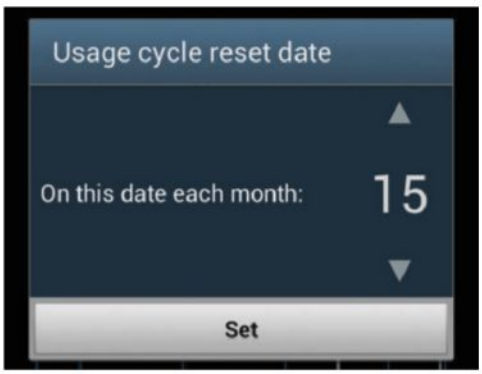

### 1: Access data usage

Tap the Settings icon from your list of apps and locate the Date usage option. It can be found under the Wireless and networks options and will be near the top of the generic Settings menu. Tap the option to open it up so you can then set a mobile data limit.



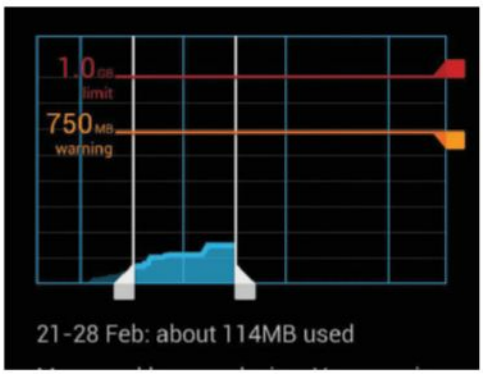

### 2: Tap to start

Now tap the Set mobile data limit option at the top of the screen to start customising your limit. Before you proceed, a warning message will appear on screen: tap OK on the pop-up window that tells you your data connection will be disabled when the limit is reached.




### 3: Choose cycle

Next up, tap the Data usage cycle option and choose Change cycle. Set this to match the start date of your mobile phone contract. For example, if your contract runs from the 15th of each month, you should set up your data cycle to reset on the 15th of every month.

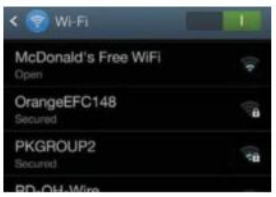



### 4: Set an amount

The default limit is set to 5GB of data per billing cycle. Drag the red line to increase or decrease this limit to match that of your contract. Here the limit is adjusted to 1GB. In this case a warning will be issued when 750MB is reached. The warning limit can also be dragged up or down.

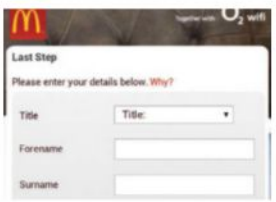
# Connect to public Wi-Fi

## Sign in and connect to a public Wi-Fi network




Pull down the Settings menu, then tap and hold the Wi-Fi option to see a full list of available connections. Select the public network, such as 'McDonald's Free WiFi' by tapping the option.

Confirm by tapping Connect. Usually public networks will require a sign-up before you are able to use them, so open up a new tab in a browser such as Google Chrome.




Follow the instructions on the sign-in page – every public connection will be different. Once you're done, open up a new tab and visit a webpage to check that the connection works.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

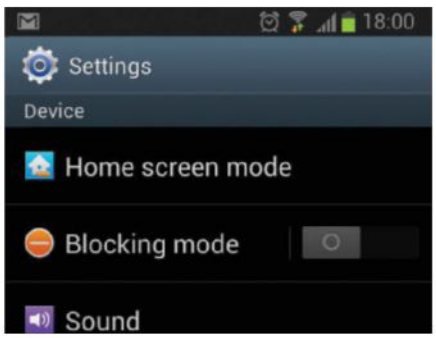
# Add contacts to your Blocking mode

## Select contacts to receive calls from even when you're ignoring everyone else

**Blocking mode is a very useful function that enables you to turn off notifications for everything from updates to phone calls during those times when you're in a meeting, sleeping or you have just had enough of communication.**

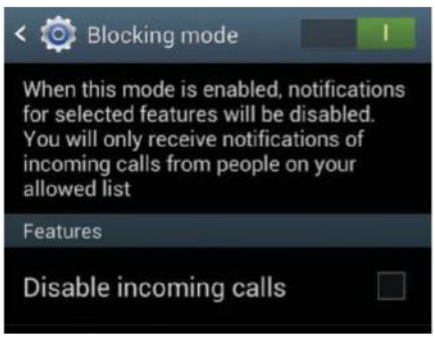
When you are in Blocking mode, you can still hear audio from music or videos on the device but won't be disturbed by an incoming emails or phone calls. Bliss! The mode comes with a small list of settings that you can tweak to your liking and one such setting is the Allowed Contacts list. This handy option allows you to select your nearest and dearest – those you would take a call from even in the middle of the most important meeting – and put them on a whitelist. This means that even when you're in Blocking mode you will be able to receive calls from only these contacts. Note that you will need to activate the mode before tweaking its settings and making a selection of those people who are always important to talk to.

## Blocking mode | Add allowed contacts



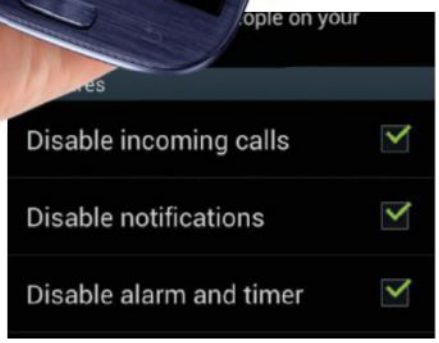

### 1: Open Settings menu

Tap the Settings icon from your list of apps and scroll down the Device options. Locate Blocking mode and tap it to open up the menu. Note that if Blocking mode is currently disabled, the menu options will be greyed out.



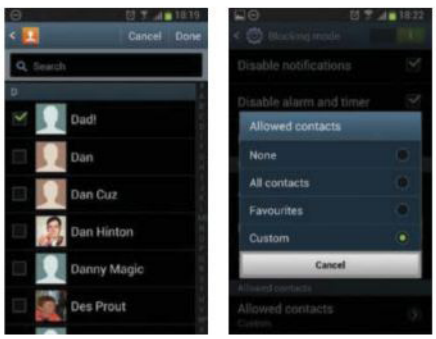

### 2: Turn blocking on

On the top of the Blocking mode menu there's an on/off button. Slide this from the left to the right to switch the function on. When it is turned on, you'll see all menu options enabled. By default, no features will be ticked.



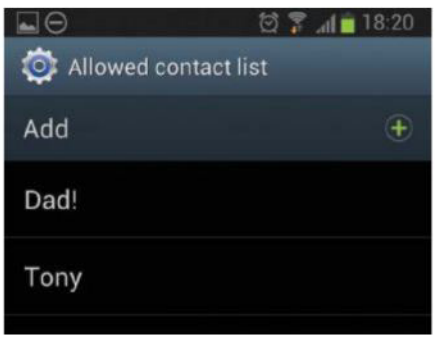

### 3: Select function features

Under the Features options, select which functions you would like disabled when in Blocking mode by tapping the box next to each item. The options that you choose will be enabled every time you switch Blocking mode on.




### 4: Set allowed contacts

Scroll to the bottom of the Blocking mode menu and tap Allowed Contacts. By default there will be none added. Select Custom and then tap the Add icon to open up contacts on your phone. Tap to select the contacts you want to add.




### 5: View current list

To see who's currently on your list of allowed contacts, tap the last option on the menu; Allowed contact list. Here you will see the names of people that you can receive calls from even when you've set your phone to the Blocking mode.

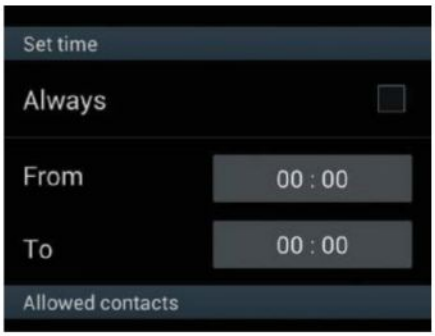
**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Set time for Blocking mode

## Keep regular hours by setting a scheduled time to go into Blocking mode

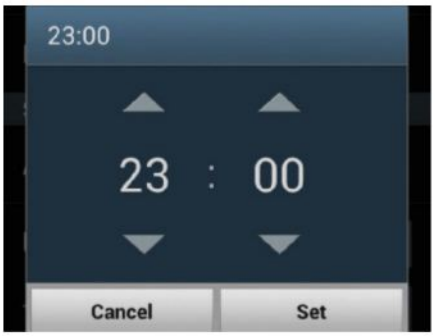
**The Blocking mode feature raises its usefulness by giving you options to add a time for when the mode should automatically be enabled and disabled each day.** If you keep a regular schedule, perhaps having meetings at the same time everyday, or going to bed and waking up at the same time, then this function is for you.

In the time option, you can set the hour when Blocking mode should start and when it should end. Outside of these times, the function will disable itself, but you'll need to keep Blocking mode toggled on for the feature to read your schedule. If you switch the mode off, it will be assumed that you want your set scheduled ignored.



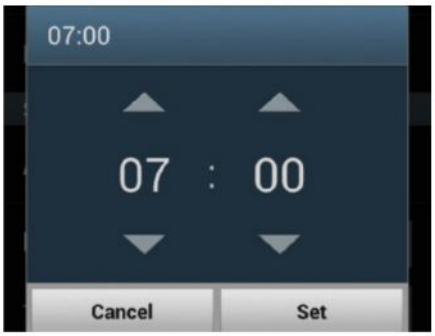

### 1: View time options

Scroll down the Blocking mode menu accessed through the Device settings until you see the brief list of Time options. By default no time options will be set. Selecting the Always option means that Blocking mode is activated as long as it is enabled.




### 2: Set start time

Untick the Always option if it is already selected, to be able to change the start and end times. Tap the From setting and choose an hour to have Blocking mode enabled every day. Here, 23:00 is selected as our regular bedtime.




### 3: Set end time

Tap the To option and again use the arrows to adjust the numbers to select an end time, such as 7:00. During the scheduled hours, Blocking mode will be enabled. Outside of these hours your notifications and calls will come through as normal.

# Sync your Google accounts

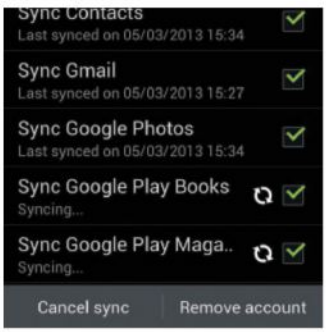
## Use sync settings to keep all your accounts in check

### 1: Access accounts

Tap the Settings icon, scroll down to Accounts, then tap your Google account. Each account that you have, such as Twitter or LinkedIn, can be synced in a similar way.

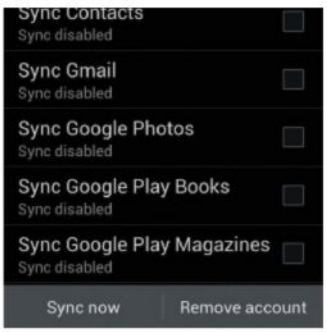
### 2: Select account

At the top of the Google menu you'll see the Google email accounts you have linked to your device. You could have multiple addresses. Tap the account you want to sync.




### 3: Sync

You'll see a list of all the accounts connected to your email address. Select the accounts you want to sync and then choose Sync now. Small rotating circles will indicate the sync is in progress.




### 4: Limit data usage

Ticked options will sync automatically. To disable this, keep options unticked unless performing a sync. This is useful if you want to limit data usage or don't want an account to sync.

# Personalisation

## Add your unique style to your phone by customising its look and feel

**Android is all about doing things your way and since you are more than likely to spend most of your time with your Galaxy device, setting it up to look, feel and work exactly as you want it to, is important.** Personalisation goes beyond simply picking a new ringtone and adjusting the display settings. It's about setting up your device so that it works for you. To find the most efficient way to customise your home screens and settings may take a few tries and continuous adjustments along the way, but when your phone starts to feel like it was built for you, it'll all be worth it!

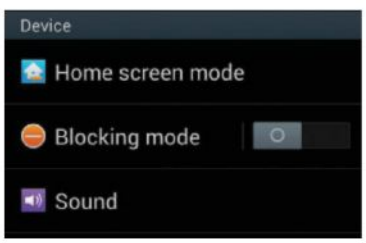
We look at how to add your favourite music tracks to the standard ringtone options and set them as your tune of choice. Next up we look at vibration settings and the simple way in which you can customise the vibration levels your phone uses for different situations. Developers have separated out options such as calls, notification and haptic feedback so you can fine-tune each setting separately. This is particularly helpful if you find vibration useful when receiving calls but can't stand it when your phone vibrates when you're using the keypad and touch screen (haptic feedback).

In the Display menu, under Settings, you'll find a host of options to customise the look of your phone, from setting a new wallpaper to adjusting the brightness. The setting we'll be taking a look at here is the Font option. There are four standard fonts available, from the straight-edged default font and Helvetica to the more funky Choco cooky and soft Rosemary. If you don't like any of these then you can also head to the Play Store to add more custom fonts to your selection. You download fonts just like you would an app and they'll be automatically added to the font menu for you to use.

Once you start building up an app collection, your home screens can often get out of hand and options become hard to find. We show you how to take control and organise your phone by creating folders to group similar apps and how to move them around to make them easy to find. We also take a look at the difference between apps and widgets and how they work together on your home screens.

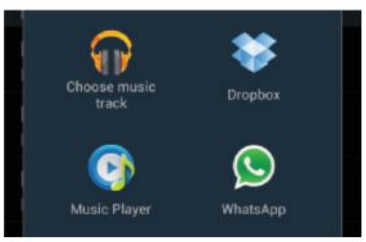
Lastly we look at the notification panel, arguably the most visited area on your device, and show you how to customise the options that you can access from there.

## Change your ringtone | Use your favourite music track



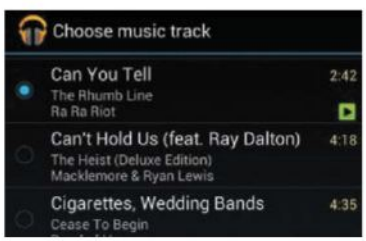

### 1: Device settings

Open Settings and scroll down to the Device section. Tap Sound. The sound menu controls functions such as volume and ringtone as well as system sounds such as keytones and screen lock sounds.




### 2: Ringtone options

Under the Ringtone and notifications settings, tap Device Ringtone. Here you will see all the available options. Scroll up and down to view more. At the bottom of the screen, choose Add and then Choose Music Track.




### 3: Select a track

A new screen will open displaying the music tracks available on your phone. Scroll the list to find your favourite song; when you select a track, it automatically plays. Once you're satisfied, tap OK.

### How do I get music on my phone?

To get tunes onto your device, connect it to your computer with a USB cable and copy from your library. Or install an app such as Amazon Cloud Player that lets you buy tracks and store them on your phone

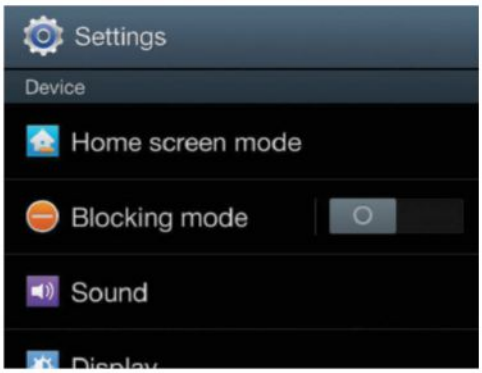
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Create a custom vibration

## Get creative by tapping out your very own vibration pattern

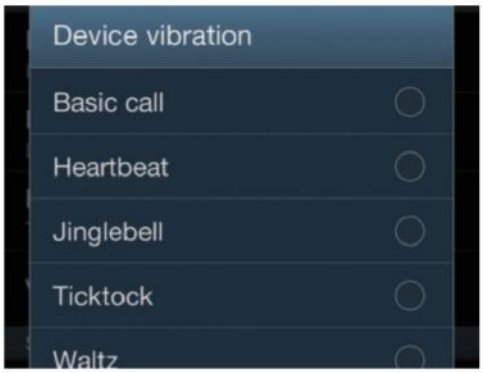
**Everyone is different when it comes to sounds and settings on their phone.** Android has taken customisation one step further by including a way to create your own vibration patterns. Under the Ringtone and notifications settings in the Sound options is a little-known setting called Device Vibration. Among the standard vibration offerings is an option to create your own. To do so, tap out a tune with long and short presses and then give your new creation a fitting name.

## Create a vibration | Tap out a new vibration pattern on your phone




### 1: Open Sound settings

Open up the Settings menu on your phone by tapping the icon on your home screen or the shortcut on the top right-hand side of the pull-down menu. Once on the Settings menu, scroll down to the Sound option and tap it to open the submenu.




### 2: Select device vibration

Scroll down to the Ringtone and notifications options and tap Device vibration. Here you will see a list of default vibration options available, with the one you're currently using selected. Tap an option to preview the vibration pattern and its intensity.

### 3: Create your own

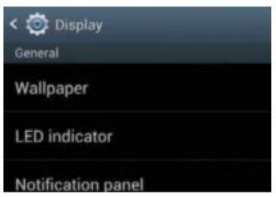
Tap the Create button to start making your own pattern. When you're ready, start tapping out your custom vibration on the circle. Tap lightly for low intensity and hold down to create a more intense vibration. When you're done, tap Play to check whether the vibration pattern is what you like.

### 4: Save and rename

When you're happy with what you've made, tap the Save button and give your vibration a name. It will be stored in the same list as the default options. If you want to delete it in the future, open the Device vibration menu, long-press on your custom vibration and then select Delete.

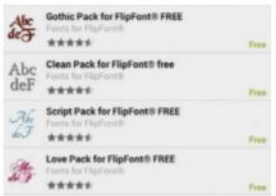
# Change your device font

## Pick a fancy new typeface for your phone




Launch the Settings menu and then scroll down to Display settings. This menu controls all the display options such as wallpapers, screen brightness and window displays.

Scroll down to the Font settings and tap Font Style. Android offers four built-in fonts, from the standard Default to quirky Choco cooky. Select an option and confirm it to set the font.




Alternatively, tap Get fonts online to launch the Play Store and view free and paid font options. Once you download a font package, options are automatically added to the Font screen.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Add and move apps and widgets

## Add functionality to your phone by adding widgets and strategically placing your apps

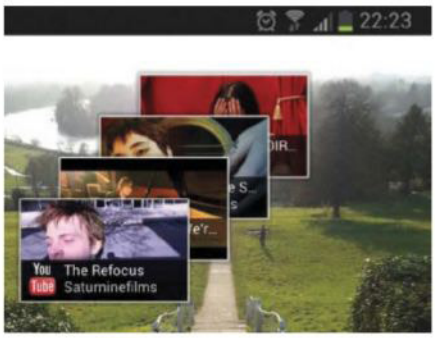
**Widgets and apps are two different things.** A widget is a mini-program that runs on your device's home screen and performs a specific function, such as displaying an updated weather forecast or telling the time. Apps, on the other hand, need to be tapped to launch them and are self-contained programs that have their own screens to navigate. For example, a Google search bar on your home screen is a widget while Google Chrome is an app.

All the apps and widgets that you have available on your phone are displayed in the app and widget tray, which is accessible by tapping the Apps icon on your home bar. Moving apps and widgets around means you can customise your phone and make your most used ones easily accessible. Once you've built up a collection of apps, you may need to swipe though a few screens of your app tray, so moving them to a home screen makes life a little easier. Similarly, adding widgets gives you instant functionality that's matched to your needs.

## Widgets & apps | Add a widget, move an app

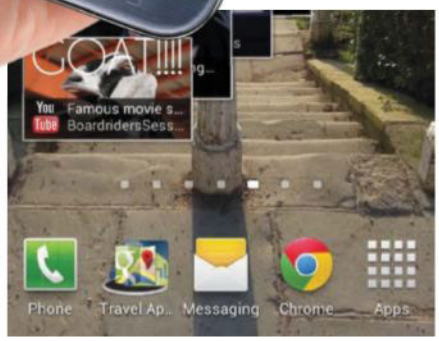
### 1: Browse your widgets

Tap the Apps icon in your home bar and then tap Widgets. On these screens you can see all the widgets that are currently available on your device. Built-in options include a YouTube widget as well as standard weather and clock options.




### 2: Add a widget

To add a widget to your home screen, long-press on the one you want to add, such as the YouTube player. The screen will change and you'll see your primary home screen appear. Drag and drop the widget to add it to the screen.




### 3: Move widgets around

It's possible to add more than one widget to a home screen depending on their respective sizes. Add the widget as you would normally, then, to change position of the widgets, go to the home screen and long-press on the widget, drag and drop to a new location.

### 4: Browse your apps

From your home bar, tap the Apps icon to navigate to your app tray. Here you can see all of the apps that you currently have installed on your device. Note that when you add and delete apps from the home screen, they will still appear here.

### 5: Move an app

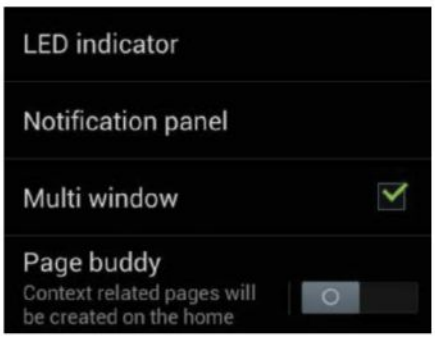
To move an app from your app tray to your home screen, use the same process as you did for widgets. Long-press on the app and then drag and drop it into place on the home screen. To remove, long-press and drag it into the bin icon.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Customise notifications

## Access functions and apps with a single swipe by adding them to your notifications panel

**Your notification panel is one of the most used areas on your phone.** Every time you receive an email, message or update, it will be indicated in the notification panel and a single finger swipe and a tap takes you directly there. Because it's used so often, adding additional functions to the notification area is a smart move. Under the General settings of your Device menu you'll find Notification panel options. Here you can add or remove options from the panel by choosing from a list of available buttons. By default there are ten buttons in the panel. When customising, you can't add more than ten options, but can choose less. Simply drag and drop buttons to make your configuration.




### 1: Launch Display settings

Launch the Settings menu as usual and then choose Display. Under the General settings you'll see an options called Notification panel. Tap once to open the screen. Here you will be able to see the contents of your panel and available options.

### 2: Remove unwanted options

Under the Notification panel section, you'll see the ten buttons that are currently on your panel. Long-press and drag the options you want to remove from the panel into the Available Buttons area. The minimum number of buttons you can have in the panel is five.

### 3: Add new buttons

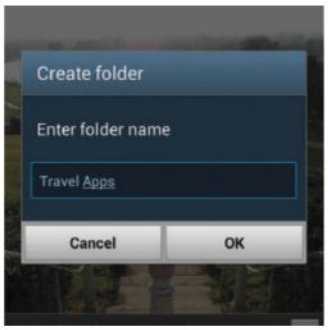
To add options to the notification panel, drag and drop buttons from the bottom up into an empty tile. Rearrange the options by dragging one button on top of another to displace it. This changes the order in which they appear on the panel.

# Create folders for app icons

## Get organised and clean up your app tray by grouping your apps into folders

### 1: Drag and drop

Long-press an app until you feel your phone vibrate and the screen change. Drag and drop the app into the top-right corner where it says Create folder. You will see a pop-up screen.

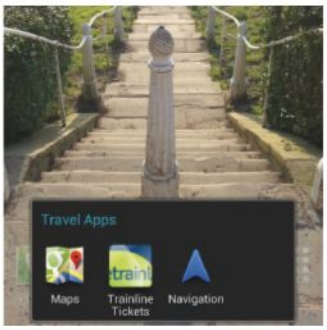



### 2: Give it a name

Type a name for your folder and tap OK. Your folder will appear on your home screen and will contain the app that you dragged and dropped into it. It will still appear in your app tray.

### 3: Add more apps

To add apps to the folder, go back to your app tray and long-press on an app that you want to put in it. Since you have already created a folder, you can drag and drop the app directly into it.




### 4: Keep it handy

To keep the folder handy, you can add it to your home bar by long-pressing and dragging it onto the icon you want to replace. Tapping it will reveal a pop-up screen of the icons in the folder.

# Accessibility

## Take charge of basic app settings and phone security functions

**Controlling your device is easy when you know where to find the relevant tools and settings.** It might seem daunting to take charge of apps that are unresponsive or clear an app's cache to get it working properly again, but it's no harder than performing any other function on your phone when you know how.

The nature of apps is that a lot are built by third-party developers. The Play Store rating system is a good way to gauge how good an app is and how well it performs, and comments from other users are definitely worth reading. However, it may happen that when you start using an app, it doesn't function as well as you thought or it becomes unresponsive when you're using it. In this case there are a few options available to you.

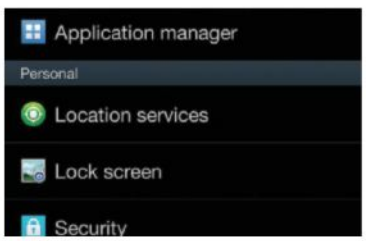
Firstly, in this masterclass, we will take a look at how to force-stop unresponsive applications, a process you can think of much like Force Quit on a Mac or pressing Control+Alt+Delete on a PC.

A gentler option you can try instead is clearing the app's cache. As an app is used on your phone it builds up data. Google Chrome, for example, will build up memory from the pages you visit and store any passwords you ask it to. By clearing the cache, you get rid of all this stored information and get the app back to its original state.

Uninstalling and reinstalling an app is another option – although if you've had enough of trying to use it, then leaving it uninstalled is another way to go. We show you how to uninstall apps directly through the Application manager rather than through the Play Store. The Application manager is a good place to check up on often as you can see a breakdown of all the apps you have – the built-in ones as well as the ones you've downloaded.

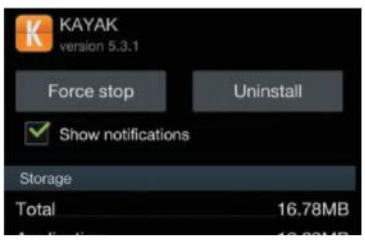
The second area we look at in this tutorial is security on your phone. Security is important when it comes to smartphones since you more than likely store a lot of personal and even sensitive data on your device that you don't want to get into the wrong hands. We take a look at how to set up a pattern lock to stop others getting into your phone. If your phone is stolen, the thief may not know your passlock but they could still access your SIM card by removing it from your device. For this reason we show you how to set up a password on your SIM card too. Lastly, we look at encrypting your device, which is the surest way to keep all your personal data under secure lockdown.

## Force-stop apps | Quit a process by killing it in Application manager




### 1: Application manager

Open the Settings menu as usual and scroll down to Application manager, found under the Device heading. Tap once to open the function. Here you'll see lists of all the apps you currently have installed on your device.




### 2: Select unresponsive app

Long-press on the app you want to stop, to open up an information page about the app. Scroll through the page to see how much storage the app uses and the permissions it has on your device.

### 3: Force-stop an app

Tap the Force stop button at the top of the App Info screen. The pop-up menu will warn of possible errors if the app is stopped. To continue with the process, tap OK and the app will be stopped.

### Is it bad to force-stop an app?

Force stop should be a last resort when it comes to unresponsive or bugged apps. Killing an app can cause errors to occur, so always try other methods, such as reinstalling the app, before you decide to force-stop it

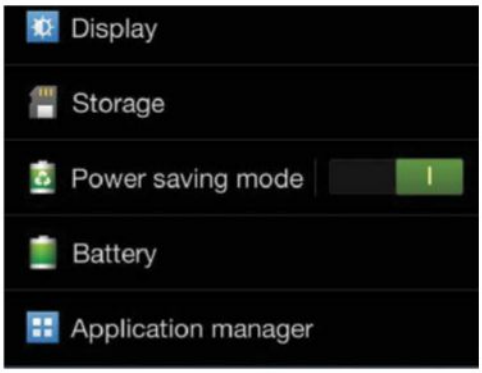
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Uninstall via App manager

## Remove an app from your phone without launching the Play Store

**Play Store is the place to go to download and uninstall apps to your phone.** But, there's another way to view and control which applications you have running and that's through the Application manager. The Application manager not only lists your Play Store apps, it also keeps track of all the apps native to your device. You can also see a breakdown of the device memory you have and see how much memory each app is using, enabling you to spot the real memory hogs.

## Delete apps | Use Application manager to remove unwanted apps

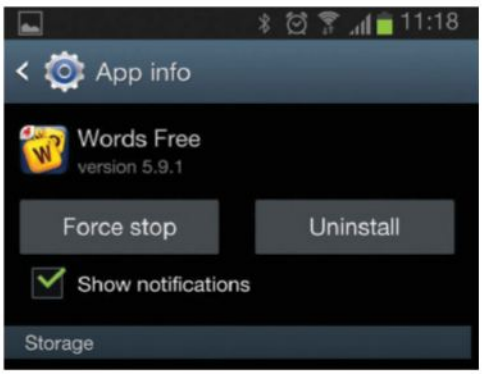



### 1: Launch Settings menu

Tap the Settings icon from the app tray or from the pull-down menu in the home screen, as per usual. Once in the Settings menu, scroll down to the last option under the Device heading, entitled Application manager. Tap this once to launch the relevant menu.

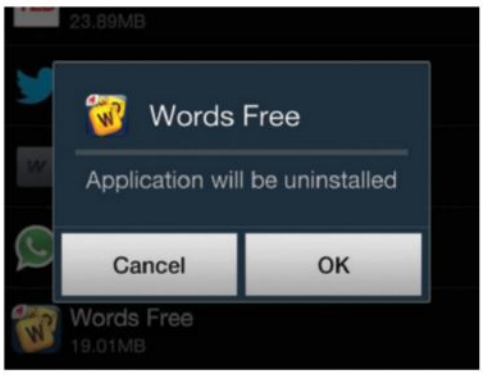
### 2: View three screens

In the Application manager menu, swipe left to view the three screens of applications. Your apps are broken down into lists of those which have been downloaded from the Play Store, those which are currently running on your phone and then all of them listed together.




### 3: Downloaded or All

To uninstall an app, you have to select it either from the Downloaded or All list in the Applicaiton manager menu. Selecting an app from the Running list will not give you the same option to uninstall. Long-press on the app that you want to uninstall, to view information about it.




### 4: Select Uninstall option

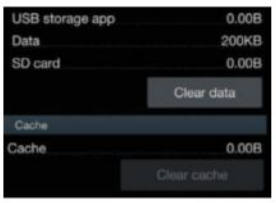
Tap the Uninstall button at the top of the screen once and you will be presented with a pop-up screen. Tap OK to confirm that you want to uninstall the app. Wait a moment while your phone performs the process and gives you a confirmation screen when it's finished.

# Clear individual app cache

## Get a fresh start by clearing your stored app data

Open the Settings menu and scroll to Application manager. Tap once to launch the manager, showing a list of all the apps you've downloaded from the Google Play Store.

Long-press on the app you want to tackle, to open up an info screen. Look under the Cache heading to see how much data the app has stored. Heavily used apps build up more data.




Tap the Clear Cache option to delete this stored-up data. There is no confirmation screen, so the effect will be instant. The reading under the Cache option will now be 0.00B (ie zero bytes).

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

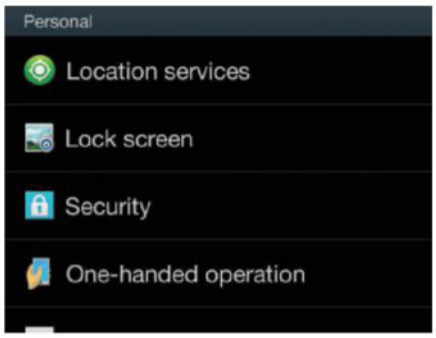
# Set up a pattern lock

## Protect your phone by locking it with a pattern code

**Your smartphone knows a lot about you, thanks to all the personal information that you will have inevitably added to it.** Unfortunately, if it gets into the wrong hands, someone else could instantly learn a lot about you too. Therefore it's a good idea to set a lock on your phone so that if it's lost, stolen or in the midst of prying eyes, there is some form of barrier you can rely on to keep your personal information safe.

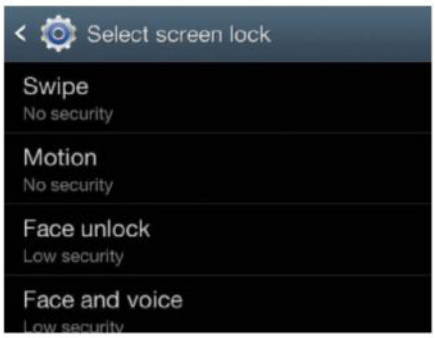
Android offers seven different ways to lock your home screen, ranging from a non-secure but convenient swipe to a high-security password. One option that fuses ease of use with security is the pattern lock option. To set it up, you create a swipe pattern over a grid of nine dots. When your phone locks, you'll need to reproduce this pattern to access your phone. You can also set a backup PIN in case you forget the pattern. Be sure to connect a Google account to your phone before setting up a lock: if you forget the pattern and PIN, you'll need your Google credentials to unlock and reset your phone.

### Pattern lock | Set a pattern and a PIN



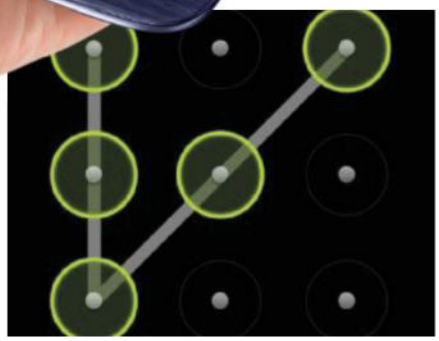

### 1: Open Personal settings

Open the Settings menu by tapping the icon on in your app tray or home screen and scroll down to the Personal section. Tap the Lock screen option. The resulting screen will be different depending on what your current screen lock choice is.



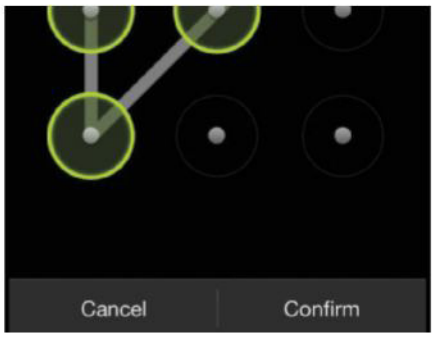

### 2: Screen lock options

Tap the option named Screen lock. If you already have security set, input your PIN/password to reveal options. If you don't then you'll be taken directly to the screen. Here you can see all available options, from Motion unlock to Password and PIN.



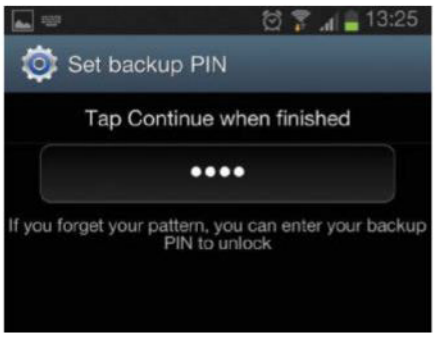
### 3: Select Pattern unlock

Choose the Pattern option. A demonstration screen will show you how the option works. Tap Next to start drawing your own pattern. When you're ready, trace a unique pattern over the dots on the screen and tap Continue when you're finished.




### 4: Redraw to confirm

Repeat the pattern you drew on the following screen and then tap Confirm. The two patterns must match in order to proceed. Your device will display your new pattern lock; tap Confirm again to start using your unique pattern as a lock.




### 5: Choose backup PIN

Set a memorable PIN to input in case you forget your unique pattern. As with the pattern, you'll need to input it twice to confirm. Once you've entered this, both security measures will be available on your device immediately.

**Time needed:** 60 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

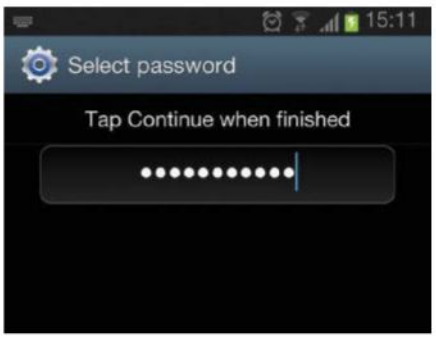
# Encrypt your device

## Protect sensitive data on your phone by using this high-security method

**Encryption is when the data on your phone is scrambled so that it cannot be easily read by those who do not have a passkey to unscramble it.**

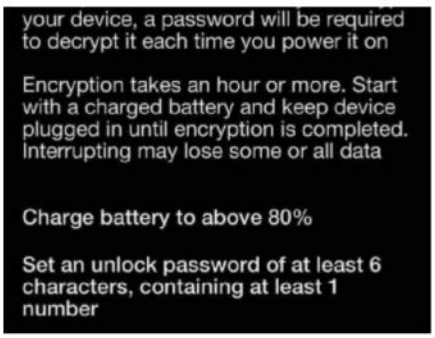
If you have very sensitive data on your phone or work for an organisation that recommends taking extra precautions to protect personal and work data, encrypting your phone is a method you may want to consider. The process takes about an hour to complete and once set up, you will need to enter a password every time you access your phone.

Note that encrypting your device is irreversible and therefore you will need to restore your phone to its factory settings if you ever want to remove the security option.




### 1: Set alphanumeric password

Before you can access the encryption option, you'll need to set up a security password. From the Settings menu, select Lock screen and then Password. Enter a memorable phrase with at least six characters, including at least one number.




### 2: Set up for encryption

Go back to the Settings menu and select Security – the Encryption options are right at the top of the menu. Tap Encrypt device. Before you can start the process, make sure that your phone is charged to at least 80% and plugged in.

### 3: Start the process

If your phone is suitably charged and your password adequate, the Encrypt device option will become active on this screen. Tap to start the process and confirm. It will take at least an hour to process. If your phone is turned off during this time, data will be lost.

# Lock your SIM card

## Protect data on your SIM by enabling the lock function

### 1: Open Settings

Open the Settings menu and scroll down to Security. Tap this once to open it and then scroll down to the Set up SIM card lock option. Tap this to open the lock settings on your SIM card.

### 2: Enable SIM lock

By default the Lock SIM card option is not enabled. Tap the option and then enter your SIM card's PIN number to confirm. This will be required if your SIM is put into another phone.

### 3: Change PIN

Tap the Change SIM PIN option and enter your old PIN. Then enter a new PIN, enter it again to confirm and then tap OK. Remember this new PIN for when you need to unlock your SIM.

### 4: If you forget

If you can't remember your SIM PIN, contact your service provider for your PUK number. Once you've incorrectly entered your PIN three times, the SIM will lock and require a PUK number to unlock.

# Contacts

## Create and back up contacts, integrate with Google and import details with Facebook

**The basic address book has had its day.** The traditional idea where static details are kept on just one device doesn't apply anymore. It suffers from the age old problem of not knowing when someone changes their details and, as we have ever more ways of being contacted, such as a work number, a personal number, an email address, an instant messenger username, we need an ever-growing list to accommodate it all.

In this masterclass for the Galaxy default Contacts app we will first look at how to create detailed contact information, using all the fields available – even the ones that are not initially visible. Secondly, we'll move onto synchronising contacts from your social networking accounts. This enables you to expand your contact list, and means that details will be updated whenever your friends, family and colleagues change their information. This is also a quick and simple way to synchronise photos and birthdays from the social network to your gallery and calendar at the same time rather than gather it from multiple sources yourself.

Thirdly, we'll look at how to use the groups feature of the Contacts app, which lets you quickly find particular contacts. Note that the groups feature does not allow you to send group messages.

In our fourth tutorial, we'll look at adding photos to the people in your address book, either by taking a photo with your camera or using photos that they've posted themselves on Facebook.

We'll also look at how to import and export contacts in an offline setting, covering copying contacts from your SIM card, and how to use vCard files (.vcf) to import and export your contacts – ie create and restore backups so you needn't worry if you loose your device. We'll also show you how to selectively back up contact details if you don't need all of them.

In our final tutorial, we'll tackle the problem that we actually created by synchronising contacts from our social network accounts. When adding contact details from these other accounts, Android does not automatically match them with those already in your address book. However, it is possible to manually join these different entries for the same people, and we'll show you how.

## Complete contact details | Find hidden fields for saving extra details

### 1: Create a contact

Open the Contacts app on your home screen, tap the plus sign in the top right to add a new contact. You'll then be asked to select an account to save details to, tap Phone to save details to your device.

### 2: Add extra numbers

If you want to add more details to an entry, tap the plus sign next to each field. The minus sign deletes unwanted fields. The drop down menu on the left allows you to set categories – Home, Work, Fax, etc.

### 3: Add more fields

If you need to add a type of detail which is not available on the contact creation page, tapping the Add another field button at the bottom of the page will bring up a list of extra fields to choose from.

### How can I view my Android contacts online?

If you've entered Google account details and use syncing, your contacts are viewable on the Gmail website. Click Gmail on the left to open a drop-down list that includes a Contacts link.

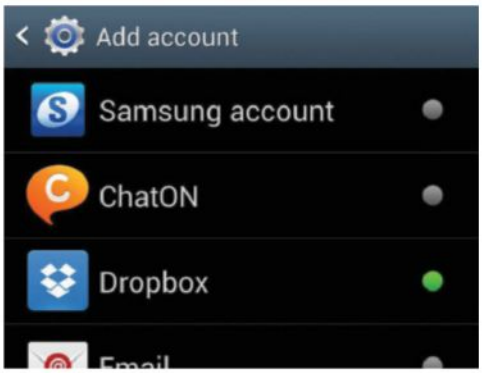
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Add social network contacts

## Syncing keeps you up to date with others' contact details

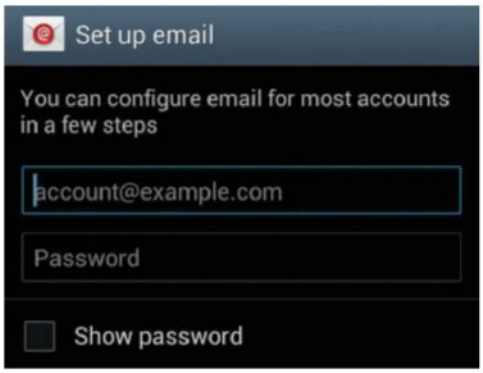
**Some apps that require a user account add your details in the Accounts section of the Settings app.** In turn, these apps can add extra contacts to the Contacts app. The advantage of this compared to a native address book entry is that when someone updates their details on a given social network, those changes will be automatically synchronised to your device without any action or knowledge on your part. We now show you how to sync your accounts.

## Social contact sync | Add contacts from the cloud and autosync



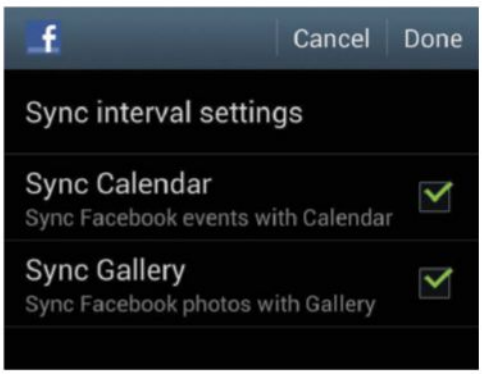

### 1: Add more accounts

Open the Settings app from your home screen and then scroll down to the Accounts section. Tap the Add account option, then select an option from the list of account types. This list is based on the apps installed on your device, such as Facebook, Google, and LinkedIn.




### 2: Account sign-in

Next, you will need to sign into your account to access your contact details. To save time, make sure that you have your username and password at hand for each account that you intend to set up on your device. Note that many apps only support one user account.




### 3: Sync your contact details

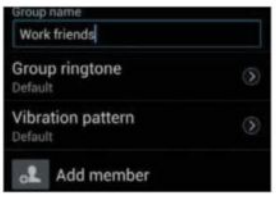
Once your log-in details have been verified, a menu will list the different information that you are able to sync to your device, many of which will refer to other native apps, such as Email or S Planner. If the contacts sync option is not ticked, contacts will not sync to your device.

### 4: Manually re-sync

If you don't think your contacts have synced, return to the Accounts section of Settings. Select the offending account from the list of apps, and details about the contact, including the last time it was synced, will be displayed. Tap Sync All to force the account to update details.

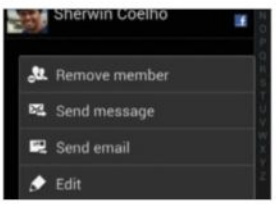
# Create contact groups

## Create groups to quickly find and organise contacts




In the Contacts app, tap the Groups button in the top menu, above the Search bar. Tap the Settings button, and select Create. From here you'll be asked to choose a group name.

For now, ignore the options to select a specific ringtone for your group and just tap the Add Member button. You can then select names from your Contacts list to add to the group.




When all names are added, tap Done in the top-right. Review the group's members, then hit Save. To edit or delete groups at any point, open Settings in the Groups menu for options.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Add images to contacts

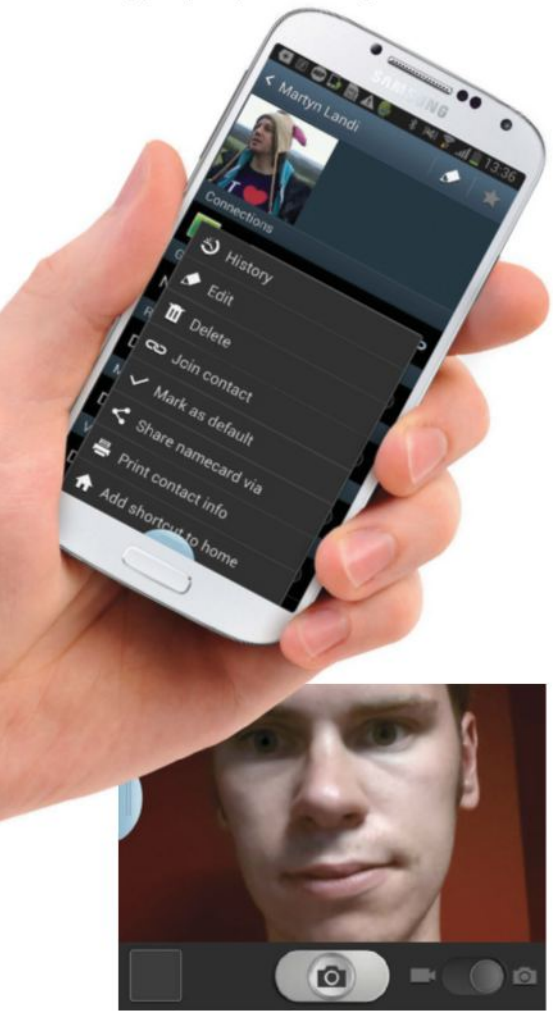
## Update your address book with photos from your gallery or from Facebook

**Having a simple list of names means that it takes you that much longer to spot the person in your address book whom you want to reach.**

When contacts have photos attached to them, it makes it much quicker and easier to recognise who you're looking for. The Contact app on your phone allows you to attach photos from the device's gallery or take a photo for each contact.

In the tutorial below, we will show you how to use photos from the native Gallery app on your Galaxy device, as well as offer some top tips on how to shoot a self-portrait if you store your own contact details in your device's address book.

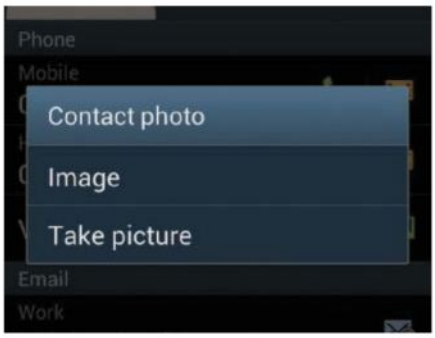
An issue with adding photos in this way is that when your friends change their personal photo, your address book photo of them will stay the same. Therefore, it is desirable to have your contacts matched to your Facebook friends list, so that if they were to update their profile photo, your address book is then also updated.




## Contacts app | Add photos for your contacts

### 1: Edit a contact

Open the Contacts app and either create a new contact or find the entry for whom you wish to add an image to. Open the menu for that contact and select Edit, either by using the Settings button or tapping the pencil icon in the top-left corner.



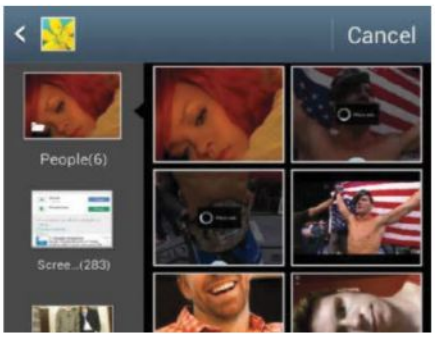

### 2: Change the image

In the contact edit screen, tap the existing image or the silhouette placeholder for a contact. You'll find a menu that lets you choose from the image gallery on your device or to take a new photo. The latter is useful if the person in question is with you.



### 3: Take a photo

If you select Take Picture, the Camera app will open. Use the front-facing camera so that you can see yourself and take a better self-portrait. You will be then given the option to Save or Discard the photo before adding it to your contact information.




### 4: Use an existing picture

If you select Image, you will be taken to the Gallery. Here you can select an image of either yourself or your contact from the photos you have already taken. To make this easier, use the filters in the top-left to sort pictures by Album, Time, Person, etc.

### 5: Use a Facebook photo

If you have not already set up your Facebook account on your device, go back to the Complete Contact Details tutorial. Once this is complete, if you select Image, any of the photos on your Facebook will be accessible from the Gallery screen.

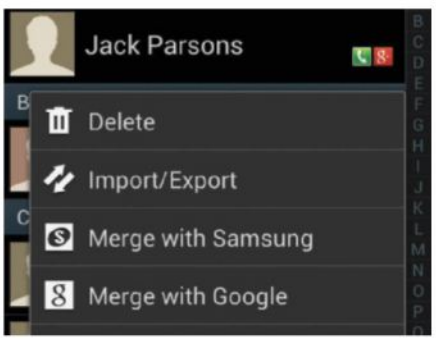
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Import/export contacts

## How to add and save contacts on your phone without using the cloud

**Loading or saving contacts with your Galaxy device has almost become a non-issue in the age of ubiquitous Wi-Fi and mobile data.** Your contacts are synchronised with your Google account via the internet. This is great, but it isn't always the case – some people don't have access to data connections and so cannot use their phone as a connected device.

In this tutorial we show you how to back up your contacts to a vCard (.vcf) file and import contacts from vCard files stored on your device, rather than using an internet connection. We'll also look at how to import contacts that are stored in the memory of your SIM card. Such numbers can be for network services or numbers you saved with a previous device.

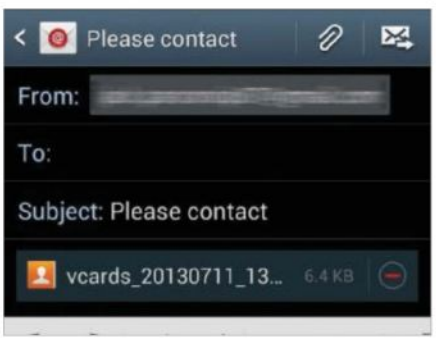



### 1: Import your contacts

Open the Contacts app and select Import/Export in the menu. You will find two import options: the first searches the SIM memory and the second searches your phone's storage for a vCard (.vcf) file. For SIM contacts there is a menu option to Import All.

### 2: Export to storage

The third option in the Import/Export menu is Export to Storage. Tapping this will trigger your phone to create a vCard (.vcf) file that contains every contact stored on your phone. Check the notification panel to watch the operation's progress.




### 3: Share visible contacts

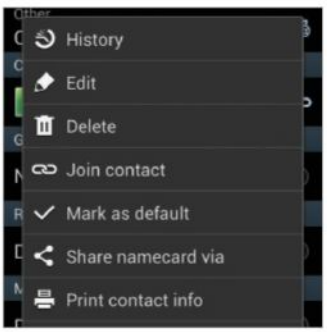
If you have filtered your contact list to a particular social account with the Contacts to display option, you can use the Share Visible Contacts export option to send a vCard file to an application on your device's universal share menu, eg. Attach to Gmail.

# Merge contacts with Google

## Manually create a single contact from multiple social network entries for the same person

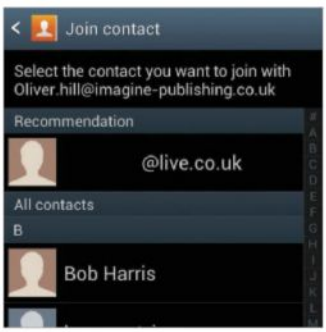
### 1: Multiple entries

As you add more accounts to your phone, there will be multiple entries for the same person. To create one entry per person, scroll through your contacts to find a group of duplicate names.



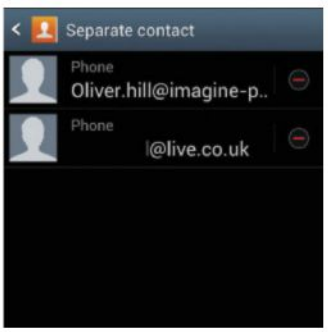

### 2: Open options

Once you've located a group of duplicate names, open one of them in the Contacts app and open the Options menu. It doesn't matter which as we are going to merge them.




### 3: Join contact

Select Join Contact from the menu. The app will present a list of suggested matches. Repeat this for each duplicate name. If a correct match isn't presented, you can manually find the correct contact.




### 4: Undo

To undo joining contacts, open the contact and tap Edit. From the menu, select Separate. It is not possible to selectively separate, so you may have to rejoin some contacts afterwards.

# Calls

## Advanced methods to make conference calls, free calls, manage callers and block unwanted calls

**Considering the 'smart' part of the smartphone name, it's surprising that most of us make no more advanced use of the Phone app than we do our landline telephones.** In this masterclass we'll look at both built-in Galaxy features and third-party applications that lend a greater amount of control over how you manage your calls.

The first tutorial in this master class will look at a free app called Viber. This app can be regarded as the voice-calling equivalent of WhatsApp – ie it allows you to make free calls to other Viber users via your data connection, thereby avoiding carrier charges. Just like WhatsApp, Viber identifies its users by their phone numbers and so it can quickly determine who in your address book is also using Viber.

Second, we'll look at making video calls. Most devices have a front-facing camera for video calls, but video calling is not universal across all versions of Android. Because of this, we have to fall back on third-party apps that can make video calls via your data connection. There are several video-calling apps out there; the best known is Skype, but there's Google Plus, Tango, ooVoo and Fring.

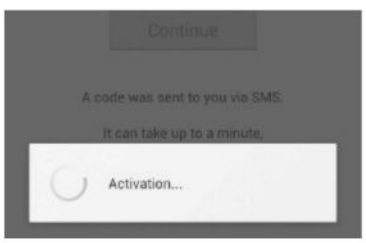
The third tutorial will look at how to add phone numbers to a reject list. Android Jelly Bean only has an option to divert all calls from a given contact to voicemail. However, there is a third-party application called BlackList that can give you much more advanced call rejection management.

The fourth tutorial will be of interest to anyone who regularly participates in conference calls. Here we look at the third-party app Conference Caller, which automates all of the laborious DTMF sequences you would normally have to key in. In fact, this app is useful even if you use other telephone services that require long DTMF sequences.

In the fifth tutorial we'll look at another way of handling unwanted calls with the third-party app, Mr Number. This app reads your call history and lets you choose which numbers you no longer want any calls from.

In the sixth and final tutorial of this master class we'll show you how to manage your Galaxy call log settings, including filtering by call type, clearing the log, and more.

## Viber free calls | Viber is an internet service that gives you free voice calls

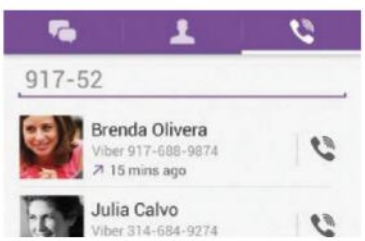



### 1: Set up Viber

Launch Viber and enter your phone number. A validation code will be sent to you by text and automatically detected. The app will then automatically match your address book to its database of users.

### 2: Add Facebook friends

Tap the More icon, then Settings, Facebook Connect and log into your Facebook account. This will match the phone numbers of Facebook friends to the Viber user list and add any matches to your Viber contact list.




### 3: Place a call

Tap the Viber logo by the contact you wish to call. Tapping a contact's name allows you to send a free text message and call other numbers. Landline calls will be made on the GSM network at usual rates, though.

### How do I find SIP account options?

Open the Phone app and select Settings from the menu. At the bottom of the page, tap Accounts under the Internet Call Settings heading. Then tap the Add Account bar, and fill in your details.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Make a video call

## Share some quality face time with friends and family

**Video calling over GSM networks is not supported on all Android devices although the majority do.** If your device supports video calling you'll see the option on any contact page in the People app.

If your phone has a front-facing camera but no built-in video calling, there are free alternatives. Skype, Google Plus, Fring, Tango and ooVoo all use your data connection instead of the GSM network, which actually makes video calling cheaper too.

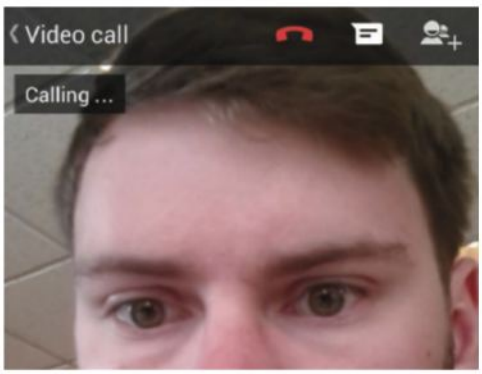
**Make video calls** | Set up your phone for video calling

### 1: Check built-in options

Launch the People app and open a contact who you'd like to video-call. If your device supports 3G/GSM video calling, a video calling line will be provided. If there is no option, you'll need a third-party app. Note that you should check your tariff for video calling rates.

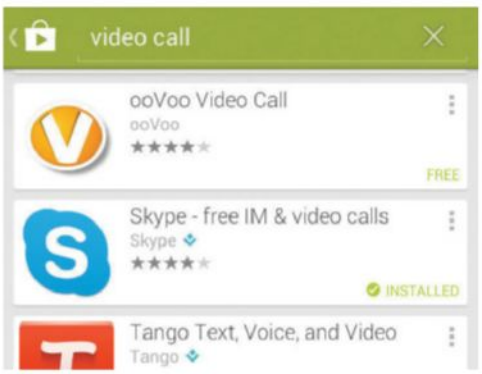
### 2: Video with Skype

You may make video calls within Skype by opening a contact and tapping the camera icon. Alternatively, if you 'joined' your contacts as described in the Contacts master class, you will find a Skype video call option in the People app for those with Skype accounts.




### 3: Use Google Hangouts

The Google+ app supports video calling, known on this network as a Hangouts. Hangouts has the advantage that you can have many people join the call. Open a contact in the People app and if the person has a Google+ account, you'll see an option for Start hangout.

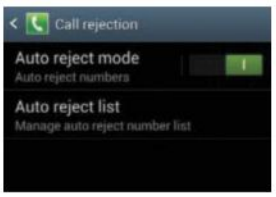



### 4: Video calling apps

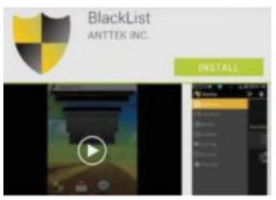
If you wish to use something other than the apps described above, there are free alternatives. For instance, ooVoo supports video chats with up to 12 people and allows you to upload videos to YouTube. Fring supports four-way video chatting and has its own SIP service.

# Add a number to reject list

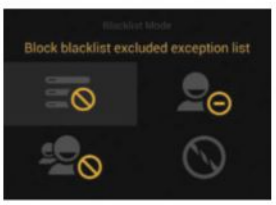
## Get your device to auto-reject unwanted calls




Android Jelly Bean does not have an explicit auto-reject function. Instead, the number needs to be saved in the People app, then you may select All calls to voicemail from the menu.




Step 1 is not an ideal solution in certain cases. For a stronger solution go to the Play Store and install an app called BlackList. This gives more advanced options for handling unwanted calls.




The BlackList app has a handy tutorial to guide you. Similar to setting up a PC firewall, you can create blanket policies or make rules for specific numbers from your call history.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Attend conference calls

## Use Conference Caller to save time and effort by storing your unwieldy DTMF codes

**Conference calls are used in place of business meetings when getting all the attendees together face-to-face is impractical. For instance - if some are overseas.** A basic conference simply requires you to call in and start talking or listening. However, more advanced conferences may require a PIN to gain access, or they may have moderation functions which are accessed via key sequences.

The Conference Caller third-party app – free to download from the Google Play Store – allows you to create profiles for each of the conferences that you participate in. For each profile, it will save a preset sequence of dial codes so you can easily perform functions by just touching your screen, instead of having to remember each of them while holding a conversation.

The nature of Conference Caller also makes it useful in situations other than conference calls. In fact, the app can help with any telephone system that requires you to key in long sequences.

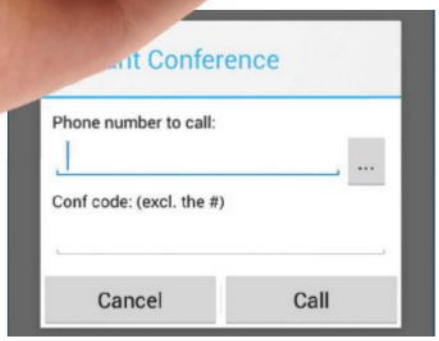
## Conference Caller | Start a conference call

### 1: Add conference line

When you first launch the app you will be prompted to enter the phone number and country of the first conference line you want to use. You will be asked for the city (optional), but this has no functional effect on the conference handling.

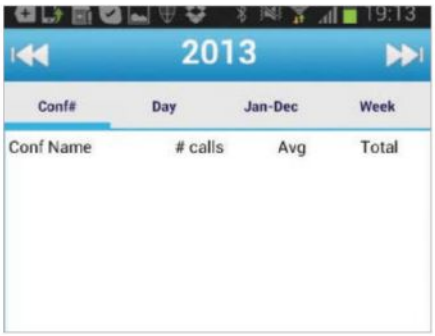
### 2: Create first conference

Once the phone number to the conference has been configured, tap its name and then tap the '+' icon in the top-right corner of the following screen. You'll then have a prompt asking you for the details of the specific conference to join.



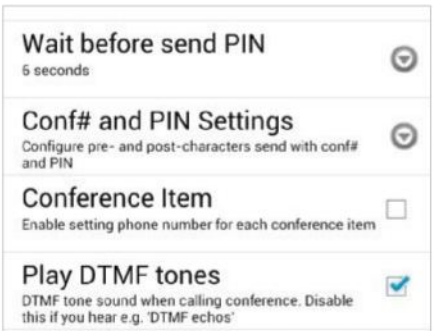

### 3: Use instant conference

If you have a conference code at hand that you do not plan to use regularly, and therefore want to avoid the configuration process, open the menu and select Instant Conference. Type or paste in the details you've been given and tap OK.




### 4: Review your activity

If you wish to review how long you've spent in each conference call (eg for billing purposes), the app keeps track of your activities and presents it to you in a convenient list or calendar view. Open the menu and tap Statistics.




### 5: Troubleshooting call codes

If your dial-code commands are not working, there are several parameters (eg timings) in the settings menu that you can adjust to suit the system you are calling. Open the menu and select Preferences. Also, note the database backup and restore options.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Block unwanted calls

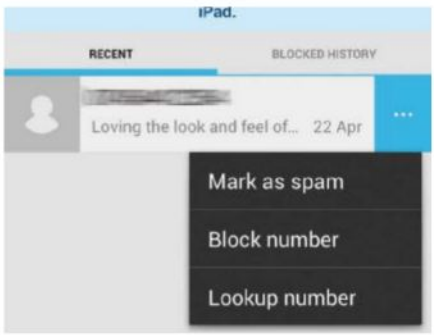
## Use Mr Number to block unwanted calls or texts and view caller information

**If you are often troubled with unwanted calls, whether it be human marketers, automated calls or even prank callers, it's wise to have your phone deal with them for you.**

Mr Number is an interesting, easy-to-use third-party app – free to download from the Google Play Store – that can block calls and text messages.

Note that the app still contains options for a crowdsourced caller ID system, but this functionality has currently been disabled as Google decided it breached terms of service.

Despite that, the app is still useful for building your personal blocklist. So read on to find out how to make the most of Mr Number.

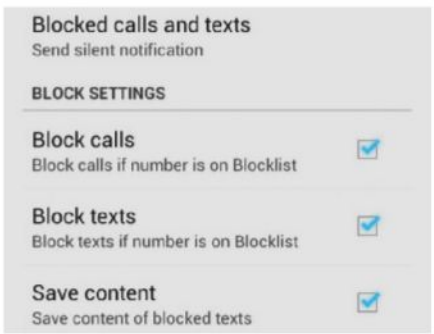



### 1: Review call history

The Mr Number app's first tab shows a list of all recent calls and texts. Each row has a triple-dot menu icon that accesses the option to block the number in the future. The other options in the menu are now defunct because of Google's rules.

### 2: Blocklist fine-tuning

Tap the stop icon on the toolbar. You will find three tabs. The first contains the list of numbers to be automatically rejected. The second contains the numbers that will be diverted to voicemail. The third is a list of exceptions to blocking rules.

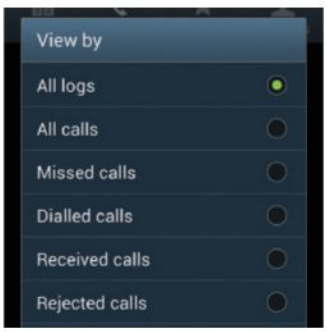



### 3: Show caller information

Tap the settings icon. There you can set options for whether texts from blocked callers will be blocked too and vice versa. You may configure an in-call pop-up that shows caller information, and set whether notifications of blocked calls are shown.

# Manage call log settings

## Make expert use of all call log settings in Android Jelly Bean




### 1: Call log settings

Launch the Phone app and open the menu. From the menu, choose one of the filter options: missed calls, outgoing calls, or incoming calls. Also note the option to clear the entire list.

### 2: View information

From the call log, tap the name of a contact. This will bring up a review of your communications with that person. From that view, you are able to call, text or view full information.

### 3: Return call

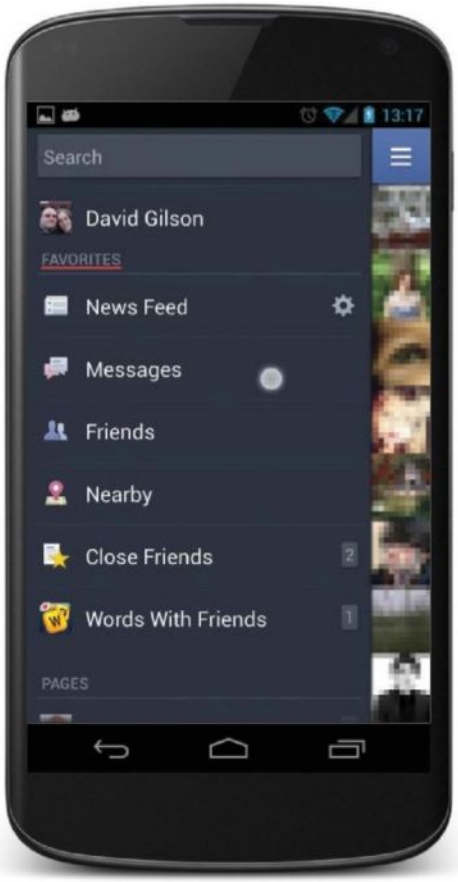
To return a call, tap the phone icon to the right of each row. To contact a person by an alternative number, tap the image to the left of their name – this will bring up a summary of their contact options.

### 4: More options

From the view in step 2, open the menu and note the Remove from call log and Edit number before call options. The second allows you to amend the phone number before the next call.

# Messaging

## Become a messaging expert as we show you around your Samsung Galaxy's built-in and instant messaging apps




**Text messaging is one of the cornerstones of using a mobile phone.** However, the way in which we send them has not changed a great deal in the past ten years. Even though most of us are using Android smartphones, our use of the short message service (SMS) has not advanced a great deal.

This master class is concerned with taking your texting to the next level. There are many ways to send short messages other than the GSM SMS environment, such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.

Furthermore, we can make smarter use of text messages. There are several ways to respond to phone calls with saved text messages. It has been possible via third-party applications, but Android Jelly Bean now has this feature built-in, which saves installing extra apps.

In the first tutorial of this messaging master class, we will show you how to add attachments to your messages – in other words, how to send multimedia messaging service (MMS) messages.

Our second tutorial will show you how to use the Facebook Messenger application. While it's possible to use this to chat in real-time, it can readily be used in place of the SMS system entirely, as long as your phone has always-on data.

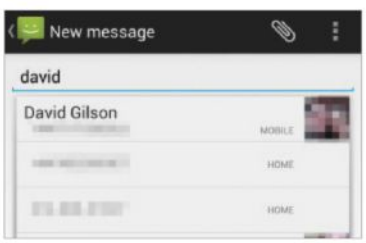
The third tutorial will show you how to use Android Jelly Bean's built-in feature for rejecting calls with canned text messages, known as Quick Responses. This is a brand new feature of Android, and you'll see how to use it and how to customise your responses.

In the fourth tutorial, we'll take you through the steps of using the most well-known SMS substitute, WhatsApp. This service lets you route your text and multimedia messages via the internet and you don't even need to create an account.

The fifth, and penultimate tutorial shows you how to use an app that is fairly similar to the Jelly Bean Quick Responses. This app in question is called Missed Call Answering Machine. Instead of focusing on rejected and unwanted calls, this app will help by automatically sending text messages to calls that you have missed.

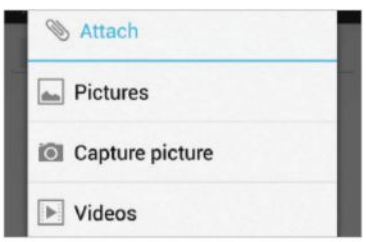
Finally, the sixth tutorial will take you through more SMS alternatives that use the internet to carry your messages instead of your provider's network.

## Add attachments | Send pictures, videos or audio with the Messaging app



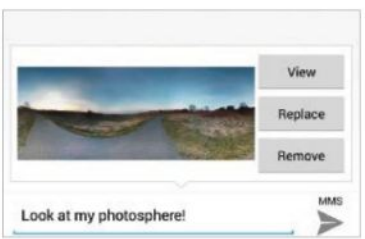

### 1: Set your recipient

Open the built-in Android Messaging app and either select an existing thread with the desired contact or tap the New message toolbar icon on the main screen and enter your recipient's name or number.




### 2: Adding attachments

Tap the paper-clip icon on the upper toolbar in the message composition screen. You will be presented with a list of all the possible types of attachments – pictures, video, etc. Select the type you wish to send.




### 3: Pick your attachment

Depending on your selection, you will either have to create the attachment (ie. take a photo or record a sound) or choose from content stored on your phone (for example, choose a photo from your Gallery).

### How do I turn on message receipts?

Launch the Messaging app and open the menu. On the next screen, tick the Delivery Reports box. Scroll to the Multimedia (MMS) Messages section and tick the same option.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Use Facebook Messenger

## Message or chat in real-time with your Facebook friends

**SMS and MMS messages allow you to send text or multimedia content, but doing so will be counted on your mobile bill.** However, Facebook messaging – whether with the mobile app or website – allows you to do all that and more free of charge. Facebook also has the advantage that phone numbers are not necessary, you just have to be friends on the world's biggest social network. Of course, even if you distrust Facebook, it's hard to deny its usefulness as an SMS substitute.

### Facebook Messenger | Replace SMS and MMS with Facebook

### 1: Install Facebook Messenger

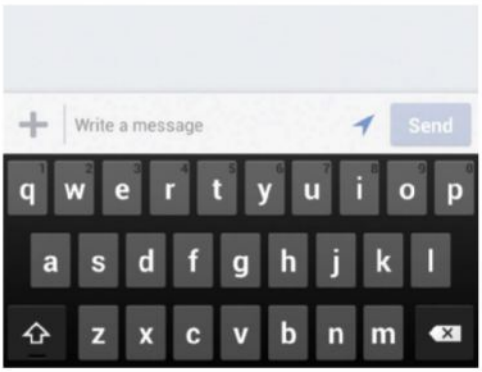
Install the Facebook Messenger app from the Play Store. Once signed in, you will see a list of all the conversations stored in your Facebook account. Also, messages can be accessed from the latest version of the Facebook app – swipe to the right and look in the left column.

### 2: Start a new conversation

If you wish to contact someone who is not already in the conversation list, tap the '+' icon in the bottom-right corner of the screen. This will then create a new conversation view. Now enter the recipient's name – the app will suggest names as you type.

### 3: Send multimedia attachments

While writing a message, tap the '+' icon beside the message composition box. This will bring up a set of icons for various attachments. Choose a photo stored on your device, take a new photo, search an image online, or attach an audio recording. Also note the set of emoticons available on offer.



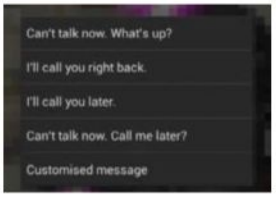

### 4: Add your location

To share your location with the recipient, tap the arrow icon to the right of the message composition box, ensuring its colour changes to blue. To withhold your location, for the sake of privacy, ensure the arrow is coloured grey. Sharing location is a good way to meet up with someone.

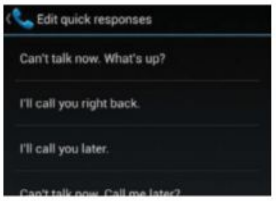
# Reject calls with Quick Responses

## Send responses to let callers know you're busy

When you have an incoming call, instead of rejecting or accepting, drag upwards to the message icon. This will open a list of Quick Responses for you to send back to that number.




Selecting the message icon rejects the call and presents a list of Quick Responses. Touch the message you wish to send to the number you just rejected. Also note the custom message option.




If you wish to write your own set of Quick Responses, launch the Phone app and choose Settings from the menu. There you'll find a line for Quick Responses, which lets you edit all four.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Free messaging with WhatsApp

## Send texts and multimedia to other WhatsApp users for free by using your data connection

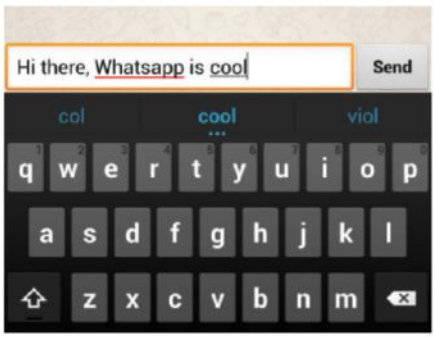
**WhatsApp is a well-known alternative to sending SMS and MMS messages over your network provider's GSM network.** Because WhatsApp utilises your data connection, texts and multimedia messages are free – as long as you're within your mobile plan's data allowance, of course. This can be a great cost saver if you have a tariff where data is cheap. However, given UK mobile networks often provide such a large allowance of text messages, the cost saving offered by WhatsApp becomes less significant. Still, if you have friends located around the world, international messages are rarely free on a mobile network. Therefore, WhatsApp can be a fantastic way of sending free text and multimedia messages to friends and family overseas.

WhatsApp is easy to set up, too. You don't need to create an account and log in. Instead it just needs your phone number. It then finds matches between your address book and its database of users, so it can then show which of your contacts are also WhatsApp users.

## WhatsApp | Send free messages and attachments

### 1: Setting up WhatsApp

Install the free WhatsApp app from the Play Store, then launch it. Enter your phone number so WhatsApp can identify you, then provide the name you wish to have displayed. After a moment of configuring itself, WhatsApp will be ready to use.

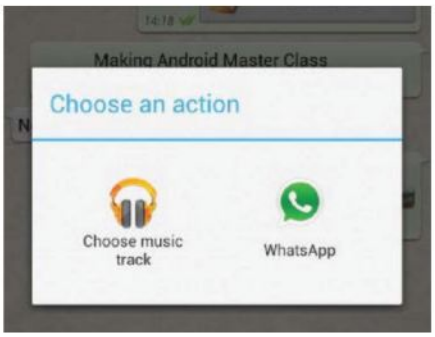



### 2: Send a text

Tap the pencil icon in the top-right corner and select from your list of contacts. Enter a message into the box and tap the Send button when you're done. Your message will be displayed above, and a tick will appear when it has been delivered.

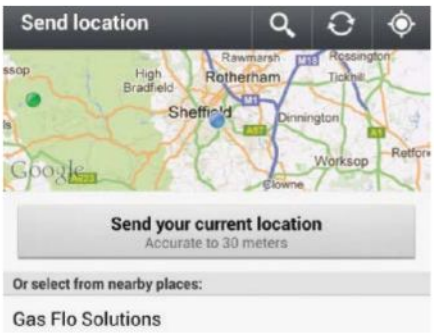
### 3: Send a photo

In the conversation view with a person you'd like to show a photo, tap the paper-clip icon and either select from your gallery or tap the camera icon to take a new photo. Alternatively, tap the clapperboard icon to open options for sending video.




### 4: Attach a sound

If you want to send a sound, tap the paper-clip icon again in the conversation view and select the Audio icon. You will be given a choice of whether to choose something from your music collection or whether to record an audio clip with WhatsApp.




### 5: Share your location

Again, tap the paper-clip icon in your conversation view, but this time tap the map icon, labelled Location. This will take you to a Google Maps screen with nearby locations listed. Sharing your location with others is a good way to find each other in the real world.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Text back to missed callers

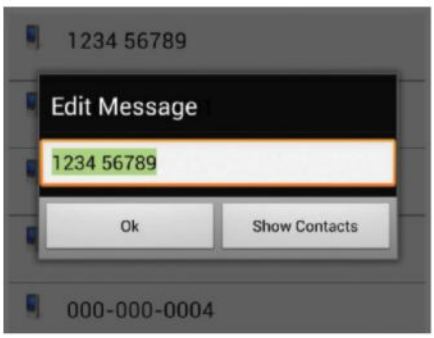
## Use Missed Call Texting Machine to invite missed callers to text instead

**When we miss a call on our smartphone, the person may leave a voicemail.** However, listening to a voicemail may sometimes be as inconvenient as actually taking a call. Therefore, the app Missed Call Texting Machine seeks to deal with this problem, by automatically sending a pre-written message to any new entries on your missed call list.

The app can be set to respond to every missed call. However, this may lead to greater costs if you tend to receive a lot of calls, especially marketing calls. Alternatively, you can configure Missed Call Texting Machine to only respond to a list of five selected numbers – useful for limiting the amount of texts the app sends on your behalf.

### 1: Edit your auto-response

Open Missed Call Texting Machine and tap on the edit box near to the top of the screen. Here you can change the message to whatever you need. Note that you should try to keep the length of the message to 160 characters or less.




### 2: Edit recipient list

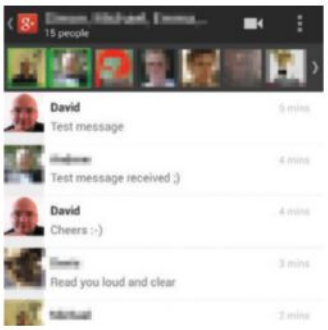
To have Missed Call Texting Machine respond to only five specific numbers, select the corresponding radio button and tap the Add Phone Numbers bar at the bottom of the screen. Tap each slot and enter a number or select a contact.

### 3: Control via widget

To control Missed Call Texting Machine via a home-screen widget, browse your widget list for it. Tapping the widget's right-hand icon repeatedly cycles through all of the app's modes. The left-hand icon will open the settings discussed in the previous steps.

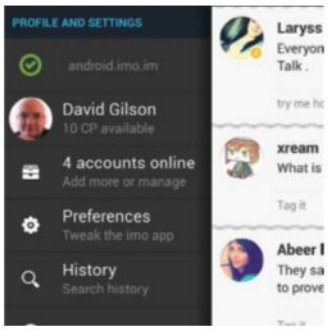
# Best texting apps

## We look at Google+, IMO Messenger, IM+ and Nimbuzz as SMS replacements




### 1: Google+

The Messenger+ app for Google+ can only send instant messages to other Google+ users. However, you can start chats (Hangouts) with entire circles, which makes it easier to send group messages.




### 2: IMO Messenger

IMO Messenger allows you to log into multiple chat platforms. It's easier to use since all of your online contacts are in a single list. IMO has its own Twitter-like service for posting updates too.

### 3: IM+

IM+ is a free multi-platform chat client. It has a wider range of compatible services than IMO. IM+ lacks its own social service, but does support the open source Jabber protocol.

### 4: Nimbuzz

Nimbuzz is another multi-platform chat client. It supports fewer services than IM+ or IMO, but has its own messaging and voice-call service that require top-up purchases.

# Google Play

Learn how to use Store features like wishlists, refunds and more

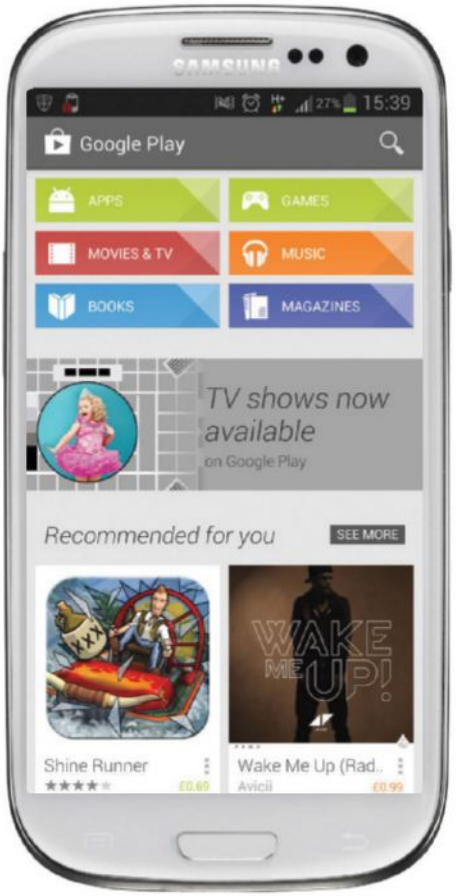
**Although it is possible to download apps from any source, the best place to get them is from the Google Play Store.** This is because it has the most comprehensive collection of apps anywhere on the internet and the quality is exceptionally high. There is an enormous number of apps to be found here, covering a vast range of subjects – pretty much everything you could imagine. This includes a large array of great games. The Play Store also offers a wide range of other items, such as books, magazines and movies. It is a one-stop shop for everything you need to have fun or to work on your Galaxy phone or tablet.

An advantage of the Google Play Store over other sources is the easy payment system: everything is handled by Google Wallet. This securely looks after your credit card details and you can add one or more cards for Store purchases. We will show you how to add a credit card to your Store account. Gift cards - either purchased or bundled free with your Android device - can also be added to your Store account and then used to buy apps and other items. One of the tutorials shows how to redeem a gift card and it is very easy once you know how it is done.

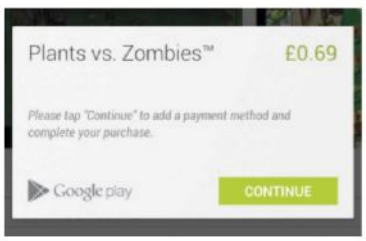
Another great feature of the Google Play Store is the ability to get refunds. This can be for any reason at all and, in fact, you aren't even asked why. You just tap a few buttons and menus and the money you paid for an app is put back into your account. You might want to use the refund facility if an app fails to download and install, or if it turns out not to be compatible with your Samsung device. You can even get a refund if you simply don't like the app or you change your mind about purchasing it. The step-by-step guide shows you exactly how to do this so you no longer need to worry about being so prudent with your app purchases.

Also covered in this section is how to uninstall apps you no longer want. If you have completed every level of a game or simply become bored, it is easy to remove an app to free up memory for something more interesting. We also take a quick look at how to download and install widgets and wallpapers to your device.

"There are an enormous number of apps here"

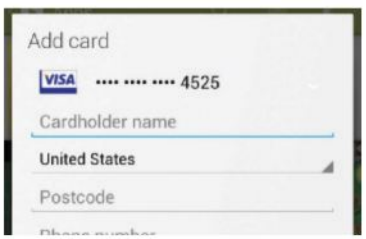



## Add credit cards | Use a credit card for Store purchases




### 1: Add a card

When the button is pressed to buy an app from the Google Play Store, Pay with displays a list of options when pressed. One or more credit cards can be added to your account by selecting the Add card option.




### 2: Enter the details

Enter the credit card details into the form, including the number, expiry date and security code. Next add your name, postcode, telephone number and so on. You can then continue with the app purchase.

### 3: Use Google Wallet

Alternatively, credit cards can be set up before you visit the Google Play Store. Go to **wallet.google.com** and sign in with your email and password. Select Payment methods, then Add a credit or debit card.

### Can I get a refund for apps bought last month?

No. There is a time limit on refunds. After downloading an app, you must try it straight away and if it isn't what you want, request a refund within 15 minutes.

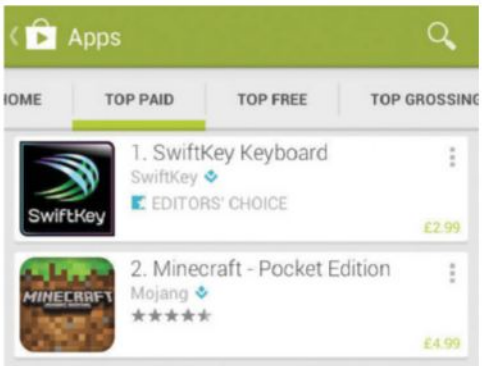
**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Build up your wishlist

## Add apps to your wishlist and return to them later

**There are many fantastic apps in the Google Play Store and you may well see several that you would like during one visit.** However, you might not have the time or the memory space to download them all right now, or you want to wait until you are connected via Wi-Fi. The Store's wishlist feature is like a bookmark facility in a web browser and it stores a link to the item you are viewing. Later, you can display your wishlist and tap an item to go straight there.

## Bookmark your favourites | Save links to your favourite Store apps

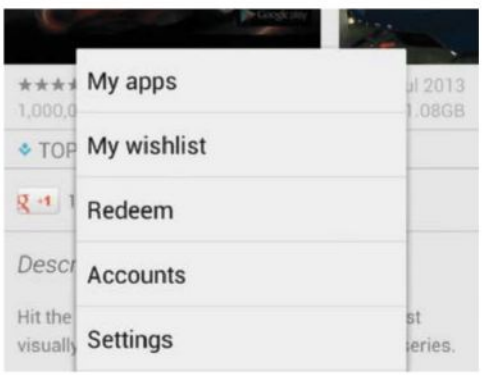



### 1: Browse the Store

Start the Google Play Store app and then navigate to the Apps section. Browse the latest apps, the top lists and recommended ones – there are always plenty of interesting things to see. If there is an app you want to install later instead of right now, you can use the wishlist facility.

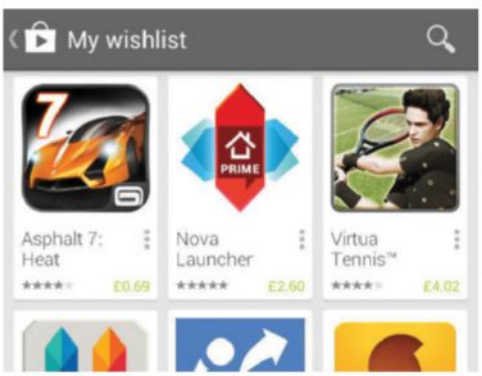
### 2: Add the app

The wishlist icon is the middle one on the right at the top, resembling a bookmark. Tapping the icon will add the currently viewed app to the wishlist and there is a confirmation message at the bottom. Notice that the icon changes – compare it to the previous step.




### 3: Go to wishlist

At any time and from anywhere in the Google Play Store, press the menu icon (the column of three dots), which is in the top-right corner on this device, and one of the items on offer will be My Wishlist. After adding a few apps, use this menu to go to the wishlist.



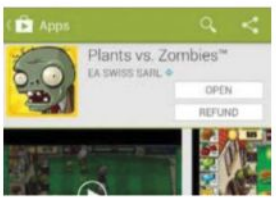

### 4: View the wishlist

This is what a typical wishlist looks like. Yours will have different apps of course, but the format will be the same. Tapping an app will take you to its Store page. If you want to remove an app from the wishlist, press the icon (circle with line through it) at the right just above the price.

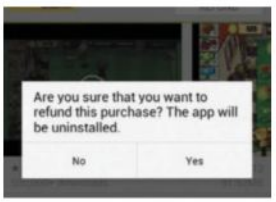
# Refund a Store purchase

## Get your money back on items purchased

Let's make a purchase in the Store and see how the refund system works. Here an app has been selected and after pressing the price button, we are prompted to Accept & buy.




Once the app has been downloaded and installed on the device, there are two buttons on the app's Store page. You can open the app and use it or you can request a refund.




The Refund button is only available for 15 minutes, so you have to try the app and make your mind up quickly. If you don't want it, tap Refund and then Yes to uninstall it.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Redeem a gift card

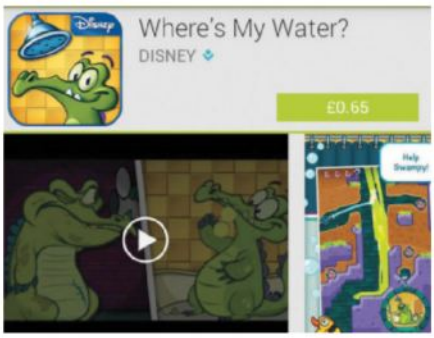
## If you receive a gift card with a redeem code, here's how to use it

**In some countries, such as the US (and now also the UK), it is possible to buy Google Play Store gift cards with values of up to $50.** They can be used yourself to purchase items in the Store or they can be given to others as a gift.

While not all countries sell gift cards, sometimes they are bundled with purchases, such as an Android tablet or mobile phone. In the box may be a gift card that credits your account so you can purchase apps and other items in the Store.

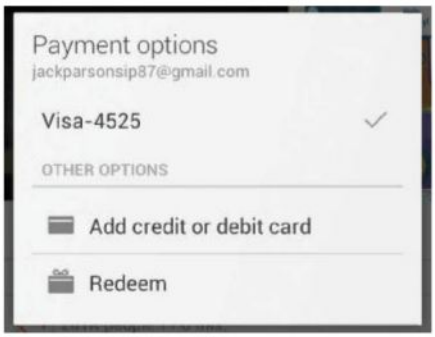
There are several ways to redeem gift cards. You can go to **play.google.com/redeem** using the Chrome browser, access Redeem from the menu in the Google Play Store app, or use it at the checkout when purchasing something. It doesn't make any difference which method you choose and it is completely up to you. However, it is best to redeem a gift card sooner rather than later just in case you misplace it. Use it, don't lose it! The credit stays in your account and does not have an expiry date.

**Gift card** | Use a Play Store gift card



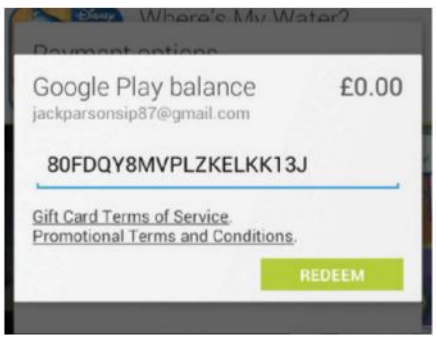

### 1: Select an app

Start the Google Play Store app and find something that you would like to purchase, such as a game. In this example we're buying Where's My Water, but any app will do. Press the price button to purchase it and the checkout screen is displayed.




### 2: Change the payment

There is a little arrow at the right of the section that says Pay with. Press it and a list of different payment methods is now displayed. You could pay by credit card or the Google Play balance. But when you have a gift card, press Redeem instead.

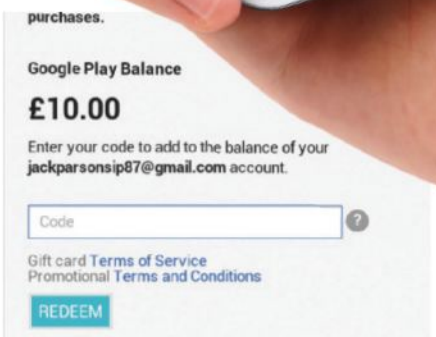



### 3: Enter the code

The Redeem screen appears and shows your current Google Play balance. Below is a box for entering the code on the gift card and when it is tapped, the keyboard will be displayed. Enter the code on the card and then press Redeem.

### 4: Fire up Chrome

If you don't want to purchase anything in the Store right now, you can redeem the card and add the amount to your Google Play balance for use later. Go to **play.google.com/redeem** using Chrome and then log in with your email and password.




### 5: Enter the code

After logging into your account, your Google Play balance is displayed and there is a box in which to enter the code on the gift card. Tap the box to bring up the keyboard and type in the code. You will see the new balance in the Store app.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Widgets and wallpaper

## Make the home screens much more exciting by using animated wallpaper and widgets

**One of the nice features of Android is the ease with which you can customise the home screen to your preference using widgets and wallpaper.** Icons can be dragged to any position, widgets can be added and the background image – the wallpaper – can be a static image or a live animated one. The three-step guide shows you how to add a wallpaper.

Widgets are slightly different, but are just as easy. Go to the Store and select the Widgets category. Select the widget you would like and tap the Install button. Afterwards, press the All apps button on the home screen and select Widgets at the top to see everything that is installed. Tap and hold a widget, then drag it to wherever you want it on the screen.

### 1: Select the category

Go to the Google Play Store and then select the Categories option at the top of the screen. There is a Widgets category and one for Live Wallpaper. Select the one that you want. We will choose a wallpaper for this step-by-step guide.

### 2: Install the wallpaper

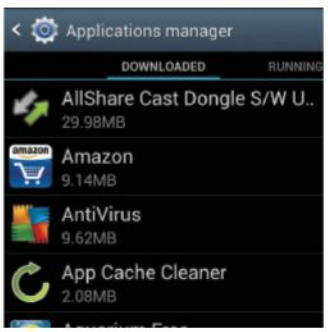
There are lots of wallpaper apps to choose from and swiping left and right in the Store is used to browse the top free and paid charts. We have selected The real aquarium, which shows animated fish, but you can choose whatever you want.

### 3: Set the wallpaper

Return to the home screen and press and hold on an empty space. A menu is displayed and this enables you to choose a photo from the Gallery; Live Wallpaper, such as the app you just downloaded; or Wallpaper, which are Android images.

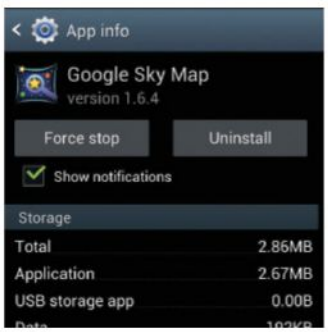
# Uninstall unwanted apps

## If you no longer use an app, remove it to free up memory



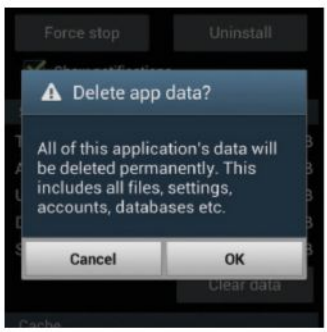

### 1: Tap settings

Press the button to show all apps from the home screen and then tap Settings. Press Apps and everything that has been installed is listed. It takes a few seconds for the sizes to appear below each.



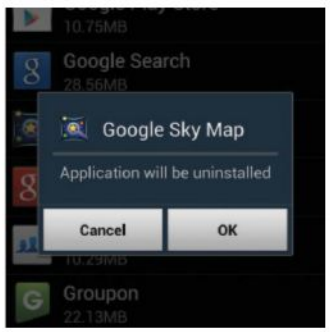

### 2: Select app

Select the app you no longer want and an info screen appears showing memory usage and several useful buttons. Some apps run in the background, so press Force stop to stop it.




### 3: Clear data

Apps store information when they are running, such as settings, personal configuration options and so on. Press Clear cache followed by Clear data to clean up the system and remove this.




### 4: Uninstall

After stopping the app and clearing all cache and data, you can press Uninstall to remove it from the device. It only takes a second or two and you will then be returned to the Apps screen.

# Google apps

## Customise your Galaxy device to get the most out of it

**Android is a fantastic system that lets you do a huge range of different things with your device.** You can start getting the most out of it as soon as you take it out of the box.

That's partly because Android comes with a whole range of useful apps built right into it, ready to use. You've got YouTube, Gmail, Google's Chrome web browser and Google Drive, for example, all designed to provide you with different services and help you have fun and be productive too.

All the pre-installed applications can be used with the minimum of setup effort from you, but you can actually get a lot more out of them if you spend a little bit of time understanding them more deeply and customising them to meet your own needs.

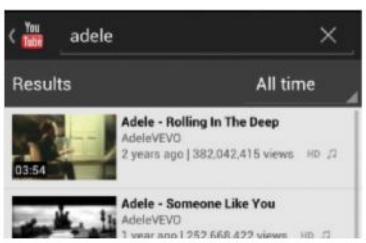
Once your Galaxy and its associated applications are set up to meet your personal requirements, you can start really making the most of everything that's on offer. Why not set up all your email accounts, for example, instead of just one? Or set up playlists and favourites in YouTube so you can chill out with the clips that help you relax, or motivate you when you need that? Or how about learning to make the most of Google Chrome so that it precisely works how you need it to – including 'incognito' browsing which lets you browse without leaving a trace behind?

Google Now will take a few weeks to realise your patterns, but once it does, you'll get customised information when you need it. Google Drive can be a worthy cloud replacement to ensure you have your important files with you wherever you go.

These kinds of customisation features are not difficult to set up, but if you take the time to get to grips with them they can make your overall Android experience a whole lot easier – not to mention, much faster too. And the more you customise, the more time you'll have to actually savour using your smartphone and get to grips with an even wider array of capabilities waiting to be explored under its gorgeous screen.

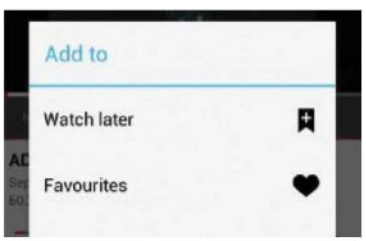
We'll show you how to customise these features of Android – and more – in the next few pages. There's plenty to explore and numerous ways to tweak your smartphone to precisely your liking.

## Make YouTube playlists | Creating a playlist of videos in YouTube



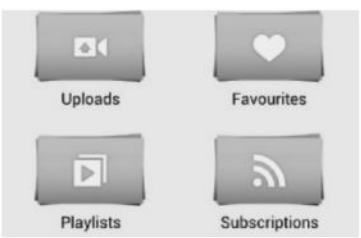

### 1: Log in to YouTube

Open up the YouTube app and log into your account – or create a new account if you don't have one. You can sign in with your Gmail details. Find a clip you like the look of and want to save to watch later.




### 2: Save a clip

If you like a clip you are watching, hit the small '+' icon at the top of the screen. This will bring up the Add to box, and you can add the clip to your Watch later or favourites list, or create a new playlist.




### 3: Watch playlists

Later on, open the YouTube app and tap the Account icon at the top right of the screen. Choose the Playlists option, then Watch later and you'll see a list of all the clips you've saved to watch later.

### Why customise Android features?

If you set an application up precisely the way you need it, then you can pop into it at any time and find precisely what you want. That can be a lot easier and faster than fiddling around every time you run an app.

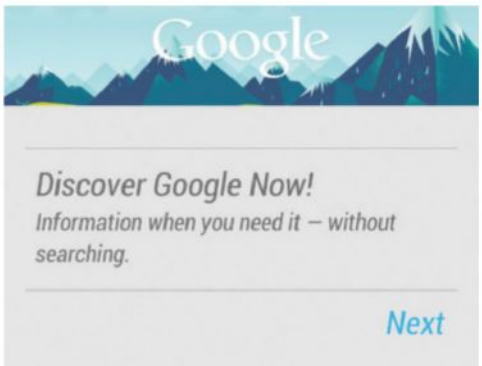
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Personalise Google Now

## Google Now can help you out in lots of ways

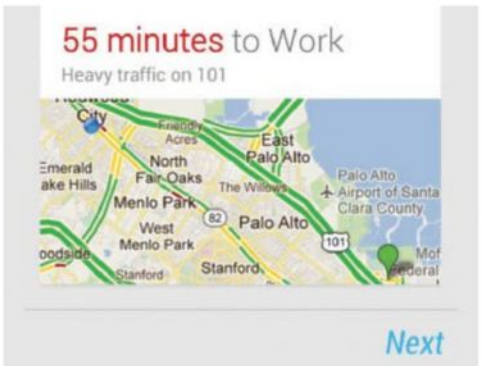
**Google Now is a great little personal assistant that can give you all sorts of useful info and will even learn the kind of things you are interested in.** The information it provides ranges from today's weather to train times, football scores and a whole lot more. It can pop up during the day to give you just what you need when you need it. It is on all Galaxy 4.1+ devices. Before you can get all that, though, you need to give Google Now what it needs to get on with its work.

**Use Google Now** | Make the most of Google Now



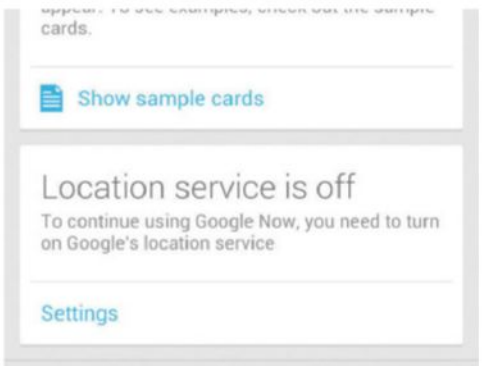

### 1: First run

Check that you are running the Android 4.1 operating system or higher by going to Settings and tapping the About phone or About tablet option. If you are running Android version 4.1 or higher, sweep up from the bottom of the screen to run Google Now.



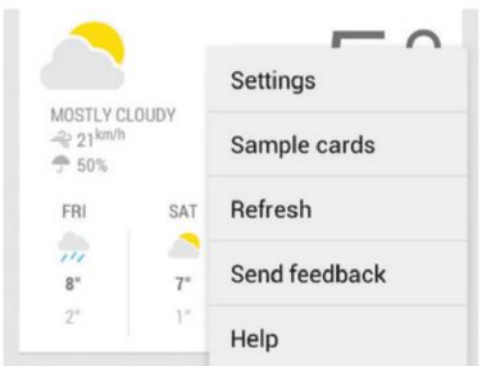

### 2: Explore the capabilities

When you first start Google Now, there is a little tutorial to run through that shows what it can do – just step through it by hitting Next when you are done with reading each screen. When you reach the last screen, press the Yes, I'm In option to get started with the service.




### 3: Turn on location service

To get the most from Google Now you will need to turn your device's location service on. Hit the Settings button to do this. You're then taken to the Settings area to turn the location service on. Once done, sweep up again from the main screen to get back to Google Now.




### 4: Up and running

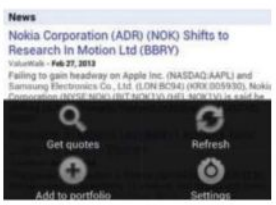
Google Now starts by delivering some info including local weather and other snippets. Tap the menu icon (three dots) at the bottom right of the screen and select Settings to customise how the service works so that it meets your specific needs and gives you the info you want.

# Use Google Finance

## Keep an eye on your stocks and shares using the Google Finance app

Google Finance helps you to track your stocks and shares in real-time. It is a free app that you'll find in the Google Play Store. For best results, log into your Google account before running it.

There are three tabs at the top; Markets and News give you an overview of the markets and financial news respectively. Tap one of the stock market indicators for in-depth info and news.




Create your own portfolio by tapping Portfolios and adding stock tickers, found easily by searching in the app. To just get a quote for a stock and not add it to your portfolio, tap the menu icon.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Add more Google accounts

## Mix and match your Google apps by adding extra Google accounts to your device

**When you first set up your Android phone or tablet, you are asked to add a single Google account to it.** However, you might well have more than one account that you use for different purposes, such as home life and business. The good news is that you can add more than one account to your device, and doing so is easy.

Why might you want to do this? Well, the chances are that if you use different Google accounts for different purposes, then you can streamline all your work and access it from one place, whether that's from your phone or your Android tablet.

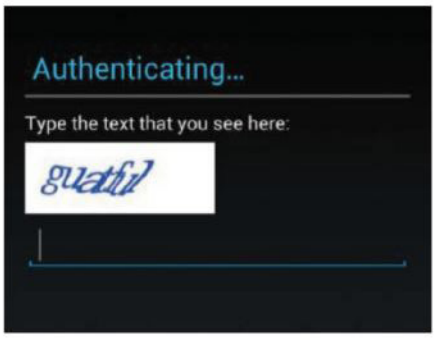
If one Google account relates to a sports club you belong to, you will want to manage its email on your device, for example. If another account relates to a voluntary group you belong to, well, you'll want to be able to access that too.

In addition, you will probably find it useful to have access to any associated email lists, calendars, Picasa photo accounts and more, of course.

## Device accounts | Add an extra Google account

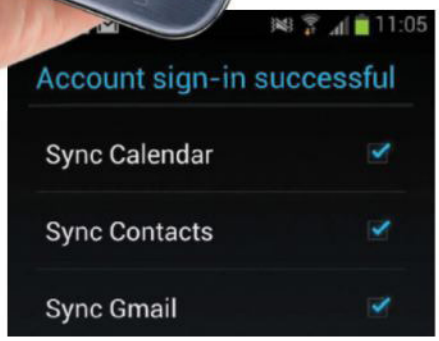
### 1: Add an account

Go to Settings and select Accounts and Sync, then choose Add account and select Google from the full range of accounts that are on offer on the following screen. Opt to add an existing account or create a new one on the next screen.



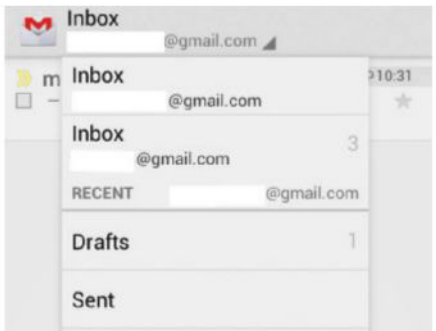

### 2: Add details

If you opt to create a new account, you will be taken through all the usual steps, including entering the Captcha verification code that proves you are a real person and not a 'bot' computer program. Running through the steps is fast and easy.



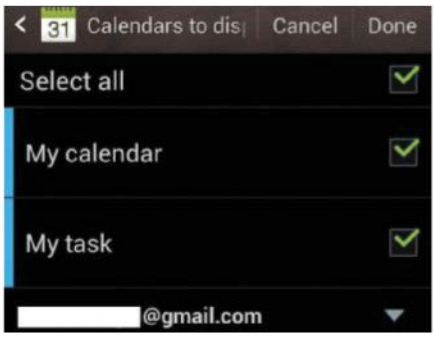

### 3: Set sync preferences

When you have set up a new account or entered information for an existing one, you can decide which features you want to synchronise with it – make sure that you tick all the relevant options that you need, such as calendar, contacts, Gmail, photos and books.




### 4: Check your email

It is easy to check email from multiple accounts. Choose the Gmail app, then switch between your different inboxes by tapping the small triangle next to your Gmail address at the top and choosing an alternate Gmail address. You will then be shown its inbox.




### 5: Configure the calendar

Once you have multiple Gmail accounts set up on your device, you can view information from them all – for example, in the Calendar app. Just choose what you want to see from each different account in the settings menu of the app.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

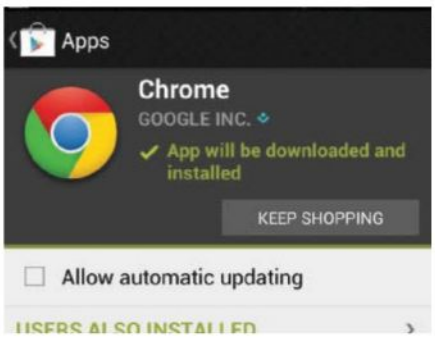
# Go incognito in Chrome

## Make use of Google Chrome's incognito mode to hide your browsing history

**Google Chrome is a superb web browser, and there's a version for Android.** Note that only runs on Android 4.0 and higher, however, so check which version you have by going to Settings and pressing About phone/tablet.

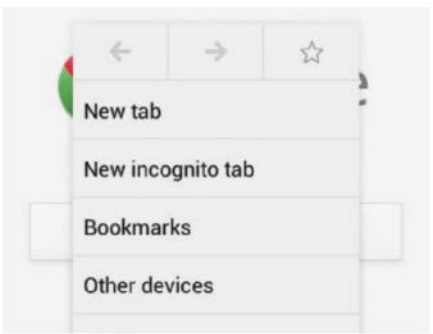
With Chrome, you can sync browsing history across devices, which many people find useful. But you can also opt for 'incognito mode' where your browsing history is not saved and cookies aren't retained after you close windows.

This can be handy if you are borrowing someone else's handset or simply if you want to do a bit of browsing without a record of your activities being recorded. Note, though, that if you are signed into Google, it will still record your web history.



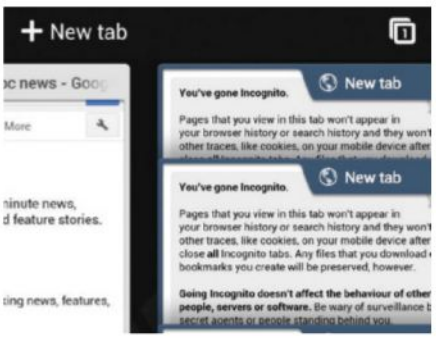

### 1: Get Chrome

Some Android 4.0 and higher devices come with the Google Chrome browser pre-installed. If yours does not, it is easy to download it from the Play Store – just search for Chrome and look for the multicoloured circular logo.




### 2: Open incognito tab

You can browse by using the search bar, but if you want an incognito tab then hit the menu icon (top-right corner) and choose New incognito tab from the menu that pops up. That'll start your incognito session for the tab you have opened.

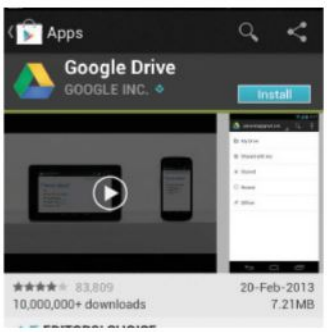



### 3: Multiple incognito tabs

You can open more browsing tabs, and make them incognito, in the same way, and you can mix standard and incognito tabs in any browsing session. To get to a normal tab, hit the tabs icon and then sweep left to see other tabs.

# Sync with Google Drive

## Use Google Drive to sync files across a number of different devices

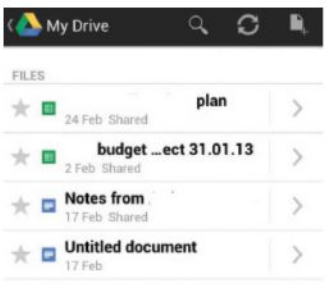



### 1: Get Google Drive

Some devices come with Google Drive pre-installed on them. If yours doesn't, search for Google Drive in the Play Store and install it onto your device. This will be a quick and easy process.

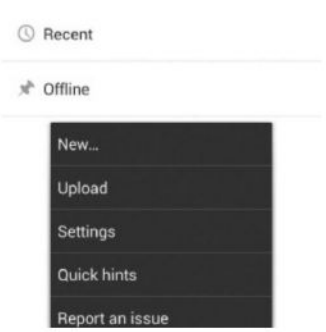
### 2: Log In

When it is installed, Google Drive will automatically recognise your Gmail address and log in. You can switch between different Gmail accounts by hitting the triangle next to the logged-in account.




### 3: Search folders

Documents that have already been shared with you will be available via Shared with me. Tap My Drive to see anything you've put in your Drive. You can make documents available offline.




### 4: Create new

Hit the menu icon, then New and choose the type of document. You'll move over to Google Docs, ready to start working on your new creation. It'll automatically be saved in your Google Drive.

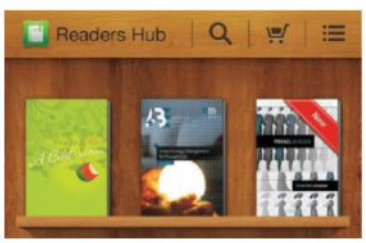
# Samsung Hub

## Access your multimedia content with purpose-built apps

**Samsung Hubs is a collection of built in applications on your Samsung Galaxy that are designed to pull together music, games, video and learning into easily accessible locations.** There are five hubs in total, namely: Music Hub, Readers Hub, Video Hub, Game Hub and Learning Hub. You'll find all five of these in your app draw and, if you use them a lot, it's a good idea to bring them together on their own home screen. While each app is designed to handle a different sort of media, such as music, they all have one thing in common and that is that they link to stores where you can buy new content and download it onto your device. All the apps work with your Samsung Account so you'll need to log in first to start using them. When you make a purchase, depending on the app, you can pay by charging the item to your phone bill, use a voucher or connect a credit card to your account. Prices across the stores are very competitive and match what you would expect to pay using another service. For example, in Readers Hub the prices are on par with what you would expect to pay using Kindle while Music Hub prices are similar to Spotify or iTunes.

Readers Hub is a neatly presented app to buy and read books, newspapers and magazines and comes with all the tools you'd expect from a digital reader such as the ability to add bookmarks and make notes. The Learning Hub follows a similar layout but is built to bring together your courses and learning content and track your progress as you pick up new skills. If you're looking for entertainment over academia you'll find the music, video and game hubs a perfect fit. While the Music Hub includes a store to purchase individual tracks and albums it also comes with a subscription option where you pay a monthly fee to stream music from your device. Video Hub doesn't have a subscription option but it does have a lot of great content on offer to download and watch wherever you are. Game Hub is by far the simplest of the lot with the options to browse and download recommended games. By pulling in all gaming content you already have it offers a neat place to go for a bit of fun.

## Readers Hub | Buy and read books on your phone




### 1: Open the app

Tap the Readers Hub icon in your app draw to launch. If this is your first time using the app sign in with your Samsung account details. You will open onto a book shelf interface that shows your current book selection.

### 2: Browse the store

Touch the shopping trolley icon to open the book store. Here you can browse hundreds of titles by category or see the bestseller list. To buy a book tap the title to see a detailed view, then tap the Buy button.

### 3: Learn reading gestures

Open a book to start reading. Turn the page by swiping your finger across the screen. Long press at the top of the screen to add bookmarks and notes. To create a shortcut to a book long press in the library view.

### Can I read my books on other devices?

Yes you can. If you're using another device such as a Samsung Galaxy tablet you can view all your purchases by signing into your Samsung account on your other device.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Learn something new

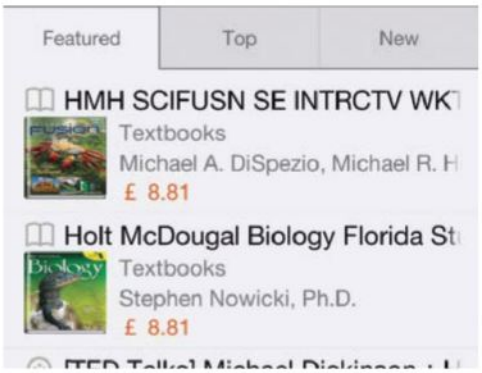
## Start a course with Learning Hub

**It's never too late to pick up a new skill and with Learning Hub it's easy to start that course you've been putting off for years.** This learning app is excellent for school children and students, but it is also great for those that have left the classroom and still want to learn a thing or two. The hub interface is a bookshelf that stores the courses that you download or buy and lets you track your progress by making notes and creating bookmarks as you go.

## Learn a language | Find and purchase a Spanish course

### 1: Open the hub

Launch the Learning Hub application from your app tray. Much like the Readers Hub the interface is displayed as a library shelf that lists courses you've bought. The drop down menu above the bookshelf breaks your courses down into those in progress, on hold or expired.




### 2: Visit the store

Tap the shopping trolley icon in the top right hand corner of the home screen. This is the learning store where you can buy courses, text books and learning material. The featured section will show current top picks. You can also view new additions or search by category.

### 3: Search for Spanish

Locate the search icon and tap once. Use the keyboard to type Spanish. This will bring up all courses containing that phrase. Swipe down to scroll through the different options from phrase books and conversation practice to full language courses. The price of each option is listed in orange.

### 4: Purchase and begin

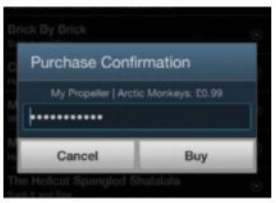
Tap the option you want, such as Learn Spanish Conversation and Phrases. View the Overview and Contents tab to get an idea of what's included in the course. You can also read reviews from other users in the Reviews tab. Tap Buy to purchase the course and start learning.

# Buy a track or full album

## Purchase music to add to your collection

Search for the song or album you want to buy by tapping the search option from the app's home screen and typing in the track or band name. Tap OK and select from results.

Tap the small arrow icon next to the song or album name to bring up options. At the bottom of the list you'll see the listed price. Tap Buy and you will start the purchasing process.




Enter your Samsung password to charge the cost to your account. You'll see this come up on your phone bill. You can also view your purchases under the Account tab of Music Hub.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Watch a TV Show

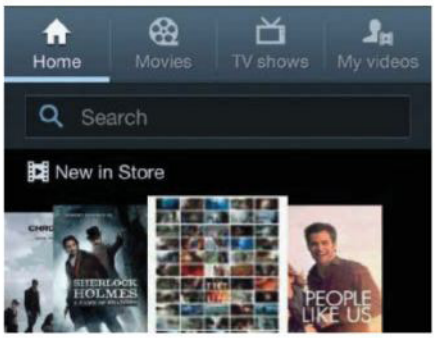
## Download and watch content on your device

**Watch films and your favourite TV shows on the move through Samsung's Video Hub.** Much like iTunes, the application offers video content for you buy. On opening the app you'll see recommendations and new films available for you to purchase. All your purchased video content is collected in the My videos tab. Head here and tap to watch them in the video player. Because the application is linked to your Samsung Account, the content you buy is linked to the account rather than your device. You have the option of authorizing other devices to access your videos on. To do this enter the Settings menu and then retype your password. You can authorize up to 5 devices which you can switch between. While there is a limit to the number you can authorize, you can swap them out as much as you like. When downloading content to a device be sure that you're connected to WiFi as video files are data heavy and it could eat into your mobile data allowance if you don't keep an eye on it, resulting in a shock when your bill comes.

## Search Video Hub | Find your favourite television programs

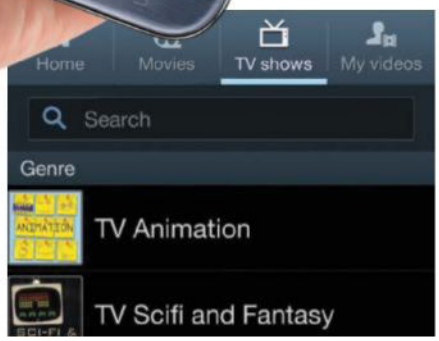
### 1: Open Video Hub

To get started tap the Video Hub icon. If you haven't already signed in with your Samsung account type in your login details. Like the other Samsung Hub applications everything you do within the app is linked to your account rather than your device itself.




### 2: Browse Store

The home screen of Video Hubs shows a list of items that are new in store. Swipe left or right to go through the list and tap an item to view more details. Scroll down on the screen to see films that are new releases, bestsellers or special categories, such as Disney.




### 3: Scroll TV Shows

Locate the TV Show tab at the top of the screen. TV shows are listed by genre ranging from Animation to Comedy and Kids. Tap a option, such as Comedy to view. If you know what you want to watch tap the search bar and type in the name of the series.

### 4: Select an episode

Once you've found the show you want to watch tap once on a Season of the show and then scroll to view info about individual episodes. Some series are available to buy per season and others per episode. Tap an episode to view the individual price to buy it.

### 5: Watch your show

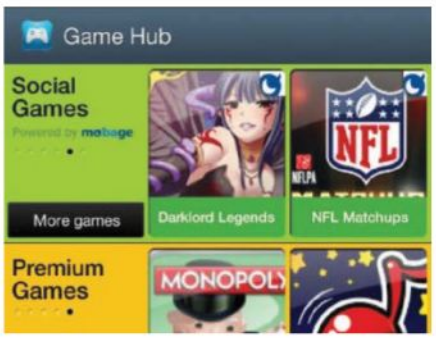
Tap the Buy button to make your purchase. Choose a method of payment such as by voucher or credit card. Once you click to purchase you can watch your show straight away. Navigate to the My Videos tab to see the videos you have downloaded.

**Time needed:** 2 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Play games on your Galaxy

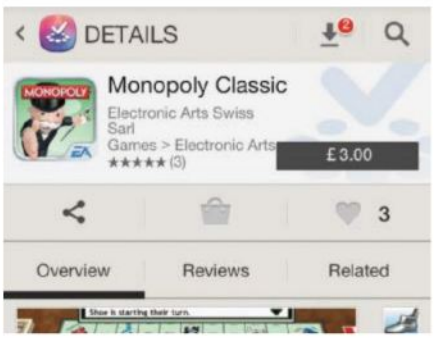
## See all of your downloaded games in one place and get playing more easily

**Games Hub is the place to go to see all the games you have installed on your device and get some inspiration for new ones you might like to play by seeing what else is popular.** When you install a game on your device, it will appear in your app tray. But, because that can be quite a crowded space developers created the Hub, so if you feel like having a quiet game of scrabble or an adrenaline filled race with Need for Speed you know exactly where to find them. The app also recommends games and links up with the Saumsung App store where you can purchase and download games. If you already have a game and you want simply find it under you installed games, the process is simple – tap and get started.




### 1: View home screen

Open Games Hub to view game suggestions split into Social Games and Premium Games. Swipe to scroll through the options or tap the More Games option to view specific games selections such as Gameloft or Sega. You will be taken to lists of the Samsung App Store.




### 2: Select a game

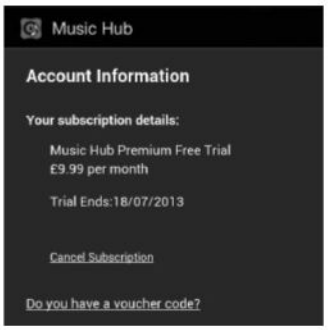
To purchase a game tap it once from the recommendation screen. A detail view of the game will open in the Samsung app store. Tap the Buy option to download it to your device. Once downloaded you can see the game in the Installed section of Game Hub.

### 3: Tap to play

Scroll through your list of installed games at the bottom on the home screen. To play a game tap once to launch. Many games require a sign-up to start playing and give you the option to link to an account such as Facebook by entering some details.

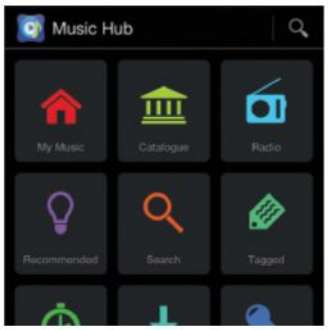
# Stream music on your Samsung

## Listen to tracks with Music Hub



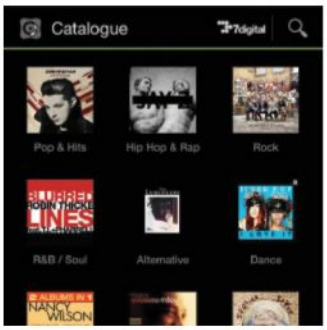

### 1: Launch Hub

Sign in using your Samsung Account. If this is your first time using the app you will be given a 7 day free trial. Once that runs out you'll need to subscribe for £9.99 a month.



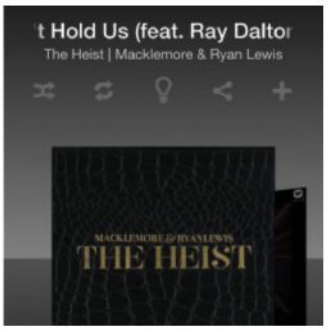

### 2: The home screen

From the home screen you can play radio, search for tracks or see recommendations based on your music. In the My Music tab you'll find tracks you have on your device and can play them.




### 3: The catalogue

Tap the catalogue item to open the tab. Here you'll see music listed by genre such as Rock and Dance. Tap a category to see a list of songs and albums available. You'll also see available radio stations.




### 4: Tap to play

Decide on a track or album to play and tap once. A small player will show up at the bottom of the screen. Tap to view track details. You can also control the player in your notifications pull down.

# Samsung S Apps

## Stay organised with a selection of built-in applications

**Samsung's four built in S apps are designed to make your day to day life easier by giving you tools to keep you organised and on top of your tasks.** The S apps are S Note, S Planner, S Suggest and S Voice. While they form part of a wider collection of apps that come with your device, including options such as Music Player and the various Hubs which control media content, they're grouped together because they each perform specific tasks.

S Note is the most in-depth of the four apps and it's built to translate your thoughts into visually engaging notes. The app groups notes into folders such as Business, Lifestyle and Idea Sketches. Whether you need to jot down a quick thought or you want to design a pretty recipe page, this is the place to go. Notable functions include the ability to import pictures and draw shapes which means mind maps, charts and graphs are easy to add and work with. You can even attach voice notes to a page if you don't have the time to scribble something down.

Like any good organiser, S Planner includes the usual functions such as adding tasks and events. But, it also pulls in all calendars from accounts that are connected to your device such as your Gmail and Facebook birthdays which means you can see everything that's happening in your life in one convenient place. We take a look at how you can add events and create task lists with S Planner to keep your life running smoothly.

If you want to go hands free you can use the intuitive S Voice to make notes and enter events for you by simply talking into your device. With a few simple comments you can have your device working for you without touching a button.

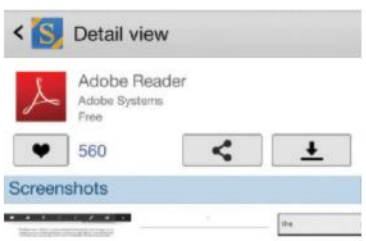
The last app of the foursome is S Suggest which is the place to turn if you need new app inspiration. Scroll through to see what's recommended for you and download or buy the application that tickles your fancy directly through the app.

> "S Note is the most in-depth of the four S apps"

## View productivity app suggestions | Browse recommended apps with S-Suggest

### 1: Launch home screen

Tap the S Suggest icon to open the home screen. Here you'll be presented with recommendations based on your preferences and device, for example, if you have an S Pen you'll see the most useful apps for that.




### 2: See user suggestions

Tap the Categories tab and scroll down to Productivity. Here you'll get recommendations for tools that will improve your workflow. Tap an option, such as Adobe Reader and view likes and comments left by other users.

### 3: Download from Play

If an app sounds good and you want to add to your device simply tap the download button in the Detail View screen. You'll be taken to the Play Store where you can download or purchase an app with one quick tap.

### Where do the suggestions come from?

S Suggests generates recommendations from the type of apps you already have installed as well as from what others are using. You'll always see the most popular and highly rated apps first.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Plan your schedule

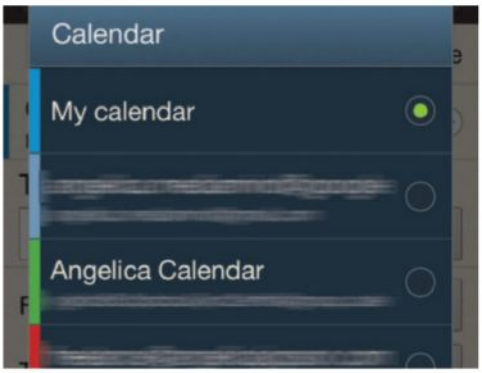
## Add important events to S Planner

**S Planner is a simple but effective way to plan your time and manage a busy schedule.** The calendar app brings together calendars from all the accounts you have connected to your device so everything's in place. You'll find swipe functions particularly useful as you can scroll in all directions to navigate days and months. The Go To function is also good to know. Tap the Menu button on your device and then choose Go To. Put in the date you want to view and save yourself the scrolling.

## Add an event | Enter and save event details and helpful notes

### 1: Tap to add

Open the S Planner app and switch to view by month by tapping the arrow in the upper right hand corner and selecting the Month tab, you can change this view at any time. Highlight the day of the event by tapping once and then tap the plus icon to add new event details.




### 2: Choose correct calendar

Because all your connected calendars show up in S Planner you have the option to choose which one to add your event to. Tap the arrow next to calendar and choose which one to add it to. Adding an event to a Gmail calendar, for example, will show up online too.

### 3: Add details

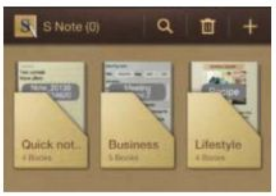
Tap to enter the title of the event and additional important details such the start and finish time as well as the location of the event. As you scroll down the Add Event page you'll see options to add participants, notes and even images such as a map or invitation.

### 4: Save and View

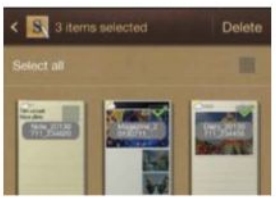
Save the event and close the detail view window. Your note will appear under the specified day. To view it tap the date under the Month View and you'll see it under the Day View with the time of the event blocked out. To change details tap the event again.

# Delete a note in S Note

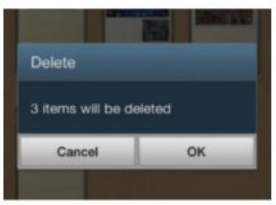
## Clean out old folders of notes you don't need




Open up S Note to the Folders screen and then tap the folder you want you delete content from. If you want to delete an entire folder, simply tap the trash can icon.




When you're in the folder tap the trash can item at the top of the screen. Each item will have a small check box next to it. Tap to select or check the Select all option at the top of the screen.




Tap the Delete button and then tap OK to confirm. The confirmation screen will tell you how many files you are deleting to confirm that you're getting rid of the correct ones.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Command your voice assistant

## Use S Voice to carry out tasks

**S Voice is Samsung's built in voice assistant, ready and at your service.** The simple interface can be deceptive but underneath it lies an incredibly intuitive piece of software that allows you to perform tasks just by speaking into your phone. While you can ask S Voice general questions and return quite accurate answers, the app really shines in performing tasks that you'd usually have to type for, such as sending a message. By default the app is set to talk back to you confirming your commands. To turn off this function head into the Settings menu which can be accessed by tapping the Menu button on your device. When not in use the app puts itself to sleep. To wake the app up simply say 'Hi Galaxy'. If you want to customise the word or phrase your device responds to you'll also find this under the Settings menu. You can choose to keep S Voice easily accessibly by setting it to respond to your command at any time while you're using your device. While this is a useful function to have it can also drain your battery easily.

## Send a text | Use your voice to type a message

### 1: Give first instruction

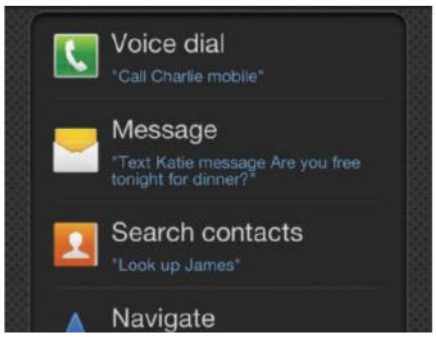
Launch S Voice by tapping the icon in your app draw. Once opened give your first command by speaking directly into your device. Speak the command 'Send a message'. The phone will confirm your instruction and then will respond by asking who to send it to.

### 2: Name your contact

Say the name of the desired contact loud and clear into your device. If you have more than one contact under that name then you'll be given the option to pick one. Do this by tapping one of the options that the device gives you.

### 3: Speak your message

Read out your message to your device. The message will be read back to you and you will be able to check the text too. If you're happy with the recipient and the text then tap the send button or say 'send'. You'll receive confirmation that the message is sent.




### 4: Learn the commands

For help with commands while you're using S Voice, tap the small question mark icon to the right of the microphone icon. Here you'll see all the commands you can use to use S Voice to perform functions from searching for contacts to adding an event to your schedule.

### 5: Check your settings

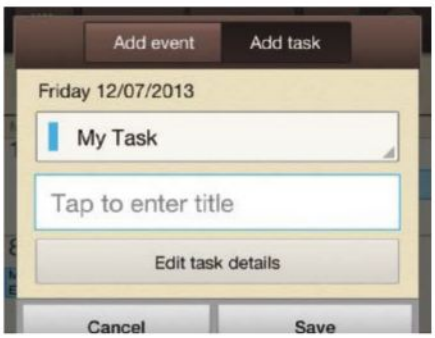
Tap the menu button on your device to view the S Voice settings options. Here you can change the language of the application as well as specify settings such as hiding potentially offensive words with asterisks when used in texts and memos.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Easy

# Create a task list

## Use the S Planner app to ensure you stay on top of tasks by compiling a to-do list

**A well managed task list is the mark of a well organised person and with S Planner you can whip yours into perfect shape.** Tasks and events are the two basic entries you can make into the planner. In the Month View you will see events marked in the colour that corresponds to the calendar that they come from so you can easily identify what they're about. The tasks, on the other hand, are shown with a small tick box next to them. Tasks that are complete are shown with a small green tick next to them and a strike through the title of the task. You can either view the tasks you have to complete by entering the Task Tab as shown in the tutorial below or in a pop up menu by tapping the day that you want to view.




### 1: Add new task

Long press on a date in S Planner to open the Add New Task/Event popup. This is a quick way to add an event or a task. Tap the Add task option and check that it's being entered under My Task which is the S Planner's built in Task List.

### 2: Enter task details

Use the keyboard to enter the name of your task. If you want to add extra details such as notes, images and time then tap the Edit task details option. Because tasks are often brief, the planner gives you the option to skip details and save the task.

### 3: View daily tasks

Tap the arrow in the upper right hand corner to navigate to the task tab. Here you'll see all the tasks you have to complete on a particular day. Tap a task to view or edit details. If you've completed a task tap the box next to it to tick it off your list.

# Draw a new note

## Think out loud with creative sketch options

### 1: Launch S Note

The app comes with built in examples of folders and documents to give you some inspiration for what you can create yourself using the tools that are on offer.

### 2: Add new

Tap the plus icon in the upper right hand screen. Choose a template. They range from a quick scribble note to an idea note where you can draw and sketch your thoughts.

### 3: Use the tools

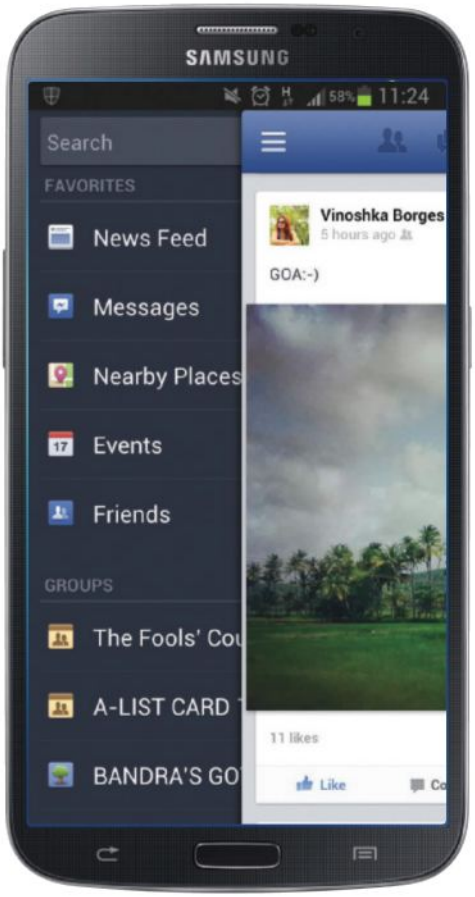
Use the tools at the top of the screen to switch between writing with the S Pen and sketching out your ideas. You can import pictures by tapping the add multimedia icon.

### 4: Add clipart

Add clipart pictures to your note by tapping the multimedia icon again and this time choosing clipart. Search through a wide range of images to make your note really stand out.

# Social networking

## Make the most of popular social networks like Twitter, Facebook and Google+




**Social networking remains a popular activity and it's easy to see why.** It lets you keep in touch with people and find out what friends and family are up to. It's also great for sharing good news.

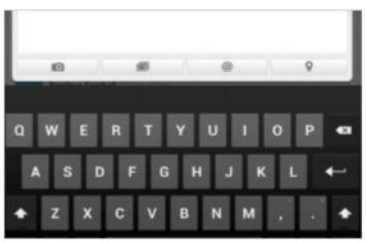
The apps we look at here are innovative, fun and popular – important if a social network is to be useful. The most popular social networks are Facebook and Twitter, with Google+ making solid in-roads and impressing due to its ability to allocate people into circles rather than lump them all into one big pot. In this masterclass, we are going to be looking at how to make the most out of these networks by concentrating on areas that you may not use all that often and then explaining why they may be worth a go.

For example, we are going to look at how you can upload images to Twitter rather than simply tap away and we are also going to see just how photos on Facebook can be location-tagged, which is great for seeing exactly where you have been. Check-in is another feature we look at with Facebook – the ability to tell others your precise location at any given time. Add to that video hangouts in Google+ and the ability to share images and contacts with Instagram, and we will be taking your social networking to another level.

Instagram, for example, allows you to create stunning photos using a built-in editing package that then allows you to share your images with others. By putting the eye-catching software on your Android phone, you will soon become addicted as you try to impress other people with your photo-capturing skills. As you would expect, you can also comment and see what others think about each image.

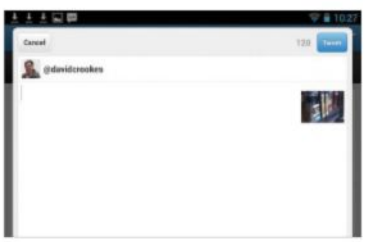
But one of the most interesting aspects of our masterclass is Slices, which takes all the wonders of Twitter and organises it for greater efficiency. It is an example of how social networking is adapting and changing to better suit the needs of today's users. By making full use of what is available, you'll be able to get so much more out of your online social life, while enhancing the real one too.

## Upload pictures to Twitter | Tweet your images to share them with the world



### Attach an image

Start a tweet by tapping the blue icon at the top right of the screen. In the tweet box, you will see four icons. The first allows you to take a photo using your device's camera and the second uploads an image from your Gallery.



### File types

You can only upload JPEG, GIF and PNG picture files and they cannot be any larger than 3MB. The image will be scaled so that it will fit into the media display. The photos are hosted by **pic.twitter.com**.

### Delete an image

If you don't want to include an image in your tweet before you send it, tap on the image you have just attached and you'll be asked if you want to remove it. If your image tweet has been sent, simply delete the tweet.

### Can I protect my social networks?

By having good security on your Android device and logging out of an app when you have finished, you can lessen security concerns. If you use Android 4.3, you can set up different user profiles.

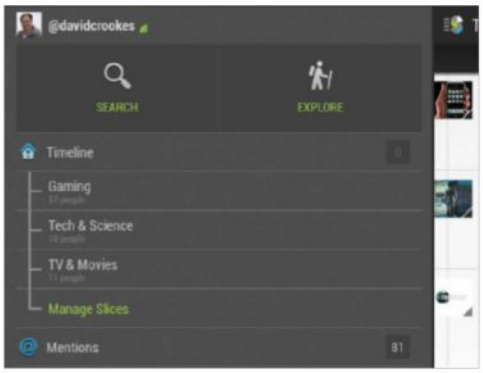
**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Organise and search in Twitter

## We look at how you can use Slices for better organisation

**Slices is a superb app which takes all that is good about the millions of tweets on Twitter and lets you make sense of them all by putting them into categories (or slices).** For example, you may have lots of people who discuss politics. You can create a politics slice and place them in there. You can also bookmark Twitter accounts for later reference and you can even explore the entire social network and view live events. There is no better way of finding fresh content and organising it.

## Understand Slices | The first steps to organised networking

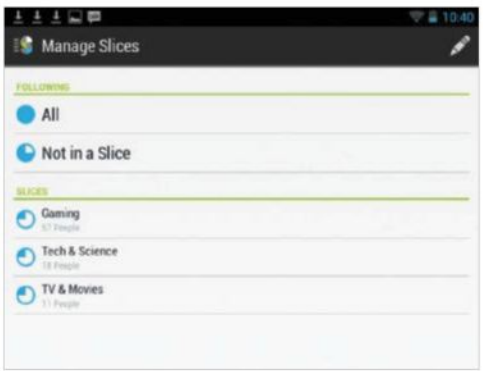



### 1: Download the Slices app

First of all, you need to download the Slices app from Google Play and launch it. It will prompt you to sign in to Twitter. The Slices interface has two main buttons: Search and Explore. It also has a Timeline and your messages, as well as any mentions you have.

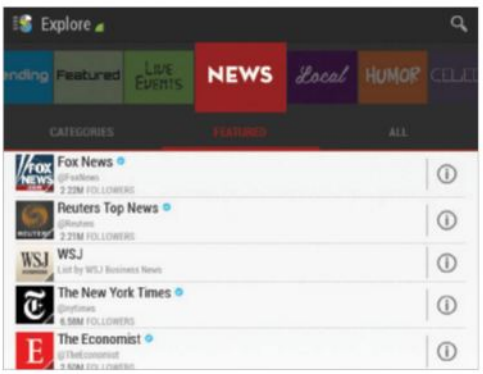
### 2: Search with Slices

Tap on the Search icon in Slices and you will be taken to a blank page with a search box. Type a query into the latter and you will be presented with results arranged into three categories: People (anyone with that word in their name or profile), Lists and Tweets.




### 3: Browse by category

The strength of Slices is category browsing. To add your own category, tap Manage Slices and select New Slice. Type the name of the Slice and then choose people who you want to place within that category. Each Slice lists the number of people associated with it.



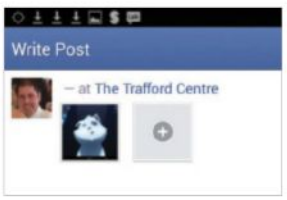

### 4: Explore using Slices

The Explore feature of Slices is a directory of the whole of Twitter. Tap it and you can see 21 browsable categories which help you to find new content and people to follow. Live Events lets you see the current trends and keep up with the very latest news.

# Add location to Facebook images

## Add a location to indicate where an image was taken

Open the Facebook app on your device and select Photo. This will take you to your Photo Gallery. Select the image that you wish to use and upload to Facebook by tapping on it.




On the next screen, your image will show in full. Tap the status update icon. Your image will appear in your status. Tap the location icon to bring up a map and select a location. Then Post.

When your post appears in your timeline, it will show the location where the picture was taken. This information is carried beneath your name, next to the time when the image was captured.

Time needed: 5 minutes Difficulty: Beginner

# Share images and contacts with Instagram

## Get photographing with the app that can transform any of your images for the better

**As well as taking photos using your phone's camera and editing them on the fly, Instagram lets you share them using existing social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr.** Instagram is an extremely popular social network in its own right, too, placing a great emphasis on images. Photos really shine, as Instagram allows you to add special effects and make them look like a Polaroid image. The filters give photos a very retro, vintage feel.

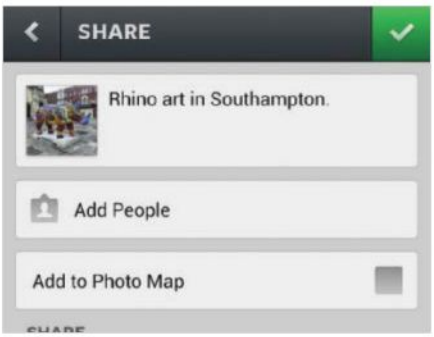
The app, which is free to download from Google Play, used to be constricted to the iOS devices – but when it was ported to Android, it was given a fresh lease of life. All of the unique brand of Instagram magic is in the app, though, including the 4:3 aspect ratio of taking photos. You can see just how versatile and fun Instagram is by looking through the thousands of snaps taken by others.

In this tutorial we look at just how flexible the program is in letting you share your images and contacts, bringing a fun dynamic to any photographs that you take.

## Instagram | Enhance and share your photos

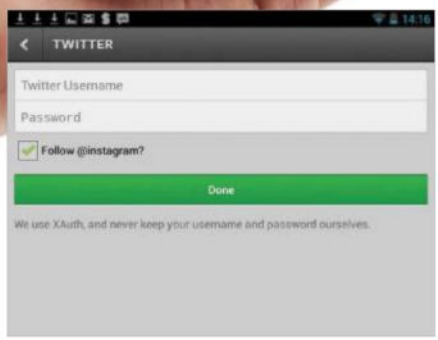
### 1: Take a photo

Download the Instagram app via Google Play and open it. Take a photo or video by pressing the camera icon. Use the built-in tools to enhance your image/video in a variety of ways, adding tints and a retro look. Then tap the forward button at the top right.




### 2: Share photo

You'll be prompted to share your photograph. You can enter a caption and also add the image to your photo map with a single tap. But you are also able to share photos and you can do this with Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Flickr and Foursquare.

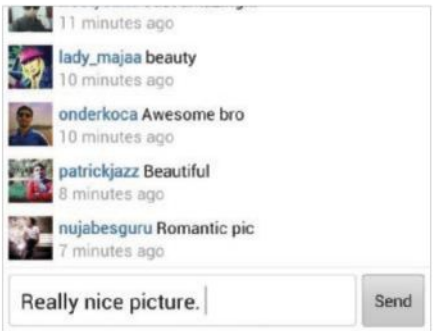



### 3: Set up network

Tap on a social network to set it up within Instagram: enter your username and password for the given account and then tap Done. Instagram says it keeps your details to itself and does not pass it on. There is an option, if you wish, to follow Instagram on Twitter.

### 4: View followers

You can see who is following you and who you're following by going to your profile. All of those following you will see your image if they wish. The same goes for those you follow. This is Instagram's very own internal social network that is very much based around the images.




### 5: Add comments

You can add comments on other people's images and they can add them on yours. It is possible to read what others have written, too. Using Instagram not only lets you manipulate your images in fun and wacky ways, it gets your pictures out to a receptive audience.

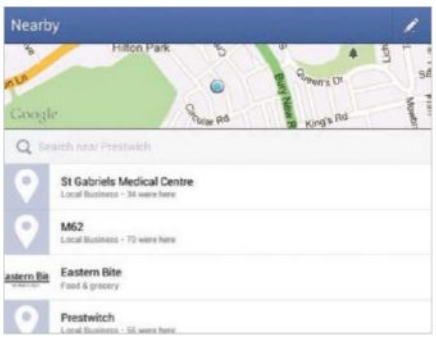
**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Check in on Facebook

## Tell other people the precise location of where you are and what you are doing

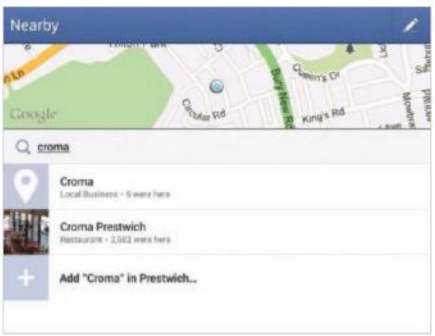
**One of the features of Facebook is letting others know where you have been and where you currently are.** Check-in helps with the latter, enabling you to share your location so that others can arrange to meet up or so that you can get tips from them about the place you are at.

As well as being able to give a general indication of where you are, you can also narrow it down to a specific spot such as an attraction or a restaurant. Facebook scours the proximity to look for these places in order to make it easier for you to check-in there. It is worth bearing in mind the privacy aspect of divulging where you are, however. Although you will be broadcasting your location to friends, you never know who is watching.




### 1: Tap Check-in

Open the Facebook app on your device and tap the Check-in tab, which is located on the same line as Status and Photo on your own profile page. This will bring up a map and display nearby places – it uses your device's GPS to pinpoint your location.




### 2: Select a location

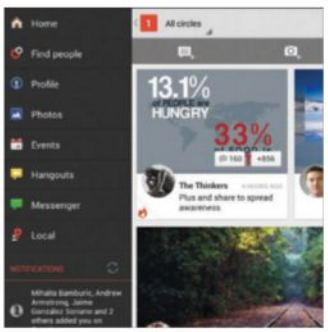
If the place where you are at is displayed, then simply tap on it. Alternatively, you can perform a search in order to narrow down your location. It also displays how many other Facebook users have previously checked in at that spot.

### 3: Add to post

You can make a comment about your location and you can also add people who are in the same spot with you. If you do not wish to continue, simply press the Back button and the app will ask if you want to cancel the check-in.

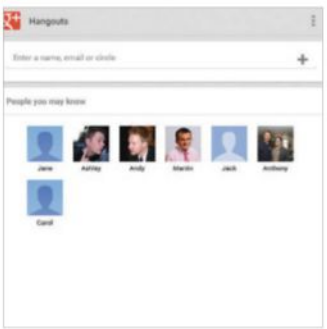
# Use video hangouts on Google+

## Chat face-to-face with up to ten different people by using the Hangout feature in Google+



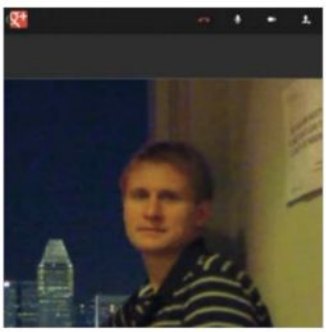

### 1: Access Hangouts

Selecting the Google+ icon at the top-left. This will bring up a left-hand menu. Tap Hangouts. You will be taken to the main Hangout screen, from where you are able to start a video call.



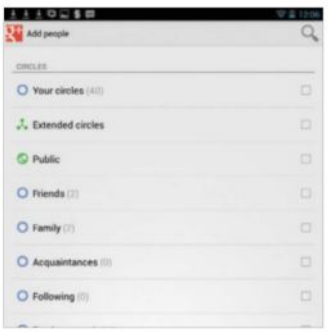

### 2: Start Hangout

Google+ shows people you may know. You are also able to type in the email address of someone you wish to have a video call with. Tap Start Hangout when you are ready.



### 3: Look your best

The front-facing camera will start a video of your face and the app contact the people you wish to call. You can see icons at the top; the red phone allows you to hang up and end the chat.

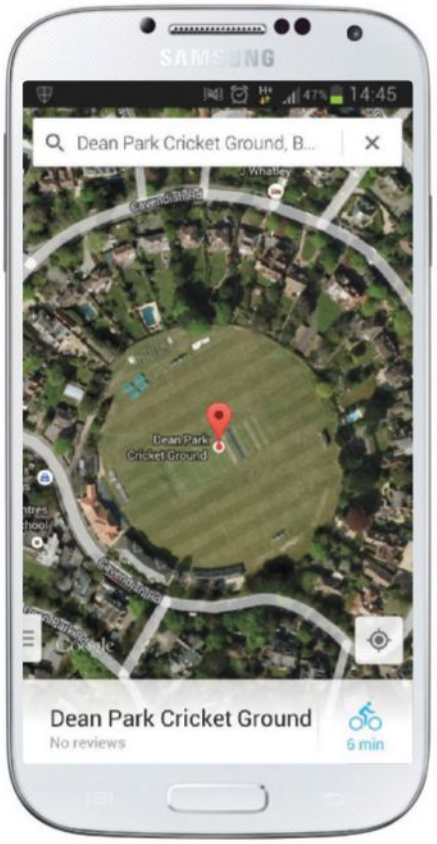



### 4: Add more people

If you tap the people icon at the top right of the screen, the app will look for more people for you to chat to and you can add them mid-chat. You can have up to ten at any one time.

# Travel and navigation

## Use the location settings on your Samsung Galaxy to get the most of the right here, right now




**In the olden days phones just let you make and take calls, send emails and manage texts.** You could run a few apps, but basically phones were pretty static. Then some bright sparks realised that your handset could know where you are, either quite precisely via GPS or less so via triangulating your position in relation to cell masts.

This was a revelation, and it really was the start of opening up smartphones to all kinds of new uses. GPS integration started with external Bluetooth GPS devices, but it was when GPS started to be integrated into handsets that it really started to take off in terms of the variety and range of uses it could provide.

Among them came a steady barrage of location-aware services. Mapping is the most obvious, and Google Maps has taken huge advantage. It has become quite simply a must-have application for many of us. No longer do people carry a printed street map – they simply turn to Google Maps when they need to find their way around a new area, for example.

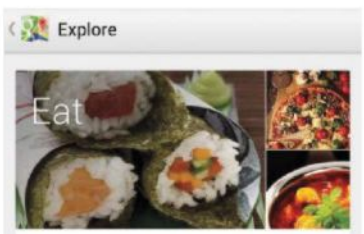
Google Maps can get you from A to B on foot really easily, but that's not its only trick. It can also show you interesting and useful places that are near you, find you somewhere to eat or something interesting to do to pass a stray few hours. It can give you local traffic information, point out public transport links and more.

And location-based services are a lot richer even than that, and they don't need maps to be extremely useful. You can find out where the nearest place is to buy that item you really want, locate your friends, find somewhere to eat or watch a movie, and much more. And of course, maps can help you get to these places.

These services, and others like them, help you make the most of both familiar and new cities and towns. They can be handy whether you are a fan of finding the unexpected or you just need something mundane such as the nearest railway station.

And when you don't actually need info relating to where you are right now, location-based services can still have something useful to offer. Perhaps none of these is more rewarding than sitting back and taking a tour of the globe via Google Earth, which really does put the whole world in your hands.

## Explore restaurants with Google Maps | Discover great local places to eat

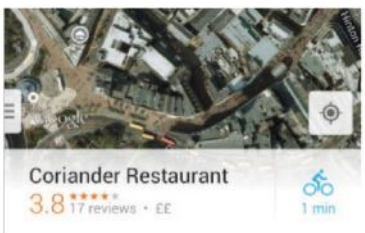



### 1: Explore

The erstwhile Google Local is now Explore with a comprehensive list of choices. Click on the search bar in Maps and below that, you'll see a colourful Explore tab. Click it to reveal a variety of options to choose from.

### 2: Restaurants

Since we're looking for restaurants, our is the first option. Based on your location, it collates data of the best restaurants around you. Tap View all under Restaurants for a more comprehensive list of choices.




### 3: What will it be?

Once you've made your choice, simply tap it to see it on a map, based on your location. Clicking on the tab below gives you more details, including calling, saving and sharing options, along with user reviews.

### Should I use GPS?

GPS will give you the most accurate positioning of any system that's available to your device, but at a cost. GPS can be quite battery depleting, and you might not want to use it all the time. Used sparingly, GPS is brilliant, though.

**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

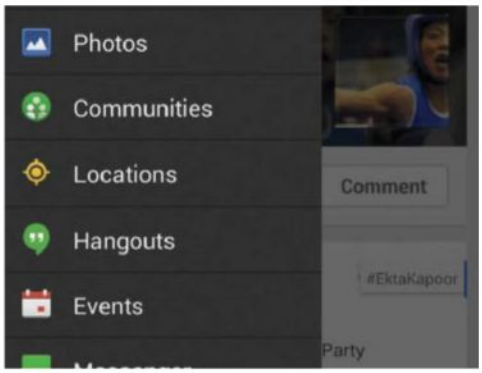
# Use Locations to find friends

## Google+ Locations is the easiest way to find your friends

**Google Locations is a very easy way to find out precisely where your friends are at any time.** Anyone you know who has joined Google+ and has opted to share their location via Locations can be spotted on a map.

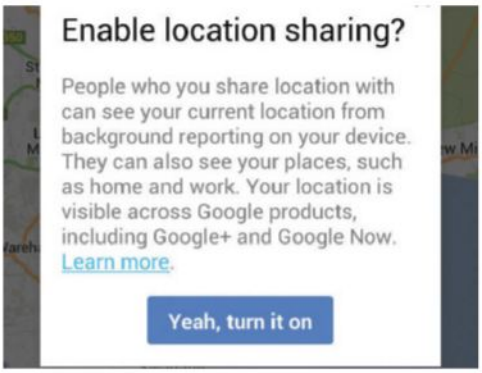
This can be really useful. Imagine being at a loose end and finding one of your chums is nearby – you could meet for a quick coffee. Or on a very practical note, you could use Locations to keep an eye on your kids. Joining is easy so why not try it out?

## Google Locations | Find your friends on Google+




### 1: Open Google+

While Latitude was previously a part of Google Maps, Google has now made it a part of Locations in Google+. Tap the top-left menu of Google+ to reveal the list of options. You'll get a whole list of updated items here. What you need to select, for the erstwhile Latitude, is Locations.

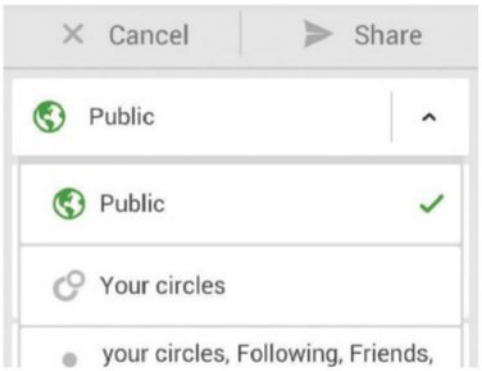



### 2: Enable location sharing

You'll then be taken to a screen which will ask you if you want to enable location sharing. Click on the blue 'Yeah, turn it on' option. This option will enable you to report your location and allow others to see it, so long as your device is compatible with the service.

### 3: Turn on location settings

Click on the Settings cog, which will take you to Google location settings. Make sure Location Reporting and Location History are turned on for the account you wish to use it with. Location Reporting stores and uses your device's location data. Your location history can be deleted later.




### 4: Start inviting friends

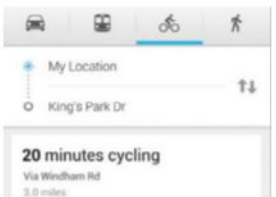
Because Latitude is new to Google+, not many know of this feature and there's no way to directly import your Latitude contacts from Google Maps. Therefore, you'll need to add friends individually to see their location on the map. Simply choose the Google+ circle you want to invite.

# Find your way with Navigation

## Use Google Maps Navigation to get you from A to B

Open Google Maps and type your destination in the search box. As you type, Google will predict your next phrase and give you a list of relevant options to choose from.

Clicking the search option, then brings up the place on your Map. The red dot marks the destination, while the blue one is your current destination. GPS improves tracking but isn't mandatory.

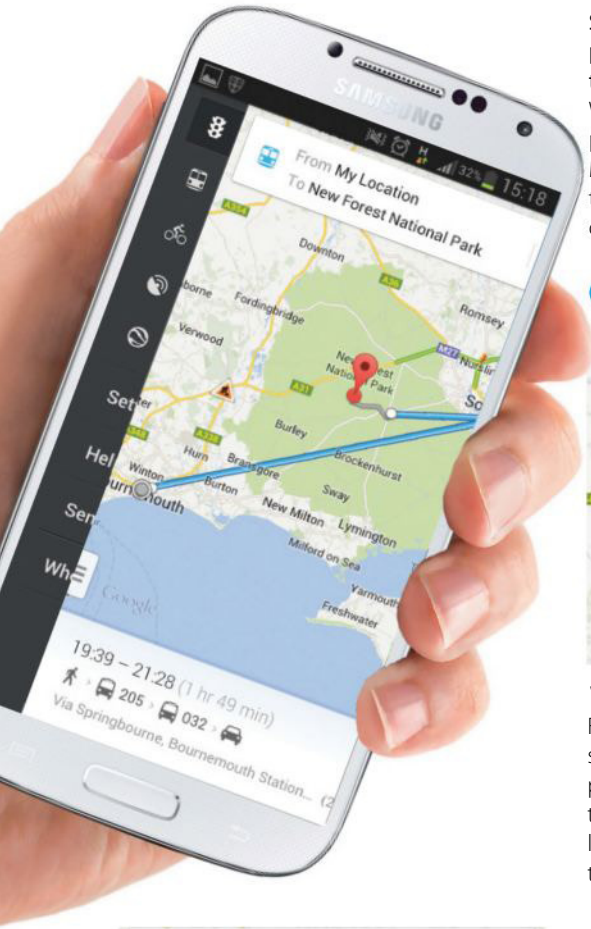



If you're happy, click on the top tab to choose your mode of transport (car, bus, cycle, walk). Travel times and routes will adjust accordingly. Click on a convenient time to track and see your route.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Public transport info in Google Maps

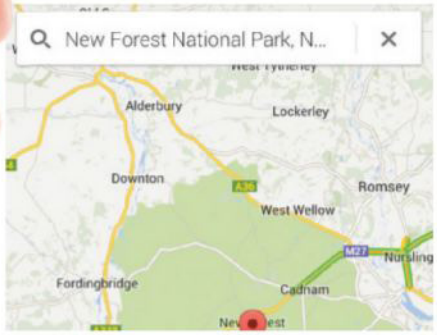
## Find out how to get to places using trains, trams and buses




**Sometimes if you are visiting a new place, particularly when on holiday, you will want to get around it using public transport.** While you can usually get hold of traditional printed maps from local shops, Google Maps can help you out too, showing you the various public transport options in different places.

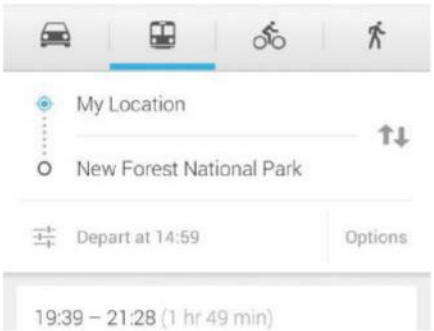
You can use the standard map overlay to show railway and underground or tram station locations. There's also a service called Google Transit which you can use via the web to get directions based around public transport. For that, go to **maps.google.co.uk** in your browser and enter your start and end destinations. Happy travelling.

## Google Maps | Get public transport information



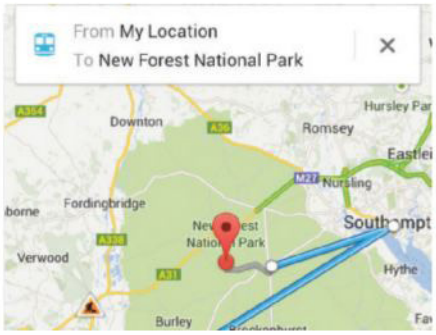

### 1: Select your destination

Find your destination from the Google Maps search tab. As you type you'll have familiar places showing up, based on what you're typing. Use these as they are places whose location is usually pre-set by Google Maps, thus making finding them easier.



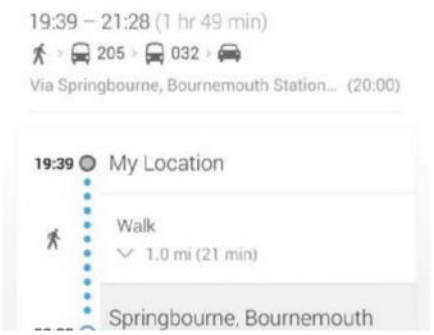

### 2: Public transport

Once you've selected your precise destination, you need to choose your mode of transport. Click the Bus symbol, which indicates public transport. You'll get more than one route, each with its own variety of transport options and times based on these.



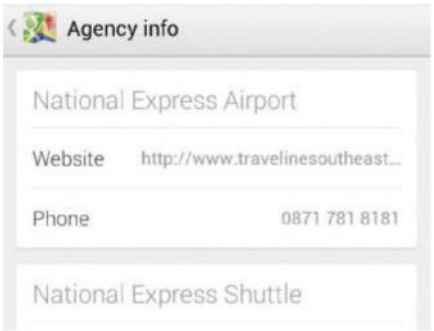

### 3: Get directions

Click on one of these route options to see your route and how you'll get there. It will give you a sense of travel direction and let you alter your route accordingly. Swiping left and right will change this view based on what timings and routes are available at the time.




### 4: View directions

Once you're happy with your route and time, simply tap the tab below. It will give you a timeline of how long your entire commute will take, as well as a breakdown of how long each part of your commute will take. Go back and change the times, as you wish.




### 5: Agency info

The Agency info tab at the bottom of your screen includes useful links to services, along with their website and telephone details. You can call them to confirm timings of the service or to confirm your bookings if you want. With Maps, you'll almost never get lost.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

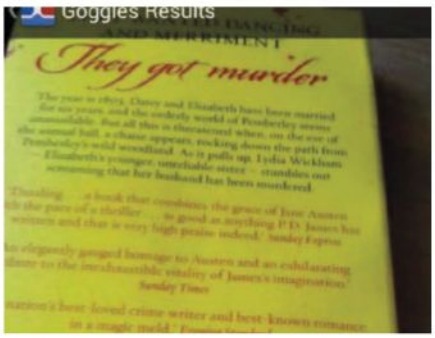
# Scan barcodes with Goggles

## Make the most of your shopping opportunities with Google Goggles

**Google Goggles is an ingenious app that can help you with all kinds of searches using visual information.** It uses your smartphone or tablet's camera to capture an image, which it then uses as the basis for a web search.

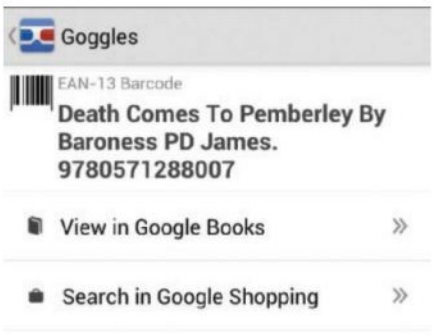
The opportunities are enormous. Want to translate the menu when dining in a foreign restaurant? Snap it with your camera and you'll get the opportunity to translate it from directly within the Google Goggles app. Want to learn more about a place or object? Snap it and scan the Google search results.

Google Goggles also comes into its own where shopping is concerned. It can scan barcodes to find out lots about any item, including prices at various stores.




### 1: Get started

You'll probably have to download Google Goggles from the Play Store and install it. Once it is on board, run the app and find a barcode to scan. This could be on any object you like – and barcodes are to be found everywhere, so it should be an easy task.




### 2: Find out more

At the bottom of the screen where you scanned the barcode, there's an identification window. Tap this and you will then see a whole load of information about the item you just photographed, including Google search results.

### 3: Want to buy?

If you want to purchase the item that interests you, then you can do a search for it. As well as results being returned for large online stores, so you can easily compare prices, you can also look for local places that might stock the desired item.

# Virtual tours with Google Earth

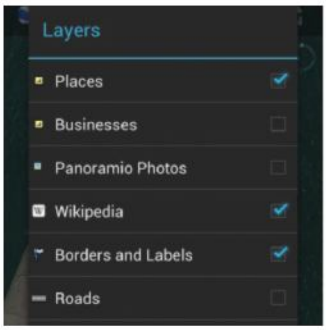
## Where do you want to go today? The world's your oyster with Google Earth

### 1: Search

Google Earth is a sophisticated navigation-based app that lets you fly round the world virtually. To get started, download it from the Play Store, then type in a search location.

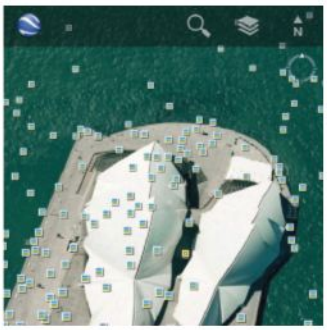
### 2: Take a closer look

The app will fly round the globe to the place you have selected. Drag the small pictures down off the screen and then you can zoom and pan to get a closer look at the location.




### 3: Get information

There are lots of information points to take advantage of. You will notice icons for Wikipedia articles, photographs and more. You can decide what aspects are visible by using the layers menu.



### 4: Panoramio Photos

If you add Panoramio Photos to the layers then you may find literally hundreds of photos become available. Just tap one to view it, and use the back icon/button to return to Google Earth.

# Photography

## Improve your photos by learning some easy tricks and tips

**Cameras on Android devices are getting better all the time, and while they can't generally rival a dedicated digital SLR camera for quality or features, you can often still do a lot with them.** Improved camera capability is only part of the picture, though (if you'll pardon the pun).

There are two other crucial factors that can help you take better photos: mastering the camera app itself and making the most of add-on apps.

The camera app that's built into your phone or tablet might have a range of different features and these are improving all the time. Typical examples of the kinds of features the camera app might have include smile shot mode so that you take photos when your subjects are looking happy. You might also have panorama shooting that helps you take wide, inclusive photos as you pan the handset around. Burst mode can allow you to capture several photos in very quick succession, giving you the option to select only the best to keep. And your camera app is likely to have filters, allowing you to add a range of specialist or fun looks to photos.

If your camera incorporates touch focus, you can make sure that what you want to photograph is in focus perfectly. This can help you take some quite arty shots if you use it carefully; though even when used for everyday photography, touch focus is better than automatic focus modes.

Your phone may have some photo-editing capability built in. You might be able to crop photos so they contain only precisely what you want them to. And there might be the ability to write onto photos, so you can use them as part of a special message you send to someone.

Generally, though, you might find downloading photo-editing apps to be useful, as these can offer a wider range of editing options. There are plenty of photo-editing apps out there, many of them free, and you can use them to enhance the native images you've taken.

There's another way to take advantage of the photographic capability of your smartphone or tablet without the need to take photos off it, and that is to show your photos as a slideshow. This is a great way to share stuff with other people easily. And if your device has an HDMI output, you can even send a slideshow straight out to an external monitor or TV so you can easily share it with friends and family.

## Touch focus | Tap to focus on part of the view

### 1: Touch focus

If your Android device has touch focus, you will know it because you get a focus box shown on the screen. This is what you tap at in order to get the device's camera to focus on a particular spot.

### 2: Tap to focus

The touch focus should work with close-up shots and standard distance shots too. The results you get can be quite subtle or quite significant. Experiment to see how things work for you.

### 3: Ignore autofocus

If you let the camera focus where it wants to, you might not get the same quality of result as if you use touch focus. For example, in this shot the camera decided to focus in the centre of the image.

### How do I use the flash?

Flash units on smartphones are notoriously poor. They may be OK in low light conditions if close to the subject, but lack the power to fully light a darkened room. Experiment and use the flash with care for best results.

**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

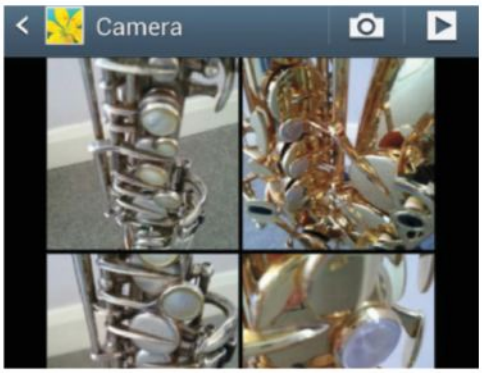
# Create a musical slideshow

## Set your images up to run as a slideshow with music

**Your photos are often very much of the moment – perhaps of a family day out or an important event in your life.** So you'll likely want to share them pretty quickly after shooting. What better way than via a slideshow?

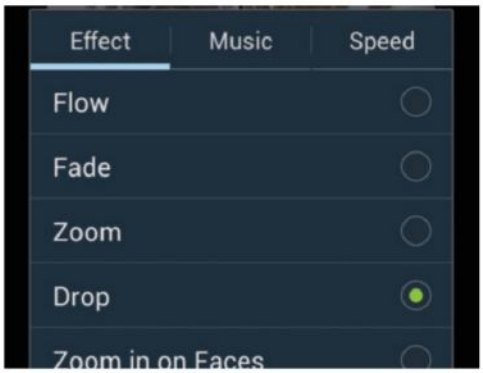
Depending on your device, you might have a range of options that allow you set up a slideshow in several different ways, including selecting between various kinds of transitions and even adding music.

**Create a slideshow** | View your photos as a slideshow



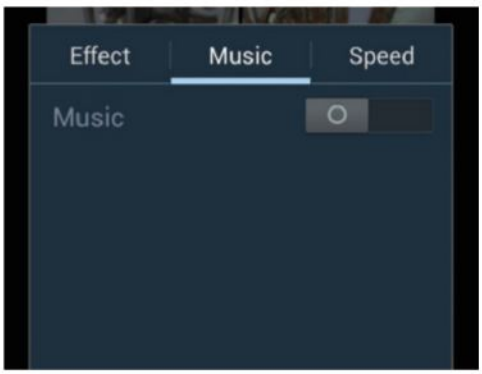

### 1: Start slideshow mode

In the gallery, choose to view the shots you've taken using the device's camera. You'll see a small arrow top right of screen. That's the one to hit if you want to start viewing the photos as a slideshow rather than looking at the images one by one.



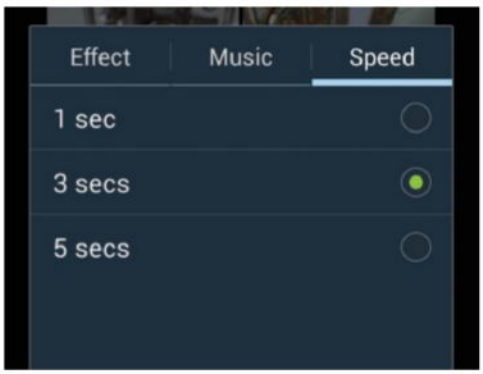

### 2: Choose transitions

You can select between a number of different transition effects, and a few other kinds of effects too. The Cube effect on our phone makes the images open out from small square into a larger one, while Drop sees them falling in from the top of the screen.




### 3: Find some accompanying music

If you hit the Music tab in the same menu, you can turn on music effects and then select a musical accompaniment to your slideshow from the range of tunes that are stored on your device. This can add a really nice ambiance to any slideshow, setting the mood for the photos.

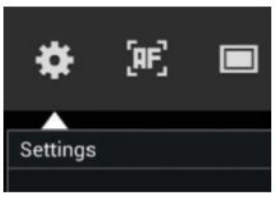



### 4: Set the speed

If you want to linger longer over your photos when watching a slideshow, rather than have them zip past, set the transition speed to the longest possible. For some slideshows you might want a much faster transition speed, however. It's completely up to you.

# Edit camera shortcuts

## Customise your camera shortcuts so they are just right for the way you shoot




In the camera app, hit the wheel that lets you get into camera settings. This will offer you a few general settings and the opportunity to Edit shortcuts. So, select that option.

You'll see all the shortcuts. Tap an icon and drag it into the location you want it to be in. Nearer the top is better for the shortcuts you use a lot; nearer the bottom for those you use less often.

If you us a shortcut a lot, then you might want it on the menu bar. Just drag it there. Remember, though, there's only room for four shortcuts on this menu so select carefully.

**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Shoot HD video

## Capture moments in high definition from your Android device

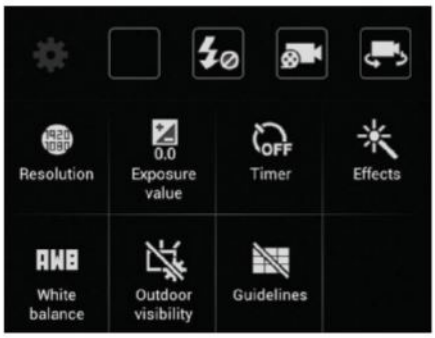
**Lots of people use their phone's camera for shooting stills, and forget all about the video options.** With higher-end handsets, this can be a mistake, as the ability to shoot HD video – 1080p – can be a real boon. It'll give you video that you can watch on the handset or deliver to an external device via HDMI, helping broaden its scope further.

Your device might translate its touch focusing capabilities from stills to video too, and carry over other settings options. You could use it to make a sepia-style silent movie spoof, or an atmospheric modernist short. Or, of course, just a simple memory of a family day out. Whatever you opt to do, miss out on video and you miss out on quite a lot.

## HD video | Shoot the best-quality video

### 1: Switch to video

When you launch the device's camera, it will probably be in still photograph mode (the usual default position). However, you should be able to switch into video shooting mode simply by using a slider, usually located at the bottom right of the screen.

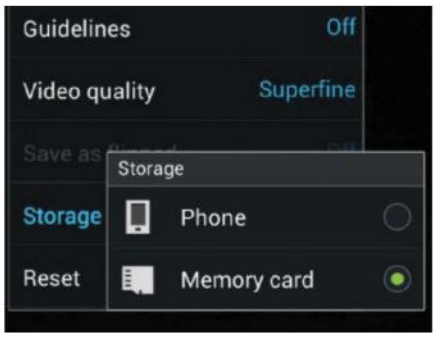



### 2: Make a resolution shortcut

It'll be easiest to change the resolution of your videos if you put a shortcut on the main camera app screen. Tap the tools option then choose Edit Shortcuts and drag the Resolution shortcut into the empty space on the shortcuts bar.

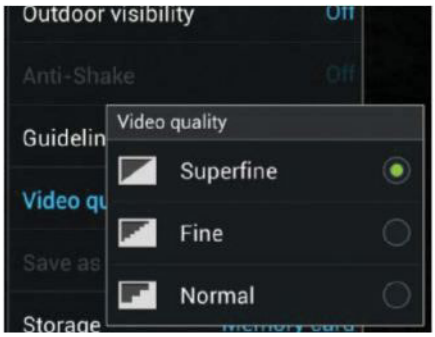
### 3: Choose video resolution

You will need to set the resolution for shooting your HD video. Call up the resolution settings box and make sure that 1920x1080 has been selected. It'll have a green dot next to it. If it hasn't, then tap it to make the selection.




### 4: Set save location

The one downside of high-resolution videos is that they can be space hungry, so it's a good idea to use a high-capacity microSD card to store them on. Open Settings, scroll down and choose Memory card as the storage location for the camera.




### 5: Set video quality

You might also want to have your video set at the highest quality possible. Open Settings again, scroll down and tap the Video quality option, then make sure that Superfine is selected for it. You are now ready to start shooting the best-quality HD video.

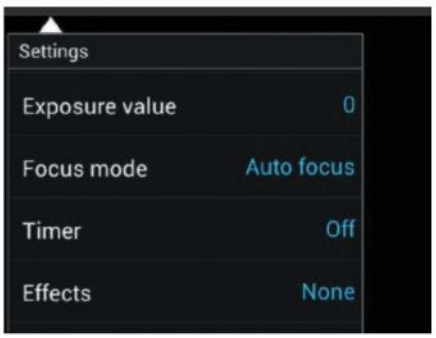
**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Make use of camera effects

## Explore all of the camera effects and make the best use of them

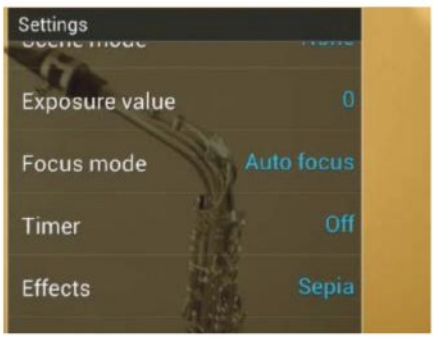
**While it is easy to use your smartphone or tablet's camera for quick 'point and shoot' photography, you might not be making the most of it if you are just content with that.** There is a range of effects on board that you can take advantage of too – not to mention the extra ones available via multifarious third-party apps.

The ability to add a series of different effects to an image can really enhance what you do with photographs. Some shots simply look a lot better in black and white than they do in colour. Sometimes you can have fun by adding a sepia effect to photos for a vintage look. And the negative effect can deliver some really surprising results as well.



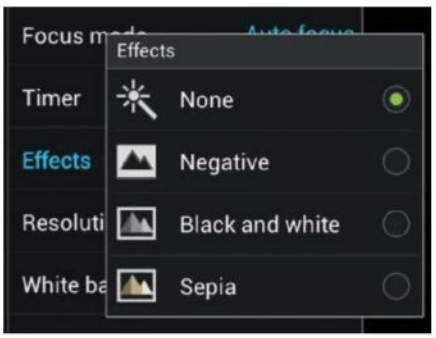

### 1: Find the effects

The effects mode is one of the settings on your camera app. To find it, hit the cog wheel symbol (ie Settings) on the main camera screen, and then scroll down the resulting menu until you see the Effects option appear.




### 2: Make your choice

Tap Effects, then select which of the effects that are on offer you want to apply to the photo you are about to shoot. As soon as you make the selection, the effect is applied and you can see through to the photo you want to shoot.




### 3: A long memory

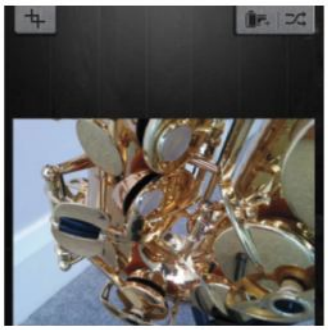
The camera app remembers what shooting mode you have selected for your photos, shot after shot. This can be handy, but you'll have to go back in again and change the effect setting back to normal (None) when you are finished with using the current effect.

# Edit photos with Pixlr-o-matic

## Use Pixlr-o-matic to add some pizazz to your photos

### 1: Get Pixlr-o-matic

Pixlr-o-matic is a fun, easy-to-use app that lets you add a wide range of different effects to your photos. It can be used for fun or for something more serious, and it is easy to get to grips with.



### 2: Take/choose image

You can either take a photo from within the app or upload an existing shot. If you are uploading, simply choose from the camera gallery on your Galaxy device.

### 3: Apply effects

Scroll through oodles of colour enhancements and they're applied instantly for a helpful preview. Only save – using the menu option at the bottom of the screen, if you like what you see.

### 4: Experiment

Play around with frames and light effects until you find something. The permutations are endless so there's lots of fun to be had here. If you ever get bored, you can easily add more.

# Multimedia

Make the most of your Galaxy device's multimedia capabilities

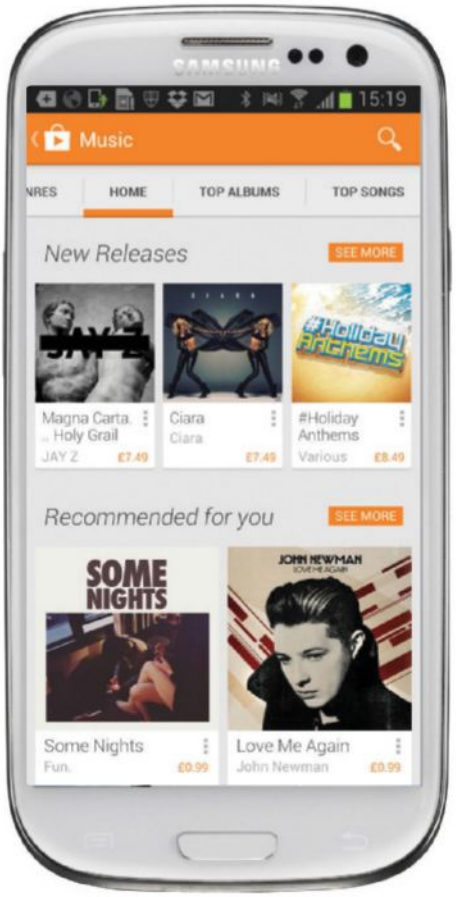
**Multimedia is a wide-ranging topic because it encompasses music, movies, photos and so much more, but the Android operating system is well placed to let you do almost anything you like within this genre.** There is native support for many formats and codecs, along with a host of options to let you purchase and download new media when you require it. So there is nothing standing in the way of you and your phone or tablet when it comes to enjoying entertainment.

Google Play is a huge resource for media that can be played and streamed on an Android device and you can purchase and preview music or rent movies whenever you have some free time available. The ability to stream content to TVs and other entertainment hardware is available to you as well and so your device could quickly become the main hub for your home entertainment if you know what you need to do to set things up.

In this tutorial we will take you through everything from purchasing and previewing music, to streaming TV clips to a larger screen with almost no effort at all. You can take videos on your phone or tablet and upload them to YouTube in seconds and even view the lyrics for any song you are playing automatically. Creativity is always within reach on an Android device and capturing panoramic images and then adding effects will also be demonstrated.

The important point to remember is that these tutorials are just the tip of a huge iceberg and that your device can do almost anything you want and be used to entertain you in a myriad of clever and diverse ways. There really is an app for everything now and no matter what you want to achieve, a solution will be available to purchase at a very low price. The days of using separate devices for photos, music and movies are long gone and that small object in your pocket is the key to everything you want to do and see. It only takes a little imagination on your behalf to seek out the solutions and when you do, you will realise just how incredibly flexible your device can be.

Don't forget that you can also purchase accessories to take the multimedia uses even further: FM transmitters can send music or podcasts to your car radio without the need for wires, while HDMI cables can be used on many Android devices to send high-definition video to any TV with the required input jack. You name it and you can do it with your device, so let's get started with the basics.




## Add photo effects

Use Camera ZOOM FX to add personality to your images

### 1: Understand the controls

When you take a photo, a new window appears showing a pencil icon in the bottom right-hand corner. Tap this to be taken to the effects menu, which will give you all of the options you need.

### 2: Change the colours

Tap the Color option at the top to choose from a variety of effects to add to the photo with one tap. You can also select Effect to pick from even more diverse tools to completely change the look.

### 3: Add a frame

Tap Frame at the top to then choose from a variety of styles including Film Reel and Polaroid. With some careful selection you can completely change the way a photo looks without actually changing the image itself.

### What formats does my device support?

The formats supported by each device vary, but most offer the ability to play back and view multiple image and video types. You can also download third-party apps for extra compatibility.

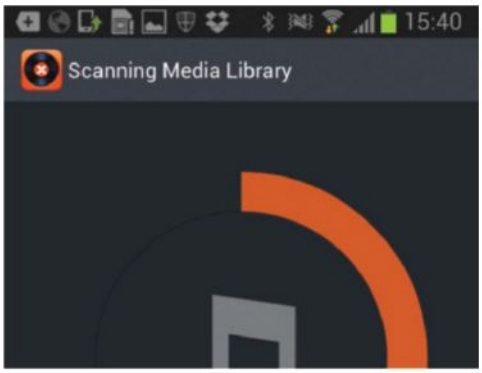
**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Get music lyrics

## You can view the music lyrics for almost any track with ease

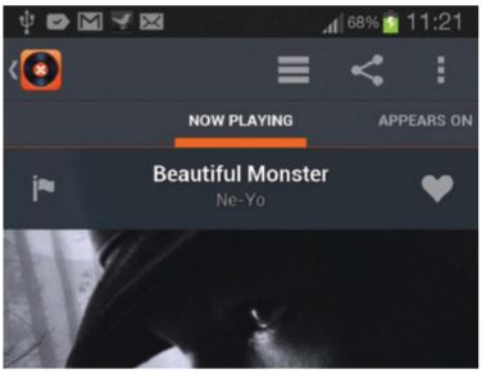
**Knowing the lyrics to a song can help you to understand the meaning behind it and ultimately enjoy the music even more, but it takes time to know them off by heart.** It used to be that you could just read the CD liner notes, but in these days of downloadable music you need more and here we will show you how to grab the lyrics for all of your songs automatically. You may be surprised at how simple the process is and then you'll soon be singing along.

## Learn the words | Automatically obtain lyrics for all of your music



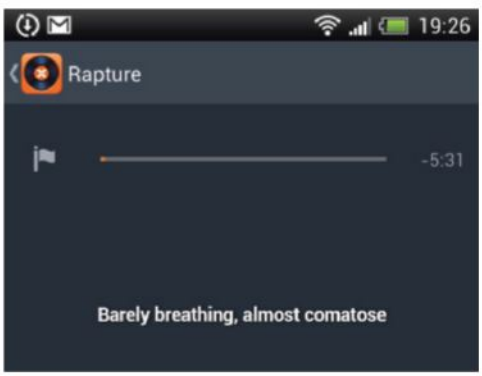

### 1: Download the app

Go to Google Play and search for MusixMatch Lyrics Player. It's a free app, so accept the permissions it requires and download and install it as normal. When you open the app, it will automatically start to scan any music tracks that are stored on your device.



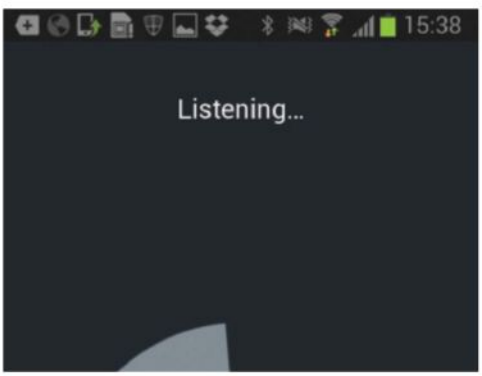

### 2: Match your music

On the next screen, tap the My Music icon at the top left and you will be presented with a list of all of your stored music. Tap a song and you will automatically see the lyrics presented in front of the album art. You can simply swipe through as the song plays.




### 3: Synchronise the words

Tap the Sync Lyrics button and you will be given the option of manually managing the pace of the lyric presentation as the music is playing. It's a little time-consuming, but the result will be perfectly matched lyrics in the future. So it's well worth persevering with.




### 4: From a sound

Selecting MusicID from the front screen lets you capture a song that is playing in the background and have the lyrics added automatically on screen. This could be useful for karaoke and other fun activities and it also helps you discover new music no matter where you are.

# Take panoramic images

## Create wonderful panoramas with a steady hand

Tap the camera icon at the bottom-left hand side of the screen and then tap the Panorama option. You will now see a standard-looking capture screen with some new features presented.

A level indicator will appear on the screen for you to ensure that you will be creating a seamless panorama. Tap the capture button and the process will be initiated.

As you move the camera left or right, wait until the screen beeps and a blue circle is filled at the bottom before taking each shot. As you move round, a beautiful panorama will be created.

**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

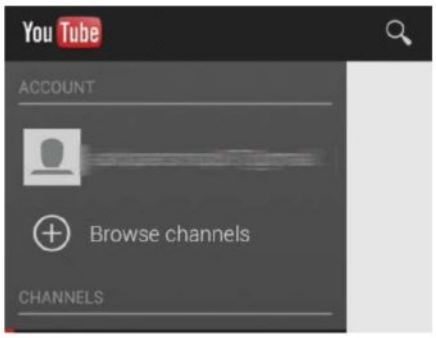
# Upload a video to YouTube

## You can capture a video and upload it to YouTube in a few simple steps

**Capturing videos is a popular task on smartphones and tablets these days and so it makes sense to be able to share your moments with others using the same device.** There was a time when you would need to connect your camera to a PC and then save the video to a particular format before you could do anything with it, but now you can capture the moment, upload it to YouTube and share the link with friends using just your device. The whole process only takes minutes and is testament to how far the technology has come.

In this tutorial we will show you how to complete the process from start to finish and also how to ensure that more people view your work, but please remember that uploading videos over a mobile connection can not only take a lot of time, but also eat into your monthly data allowance very quickly. So use Wi-Fi whenever it's available or make sure that you have a generous enough allowance to avoid falling foul of extra operator charges.

## YouTube | Shoot and upload a video directly

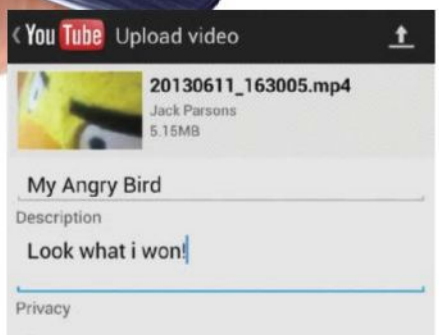



### 1: Signing in

Before you start the process, go to the YouTube app and make sure that you are signed in with your account. This will make uploading new videos much quicker in the future and greatly speed up the entire process.

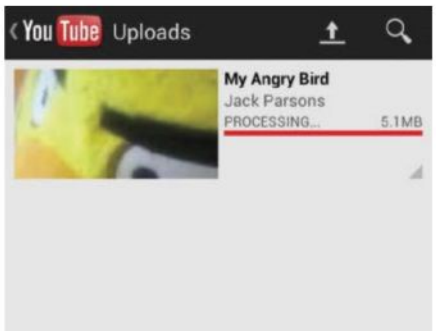
### 2: Time to share

Once you have captured a video with your device's camera, you can view it in the Gallery app and then tap the main screen to see extra options available to you. Select Share, tap More and then scroll down until you reach the YouTube option.




### 3: Add some detail

You will now be presented with a screen asking for a title and a description of the video. If you want the video to be viewed by lots of people, be as precise and descriptive as you can to help people find it when they're searching on YouTube.




### 4: Start the upload

When you tap Upload, the software will start the process of uploading the video to the YouTube servers. Be patient because this can take a lot of time – especially on a mobile connection, so you may want to wait until you have Wi-Fi access.

### 5: The finished product

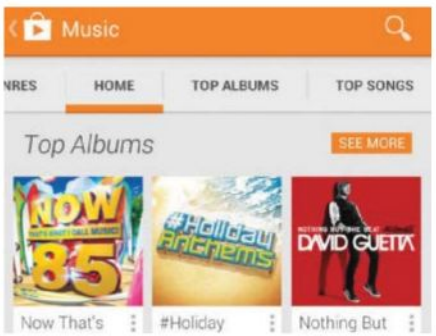
When the upload is complete, the video will take a few minutes to be processed by YouTube. Once everything is done, you will be able to view it from your device and share the link with others without ever having touched a PC.

**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Preview and buy an album

## You can preview and purchase new albums from Google Play in a matter of seconds

**Google Play holds thousands of music tracks and has the latest songs available as quickly as iTunes - most of the time.** The choice is almost limitless and you always get the option to preview a track or album before making a purchase. Once you decide that a song/album is worth your money, the purchasing and downloading process is as easy as can be. In this tutorial we will highlight the simplicity and explain each step. Your albums will not only download to your device, but will be available to stream from the cloud as well and so you will have access to them for as long as you like and in a variety of ways, from wherever you are. Google Play Music is as good an option as any of the competition these days.

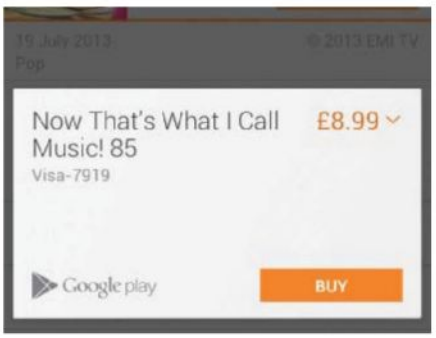



### 1: Find the music

Go to Google Play and locate the Music section. It is categorised into sections for featured music as well as top albums and songs. The pricing for each album is displayed next to it. Find an album you want to purchase to continue.

### 2: Preview the album

You can now tap the play button next to any track to listen to an excerpt and see what you think of the songs on it. It will start streaming immediately. This may not be an option for all tracks on the album but popular compilations (like this one) will have all the familiar tunes.




### 3: Buy the album

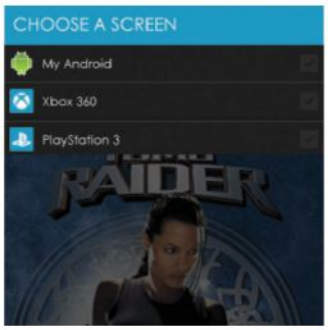
Tap the price button and you will be taken to a new screen which details your Google account information. Tap Accept & buy and the album will immediately download to your device and be available for streaming whenever you like.

# Stream video to your TV

## Videos can be streamed to a TV with the aid of a simple app

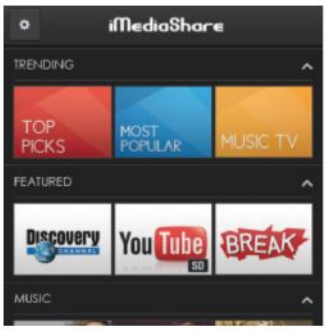
### 1: Download app

Download and open iMediaShare from the Play Store and read through the instructions. They offer an insight into what the app can do and should be all you need to get set up.




### 2: Select device

You will reach a screen which will show you what devices are available to stream to. Tap the device you want and you will now be able to choose which content you want to watch.




### 3: Select clip

A vast range of content will be available. When you select a topic or show, you will then be given further options such as clips to view. Select one of the clips to start the streaming process.

### 4: Find the music

The software will connect to the hardware and start playing the clip on the larger screen. It takes a couple of seconds to connect, but the streaming will be of high quality and never stutter.

# Productivity

## Harness the power of Samsung for your work

**The great thing about having an Android device is that it is so versatile.** As well as being great for entertaining, it is also perfect for those times when you need to get down to business. In days gone by, you would have to carry a large bag with a laptop inside, but this is unnecessary today.

With your Android device, you can take notes on the fly, check your emails, see when your next appointment is, write a quick report or knock up a simple presentation, dictate your work and even print. And there is barely any cost for doing any of this since many of the apps which you need are built in or available for free.

Apps such as Evernote are becoming more essential than ever before. With Evernote, for example, you can tap in notes or store images that can then be viewed on any device which has the app available on it. And this doesn't mean being restricted to Android either. If you use a different phone operating system for work or you want to see your notes on a PC or Mac, Evernote syncs your missives to the cloud so they are available wherever you go.

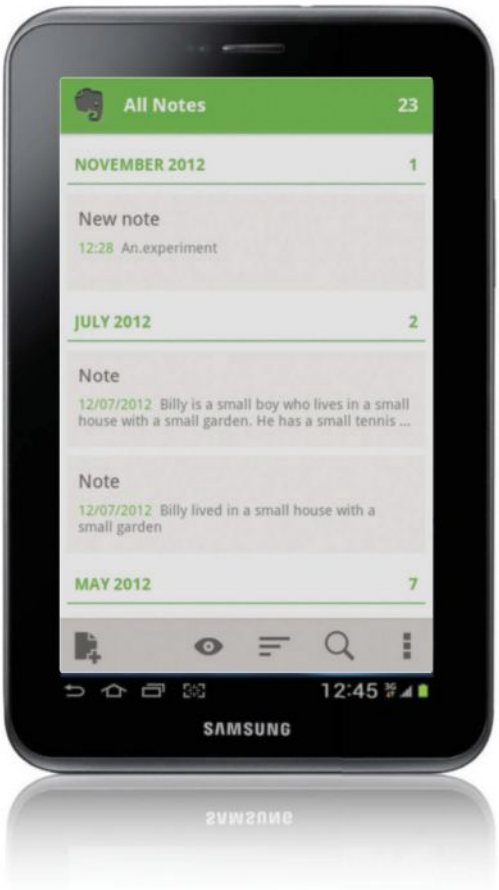
The same is true of your work emails. You can use the Email app on your Android phone to ensure that any work emails are pushed to the device, letting you read and reply to them while you're out and about.

And you can also print items. Using Google Cloud Print, you can print straight from your Android phone and all you have to do is set this up on your PC or Mac via Google Chrome. If you have a Cloud Ready printer, then it is even better because you then send the files directly to the printer. This will prove incredibly useful when you want a hard copy of that report that you've spent a while editing and writing on your Android device.

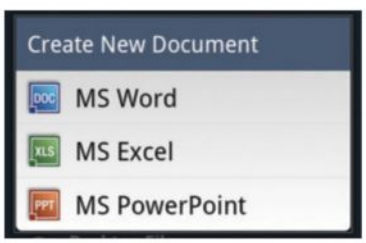
You can also print out a spreadsheet created on your handset. Special productivity software gives you the power to put your office in the palm of your hand and we look at how you can get the very best out of one of the most popular office apps, Documents To Go.

Anyone serious about taking their work with them will love the ability to quickly open or produce a document and tap away. Sharing functions are a given with software such as this and so it goes that when you want to finally hand your document to somebody, you can email it with just a few simple taps.

Indeed, over the next few pages, we'll turn you into a business high-flyer and show you how a few apps can revolutionise your working life and make you more efficient, especially while on the go.




## Use Documents To Go | Be productive with the popular office app




### 1: Upgrade to create

Although Documents To Go can be downloaded for free, this only allows you to view files. When you upgrade, you are also able to create new documents and these include Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

### 2: Press the Menu button

By tapping the Menu button on your Android device, you can call up options, including the ability to save and edit files. You can insert features and format your documents too. Use the keyboard to input information.

### 3: Produce a presentation

With the presentation facility, you can speed up your workflow via the Insert menu by using the Duplicate Slide option. This will let you create a uniform slideshow in rapid time that will surely impress the boss.

### How can I store my files?

You can use the cloud to ensure your items are kept safe and easily available to use on any device. Google Drive allows you to save and retrieve items, but you can also use popular services such as Dropbox.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

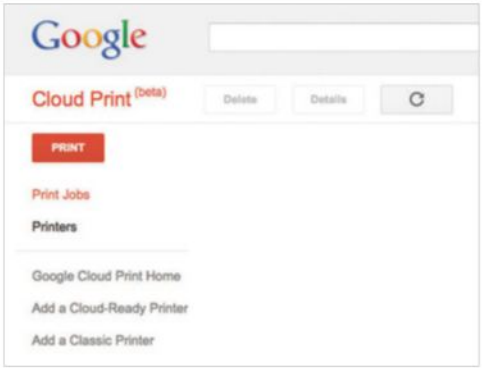
# Print from your Galaxy device

## We look at how you can make use of Google's Cloud Print

**It is possible to hook up your Android device to a printer.** There are lots of Cloud Ready printers available to buy from the likes of Canon, Epson, HP and Kodak. These let you print directly from an Android device since they connect to the internet. When you print from your device, the job is sent wirelessly to these printers.

If you do not have a Cloud Ready printer, you can still print but you will need to have the printer hooked up to an internet-connected computer.

## Use Cloud Print | Get set up and connect your printer

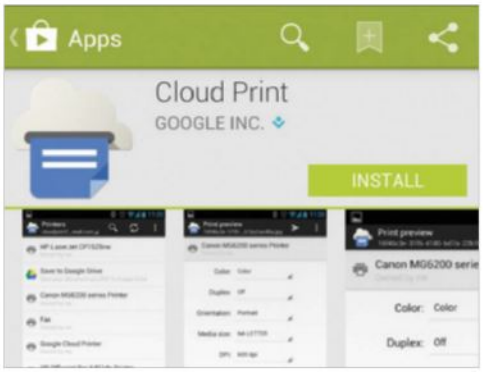



### 1: Set up printer

First you'll need to set up your printer, so point your browser to the Google Cloud Print website at **google.com/cloudprint** and log in to your Google account. On the left-hand side, you can choose from a number of options including adding a Cloud-Ready or Classic Printer.

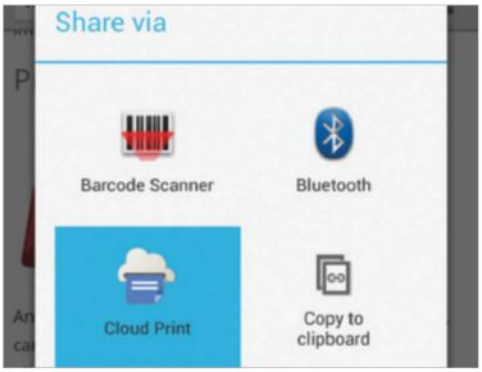
### 2: Non-Cloud Ready?

If you own a Cloud-Ready printer, choose the one you have. Follow the on-screen instructions which show you how to set up your specific printer. For non-Cloud-Ready printers you will need to have the printer connected to a computer. Ensure you have Chrome installed.




### 3: Download Cloud Print

The instructions for connecting the printers are contained on the Google website. Now download the free Cloud Print app by Paulo Fernandes via Google Play. This will let you set up your printer on your Android phone. Your printer should show up once you have signed in.

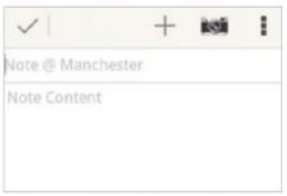



### 4: Print your file

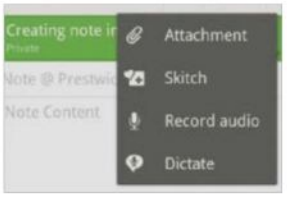
Cloud Print lets you print a variety of files, from documents and text messages to emails and drawings. Tap the file you wish to print from the Cloud Print menu. Some apps let you print directly from them by going to the Share option and selecting Print.

# Take notes using Evernote

## Create text, voice or picture memos with Evernote




Evernote is a popular note-taking application. You can use it to store written notes as well as photographs and audio. The main screen lets you select the type of note you wish to make.




The main note-taking screen allows you to input a title, which will be useful when looking back over your notes. Use the keyboard to input your note. When you have finished, simply tap the tick.

By tapping the '+' icon, you are able to add attachments. You can also record audio or dictate your note. You will also see a camera icon; this allows you to take photographs on your device.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Set up work email manually

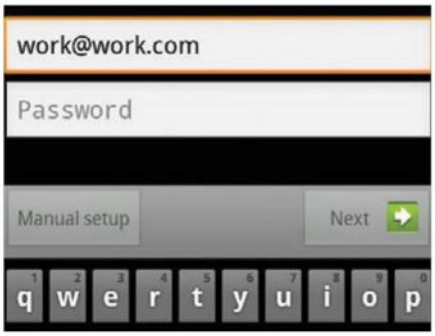
## Need to access your work email account? You can do just that with your Galaxy

**Unless you use a third-party app, then Outlook support is not available to you when you buy your Android device.** However, you need not despair because your device is very flexible and you are not confined to Gmail. Indeed, you can set up any type of email via the Email app and this includes support for Exchange, which is brilliant given that so many employers today use this for work email.

Setting up can be done in a small amount of time, allowing you to use your Exchange email, Calendar and Contacts via Android. Just be sure that work allows it and will give you the details you need. These will include the Exchange server address, the username and password and the domain name for the account required.

The Email app is also good for emails that work using POP3 and IMAP standards and again you simply need the right details to input into the required fields. You will then be able to send and receive emails and, if you so wish, have them removed from the server.

### Email app | Set up a work email account

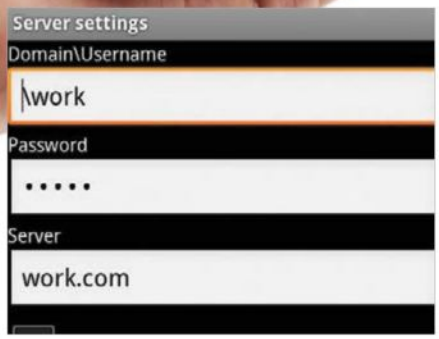



### 1: Input email address

Open your device's built-in Email app and you will immediately be prompted to configure your email. This can be done for a variety of accounts and the first thing you need to do is input your email address and your password.

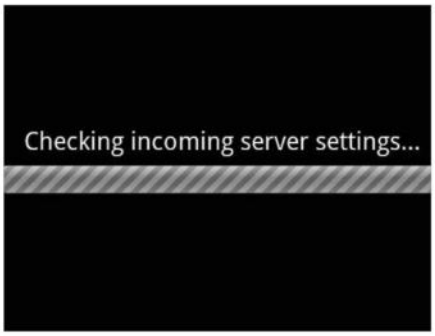
### 2: Choose account type

If you selected Next, then Android will try to retrieve your account information. You will need to know the type of account you are accessing and your work's IT department should provide you with this. Select from either POP3, IMAP or Microsoft Exchange.



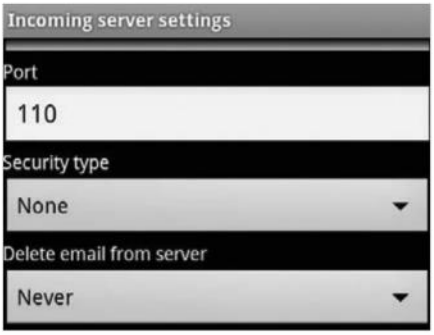

### 3: Manual email setup

If you have selected a manual setup, you still get asked if you want POP3, IMAP or Microsoft Exchange, but Android won't try to retrieve account information. Instead you will be asked to input your server settings. Your work's IT department will have this information.




### 4: Check server settings

Once you are sure of your username, password and server address and have selected Use Secure Connection and Accept All SSL Certificates, it will check the settings. Now check if you want to Push emails, and your Sync and notifications options.




### 5: POP and IMAP

If you are not using Microsoft Exchange and are using POP and IMAP, your incoming and outgoing server settings will need to be inputted. You can also select whether or not you wish to have your received emails deleted from the server or not.

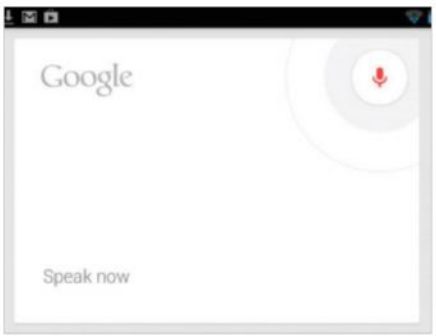
**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Use voice recognition

## Speed up your workflow by speaking rather than typing and get instant results

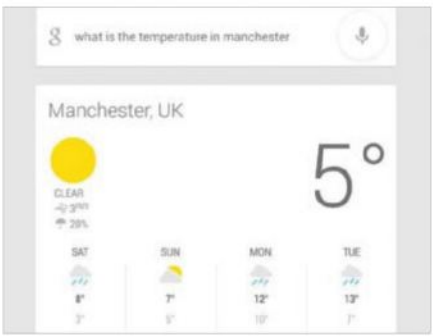
**One of the killer apps for Apple iOS devices has been Siri, which allows the user to speak into their iPhone or iPad and receive all manner of information in return.** It is even possible to have something of a conversation. Android, with the introduction of Jelly Bean, allows the same thing. It is brilliant when performing searches. All you need to do is tap the microphone, speak and have Android scour the web for you.

Although it can make mistakes in picking up your speech patterns, speaking deliberately and clearly will ensure you eliminate them. It is, however, quite accurate and it will speed up your work by ensuring information is delivered to you fast and efficiently.




### 1: Use the microphone

Whenever you see a microphone symbol, you are able to speak to your Android device rather than use the keyboard. From the homepage in Jelly Bean, you can ask random questions too. Tap the microphone and speak when prompted.




### 2: Instant results

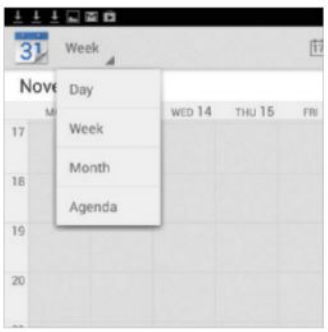
We asked for the temperature and Android gave us the forecast on a card. It took very little for our speech to be recognised and interpreted. Note how the voice recognition displays your speech as text to let you check it was correctly recognised.

### 3: Search the web

You can select to search the entire web for results relating to your query too. The voice recognition software can also be used for other things, such as when you are writing a document. Just speak rather than type and the text will display on the screen.

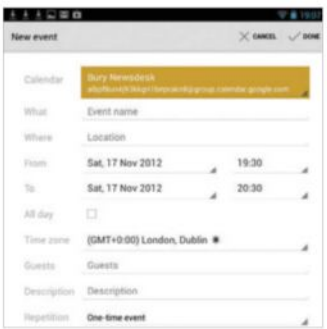
# Use Google Calendar

## Google Calendar lets you create events and sync them with your computer




### 1: Multiple views

There are four ways of viewing your calendar. You can choose from day, week, month or an agenda. Simply tap the option to the right of the calendar icon to bring up a drop-down menu.

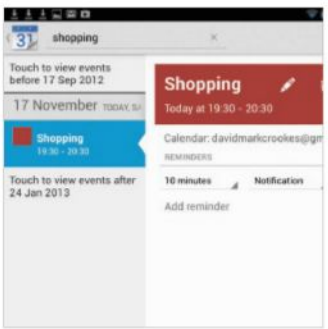



### 2: A new event

Creating a new event is easy. Simply select the Calendar you wish to use and then input what the event is, where and when it will take place and if you wish to invite others.

### 3: Automatic sync

When an event is created, it is placed on the calendar. Event colours now match the desktop version, which means syncing feels more fluid. Events could also be in a list and then overlap.




### 4: Set notifications

You can set reminders and notifications by tapping 'Add reminder' and using the Notification option. Use the pen icon to add notes and the trash can to delete an event.

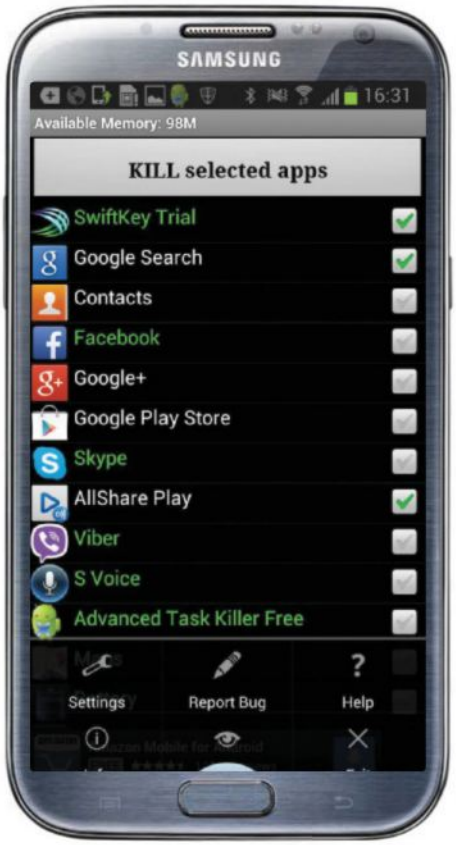
# Data and security

## Keep your device secure with some handy apps and optimise performance by controlling data

**You might presume that your Galaxy device is completely secure and immune to threats from those who want to get hold of your data but you'd be wrong!** In these tutorials we will demonstrate some tools to help you to keep your device secure, showing you how to set them up and make the most of their features. With just the tools we are showing here, you can ensure that your Google data is more secure than ever before and we may even be able to stop you losing your device and increase the chances of getting it back should the worst happen.

We will also highlight some of the lesser-known tools that can improve how you work with your device every day. You will be able to quickly kill any task that is running to increase speed and available program memory, and also reduce how much cache each app is using with one tap on the home screen. Your mobile data usage can also be monitored at all times, which offers the potential of saving lots of money in the long run. Network charges for overuse of data are substantial and one simple tool can help you avoid them completely. No matter which area you want to improve on your Android device, you can do it and everything from removing unwanted adverts to speeding up every aspect of the system is available. If you find a problem in the future or a small part of the system that doesn't work the way you want it to, have a search on Google Play and you will likely find a solution within seconds.

The incredible flexibility built into Android means that you never have to accept your phone or tablet the way it is. You can choose to set it up to work perfectly for your most used apps or the tasks that you use every single day. When you really think about it, security and performance are two of the most important aspects of any mobile device and following these simple tutorials should help you to master each area with ease. Your device will feel faster and more secure than ever before.




"You can choose to set it up to work perfectly for your most used apps"

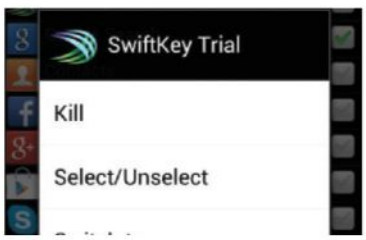
## Kill unwanted tasks | Use Advanced Task Killer to kill tasks at any time

### 1: A simple screen

Advanced Task Killer is free to download. When you open it, you will see a green tick next to each app listed. Tap each box to remove all of the ticks to start afresh. This is the easiest way to use the app.

### 2: What to kill

Tap the box next to any app you want to kill and then tap the Kill Selected Apps bar at the top. Each selected app will be stopped immediately and therefore more memory will be freed up on your device.




### 3: More control

Hold your finger down on any app to bring up a menu offering more options. You will be given a variety of choices including the ability to switch to the app. Also, try to avoid killing green-coloured apps.

### How secure is my device?

With all internet-connected devices you need to think about security. While Android devices are relatively secure, the best advice is to presume that it isn't secure and be as careful as possible.

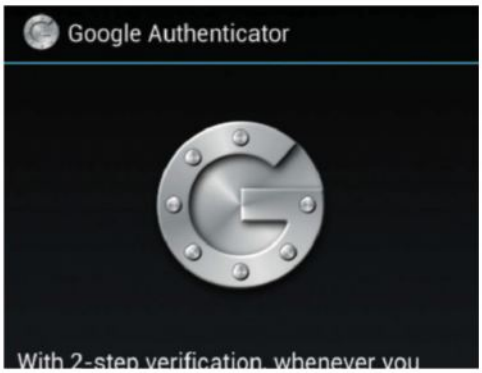
**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Secure your Google account

## Keep your most important data secure all of the time

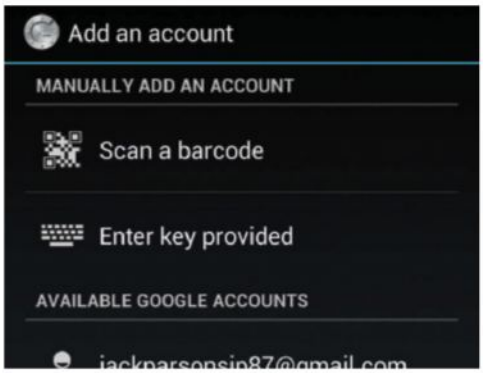
**The amount of personal information stored in your Google account is potentially damaging if it falls in to the wrong hands.** With Google Authenticator you can use your device to access a constantly revolving access code which is perfectly in sync with the Google servers. This will ensure the best possible security for your account and all of the data held within it. In this tutorial we will explain how to set it up so that it works efficiently when required.

**Google Authenticator** | Stop people accessing your information



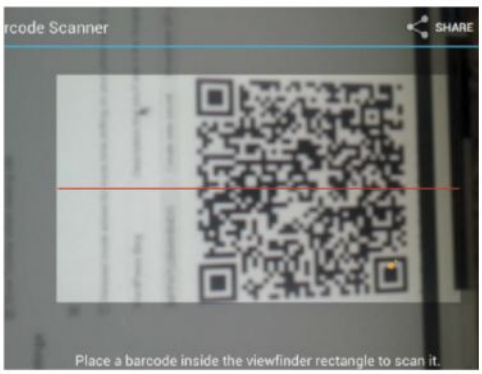

### 1: Get the app

Go to Google Play and search for Google Authenticator and install as normal. When you open the app you will see an option to begin the setup. Before you do anything else, make sure you go to **https://accounts.google.com/security** to set up 2-step authentication.



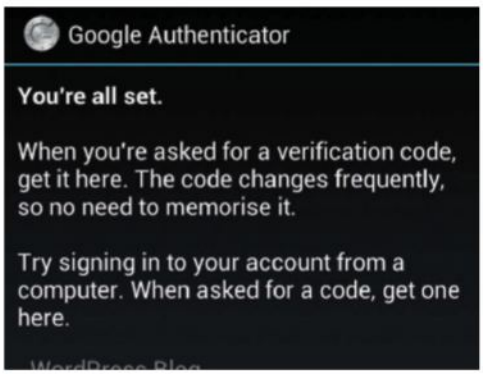

### 2: Specify your device

You will also need to add your Android phone or tablet to the list of devices that are authorised to use the authentication system. This will be achieved by Google listing what software is allowed access to your Google account and it's a very simple process.




### 3: Final setup

Choose the Scan a barcode option in the Google Authenticator app and then download the recommended scanner. You will be able to scan the code directly from your PC screen, which will do almost all of the setup work for your specified Google account.



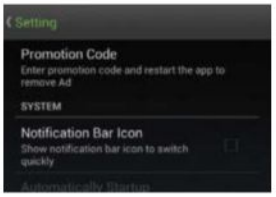

### 4: Get the codes

You will still log into your account as normal, but you will now be able to use the Authenticator app to grab a verification code whenever Google asks for one. The code changes continuously so it makes for a highly secure system which offers great peace of mind.

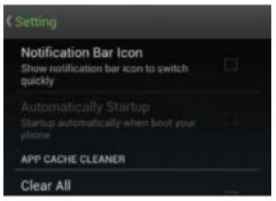
# Clear your cache with an app

## Increase your device's memory and performance

The free App Cache Cleaner app displays a list of installed apps with the amount of memory they are using. This will help you work out where you can save the most memory.




Tap the menu icon at the top and then select the Settings option. You can now choose whether to clear the cache as soon as the app opens or at specific intervals.




The included widget can be placed on the home screen and will let you clear the entire cache with a single tap. This makes the system very efficient and it will save you lots of memory.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Keep a tab on your mobile data

## You can manage your mobile data usage 24 hours a day

**Almost every mobile network limits the amount of data that you can use on your smartphone or tablet every month.** Despite improvements in this area and the ever-expanding functions you can perform with mobile devices, there is still a long way to go before you will be able to not worry at all about how much data you consume.

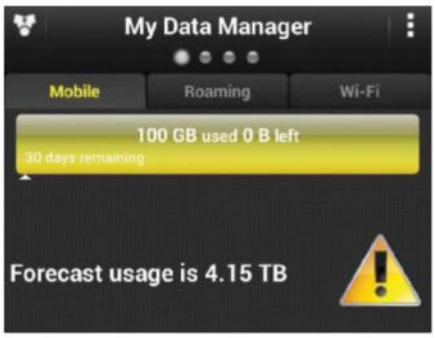
In this tutorial we'll show you how to use a simple free app, My Data Manager, to keep track of your data usage for each month. With alerts that allow you to be notified when a certain limit has been reached and a simple app interface, you should have everything you need to stop your network provider from charging you extra.

Overage charges (for going over your monthly data usage limit) can be extremely expensive and doing all you can to avoid them will pay dividends in the long run. It will take very little time to set up the system and even less to manage it on a daily basis, so you have no excuse not to be in charge of your usage every single day.

## My Data Manager | Keep track of your data usage

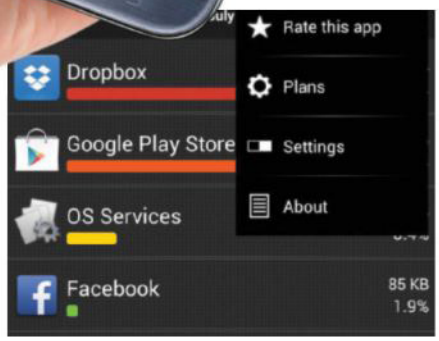
### 1: Set a plan

My Data Manager is free to download. When you open the app, select the Tap to set plan option. You should take some time over this because it will form the basis of all of the stats the app will produce for you. Refer to your mobile bill if required.



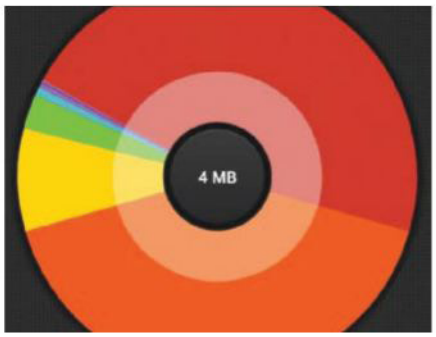

### 2: Watch the roaming

The second screen in the plan section lets you choose how you want alerts to sound and also to select your roaming plan. This is a vital area because data roaming charges when abroad can be excessively high and end up costing you a fortune.



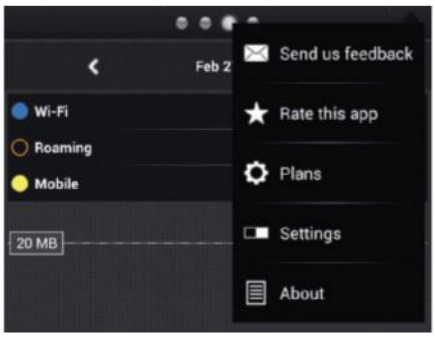

### 3: Simple data presentation

You will now see the data used on the front screen. It lists the projected forecast alongside the amount of data used today and how much data you have left for the month. This should be all you need to ensure you keep within your plan.




### 4: Use the graphs

At any point, you can use the colourful graphs and pie charts to see which apps are using most of your data. This will help you to analyse which apps you can cut back on and therefore how you can reduce data usage in the long term.




### 5: Changing settings

You can change the plans you have set up at any point and My Data Manager will also help you decide what type of plan you should be upgrading to when you want to change it. The other settings screens let you tweak almost every aspect of the app.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Protect your Galaxy device

## Use AVG Antivirus Security Free to secure your device should it fall into the wrong hands

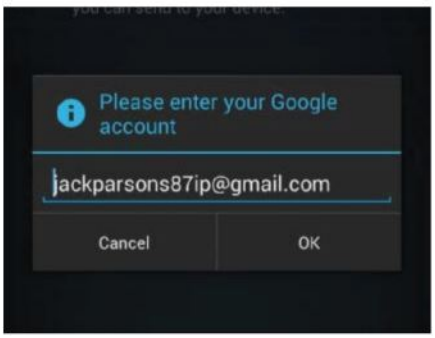
**There may come a time when your phone or tablet gets lost – or even worse, stolen.** At this point the inevitable panic may cause you to not think rationally, but there is something you can do preemptively to save a lot of heartache.

AVG's Antivirus Security Free app includes a set of features that are designed to help you track down your device if it goes missing and you can even block it from being used remotely. You can make the phone ring if it is on silent mode and also notify the person using the phone of your current location.

It really does offer the best chance of retrieving your precious device and keeping your data private, so let's get started learning how to do so.

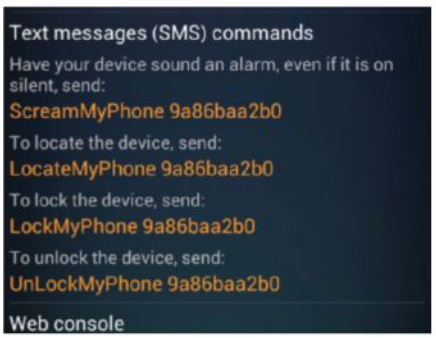
### 1: Explore the features

When you open AVG's Antivirus Security Free (after downloading for free), you will see boxes which summarise the main features of the app. Explore them all to see how they can help you, but for this tutorial tap the Anti-Theft box to register for the service.




### 2: Time to register

You will now be asked to register for the Anti-Theft service. So input your email address and then look out for an email confirmation. The entire process is very quick and this is all you need to do in order to activate your account.

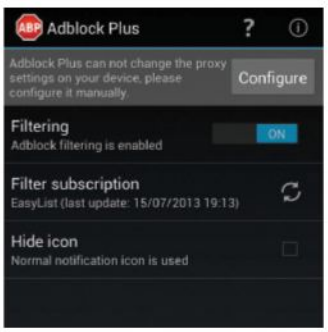



### 3: The important information

Now you need to keep a note of the information provided upon completion of your registration. It might even be a good idea to print these off and carry them with you so that you can act quickly if your device does get stolen.

# Block unwanted adverts

## You can use Adblock Plus to block adverts that stop you using your device effectively

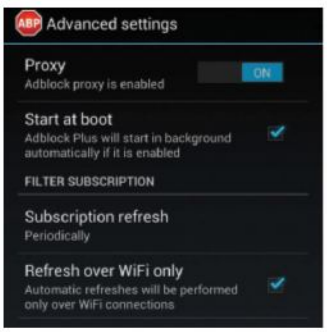



### 1: Download

Download Adblock Plus from its website (it's not on the Play Store). A suitable subscription will be set up for you automatically to get you started, but we would suggest choosing your own.

### 2: Advanced features

Tap the '?' icon and you will be taken to a website which highlights the more advanced features. Take some time to read it to understand how you can tweak the app to your needs.




### 3: Settings menu

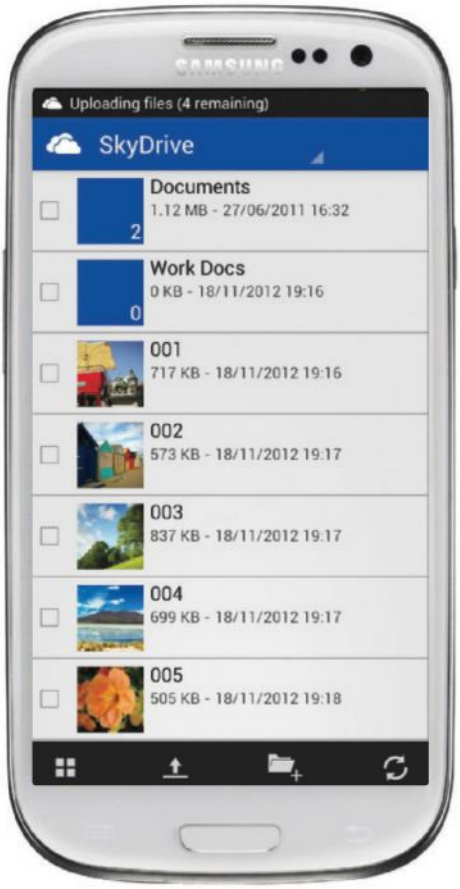
In the settings you can refresh the subscription and are able to block most ads and also have the app start up when you turn the device on. Both these settings should help to keep you ad-free.

### 4: Enjoy!

You should now be able to dispense with adverts in your favourite games and websites. The tool sits in the background doing all of the work and is invisible most of the time.

# Cloud storage

## Use cloud services to store your documents and files, as well as back them up for peace of mind




**Your files, images and music are just as precious as any of the devices on which they're stored and losing data can be catastrophic.** There are a number of ways to back up your data and storing it in the cloud is one of the surest options to prevent loss. Working in the cloud has the added advantage that you can access your files wherever you are and you no longer need to rely on memory sticks and USB drives to move data from one machine to another.

Android devices are becoming increasingly sophisticated and allowing users to perform traditionally desktop-based tasks from the comfort of their phones and tablets. If you're working on your device, you should also be able to access cloud options to access documents and also back them up once you've worked on them. Each cloud option requires users to create an account to access features. If you haven't already got an account with a particular provider, you can easily set one up by following the prompts and choosing a password to access your work.

Amazon Cloud Player offers a unique option to upload and store songs online with the option to access them anywhere and play them on your device. We show you how to use Cloud Player and make the internet a new home for your digital record collection.

We walk through Microsoft's Sky Drive and Google Drive to show you how to use each option to upload and store documents. Storing files in the cloud doesn't only allow you to access them, it also means you can share documents with colleagues, and photos with friends. Learn how to collaborate on documents using Google Docs and upload images to Flickr in a few easy steps.

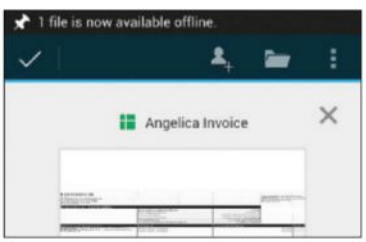
One disadvantage of using cloud storage is that you need an internet connection to access your files. This is probably not a problem on your desktop computer but when you're using an Android device on the go, a stable connection is never guaranteed. We look at a few options to save selected files to view in offline mode.

The cloud becomes an asset to your productivity when you use it as you would an external drive or the built-in drive on your computer. Creating files and organising content makes retrieving what you need easier, especially if working on a device rather than a desktop computer.

## Offline Google Docs | Save files to view and edit when without a connection

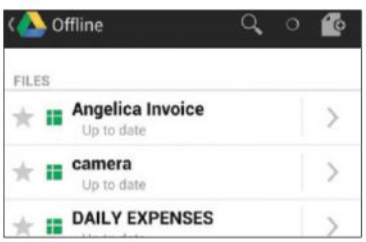
### 1: Access via internet

Files stored in the cloud require an internet connection to access and edit. If you don't have a connection you'll be cut off from your work. To get around this you can make certain documents available offline.




### 2: Save for offline

Open Google Drive and tap My Drive to view your files. Select the one you want to use offline and tap the grey arrow to see more. Tap the Offline box to make the document available when you don't have a connection.




### 3: View offline files

From the Google Drive opening screen, select Offline to see all the documents you have saved for offline use. Access these documents from this location whenever you aren't connected to Wi-Fi or 3G.

### What does cloud storage mean?

Storing a file in the cloud means storing it online via a provider such as Google. The benefit of this is that you can access a document anywhere and won't lose it if your computer breaks down.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

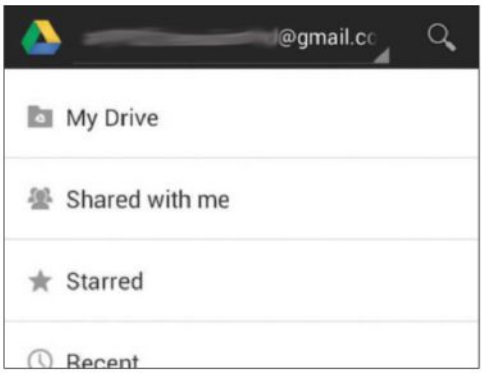
# Back up files with Google Drive

## Store the contents of your phone in the cloud

**Google Drive is a solid option to back up and store files.** If you use Gmail it's especially useful since you can save files directly from mail attachments and edit and collaborate on them from any device you can access the internet from.

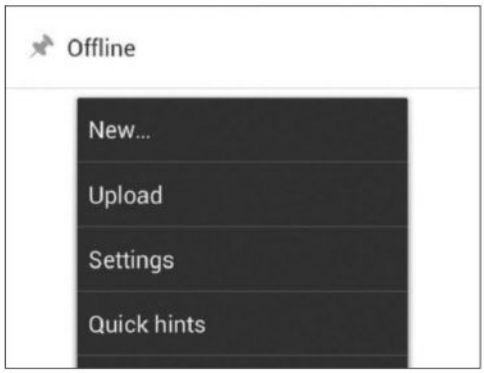
To use Google Drive as a backup system, download the free app from the Google Play store. Be aware that the Drive is linked to your Google account, so be sure to sign in with the account you want linked to your backed up files.

## Upload your docs | Get files from your device to your Google Drive



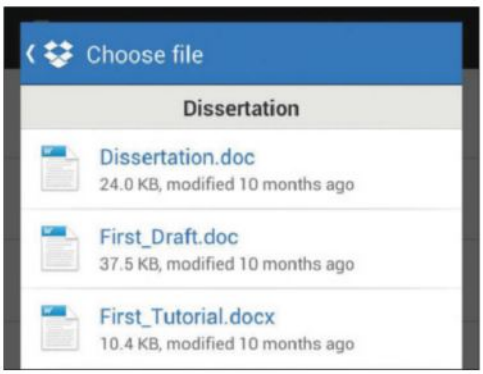

### 1: Open Google Drive

From the Google Play store, download the Google Drive app and install it on your device. When you launch the app, log in with your Google account. If you've used Google Drive before you'll see the files that you've stored in the cloud; if not, your Drive will be empty.



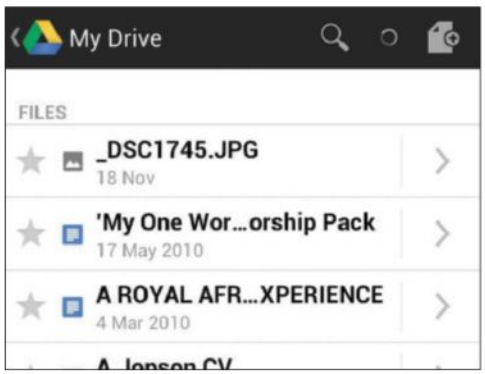

### 2: Access upload menu

Tap the Menu button on your device to bring up a pop-up menu containing the Upload option. Google Drive will accept any file type, including documents, images and music files. There is a 5GB limit on each account, but you are able to buy additional storage.




### 3: Select and upload

Select files from on your device or from other sources such as the Dropbox cloud storage service. Tap to select the files that you want to upload and then tap again to begin the upload. Depending on the size and number of files, this may take a few moments to complete.



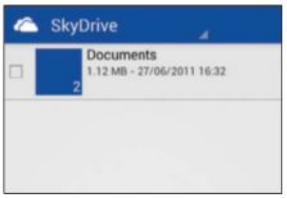

### 4: View your files

Tap My Drive to view the files that you currently have backed up in the cloud. From here you can share and edit documents directly, without having to download them and then upload again. You can organise files into folders and subfolders and invite others to collaborate.

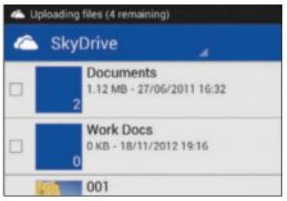
# Store your files on SkyDrive

## Use Microsoft's cloud service as a storage option

Download the SkyDrive app from the Google Play store and then launch it. Sign in using your Microsoft account, such as a Hotmail address. If you don't have one, sign up for a new account.




To start backing up your data, tap the Upload icon on the bottom ribbon of the app to search your device for files to upload. Make a selection of files to upload and then tap OK to start the process.



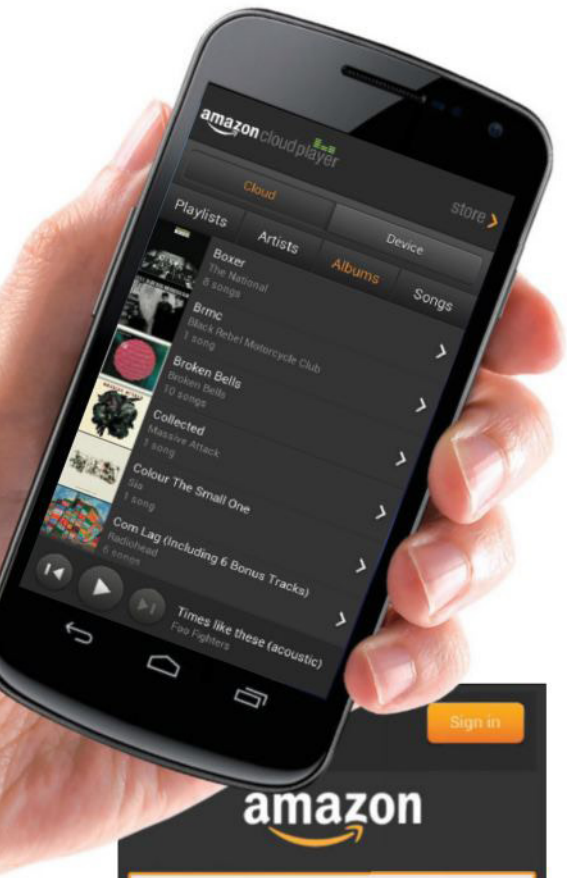

It'll take a few moments to upload the files depending on size. As they upload, the files will appear in your SkyDrive account; you can now access these wherever you can log in to SkyDrive.

**Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Store music on Amazon Cloud Player

## Save space by uploading your music collection and streaming it to your device

**Amazon Cloud Player is a unique way to store your entire music collection in the cloud and then stream music through the Amazon MP3 app on your device.** The Cloud Player is linked to your Amazon account and once you start the player, any music you've purchased is automatically available on the player. You can also store up to 250 songs from your own music collection for free by uploading them from your computer. Various subscription options let you upgrade the amount you can store, starting from 20GB for £6.00 a year. The beauty of having your music in the cloud is that you can access it wherever you are, whether that's a party or at work, without having to physically transfer your files. It also safeguards the music if something happens to your computer. Download the Amazon MP3 app and turn your Galaxy device into an instant music player. Either choose to stream the music directly from the Player or download your favourite tracks to listen offline. The app makes all music you have on your device available too.



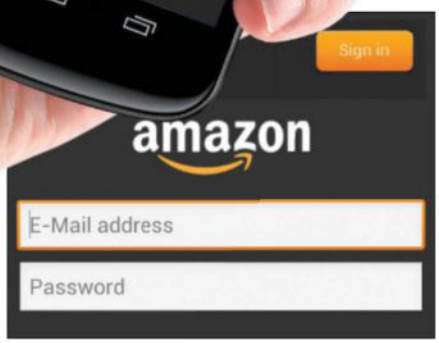

## Amazon Cloud Player | Upload and stream music

### 1: Open Cloud Player

Launch your desktop computer's web browser and open up Amazon Cloud Player. Use your usual Amazon login details to access your Cloud Player and then download the Music Importer to start adding extra music to your account.

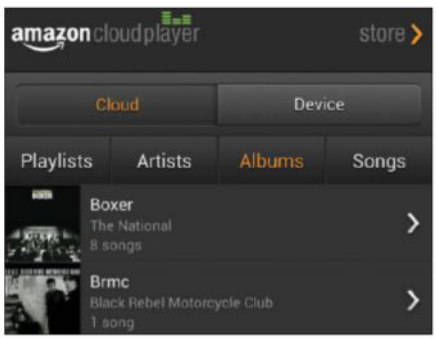
### 2: Upload songs

Cloud Player gives you a free allowance of 250 songs to store online. Open the music installer and select songs from your computer to add to the player. Once selected, the upload will take a few minutes. Any songs you buy from Amazon are stored for free.




### 3: Install Amazon MP3

On your Android device, open the Google Play store app and find and install Amazon MP3, which allows you to see and play the songs that you've stored in the cloud. As before, use your Amazon login details to access your account.




### 4: View cloud music

Tap the Cloud tab to view the full contents of your music collection saved online and then tap into a song to start streaming it to your device. You can access and play music in your cloud collection as long as you have an internet connection.

### 5: Download to device

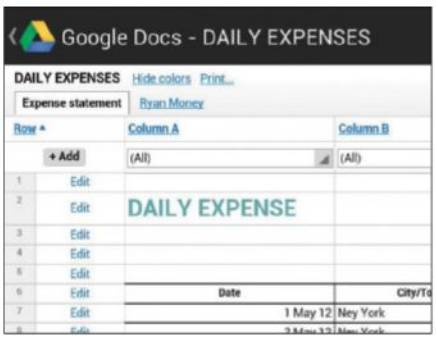
You can select the orange download button to download a single track or a full album to your device. The songs that you download will be available offline and you can then listen to them directly through the player without streaming.

**Time needed:** 2 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Collaborate in Google Docs

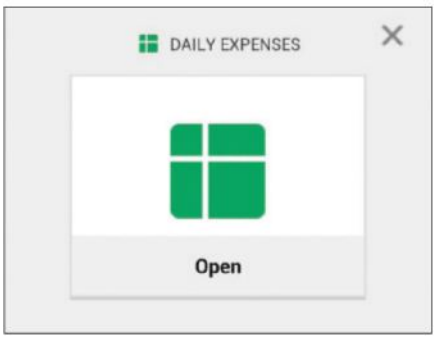
Invite others to work on a document with you without the hassle of multiple copies

**Using Google Docs to collaborate on a spreadsheet or text document does away with the tedious process of round robin emailing and editing documents, creating a new version each time.** Once a document is uploaded to the cloud and stored online, it can be viewed and edited by anyone you invite to collaborate. When you share the document, you can specify who has access to make changes and who should just be able to view it. Changes are made in real-time and you can work on a document simultaneously, seeing each other's changes as you go. All changes are effected on all copies of the document, so you no longer have to worry about keeping track of which version of the document is the latest.



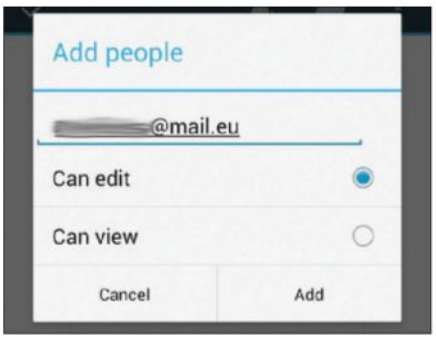

### 1: Upload and open

Begin by uploading a document to your Google Drive – or, if it's already uploaded, simply launch the Google Drive app and open up the document on your Galaxy device. Select the My Drive option to see a list of available documents.




### 2: Access sharing settings

Either access the Share Settings by tapping the share icon or tapping the arrow next to your document in your Google Drive list. Here you can see if anyone is already collaborating and invite new contacts to join the document.




### 3: Invite with email

Tap the Invite People option and type in the email address of a friend or colleague. Specify whether that person should be able to view only or if they can edit the document, then tap Share. Your contact will receive an email to say they've been invited.

# Upload and share with Flickr

Store and share your images on the web by uploading your content to Flickr

### 1: Download

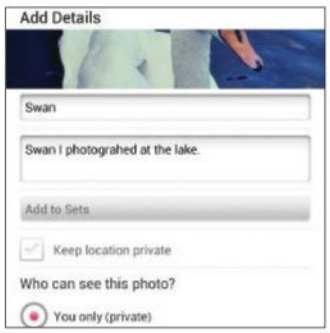
Download the Flickr app and either sign in using an existing Flickr account, Facebook or new account. Create an account by filling in your details and tapping Create Account.

### 2: Share to Flickr

Once an account is connected to your device, you can share via Flickr from your image gallery or from your camera. In the Gallery, select the Share option and then choose Share via Flickr.

### 3: Add Effects

Flickr gives you options to add effects to your image before uploading it. Tap on one of the options to add – such as Tokyo, NYC, Berlin or Paris – or stick to the original and then tap Next.

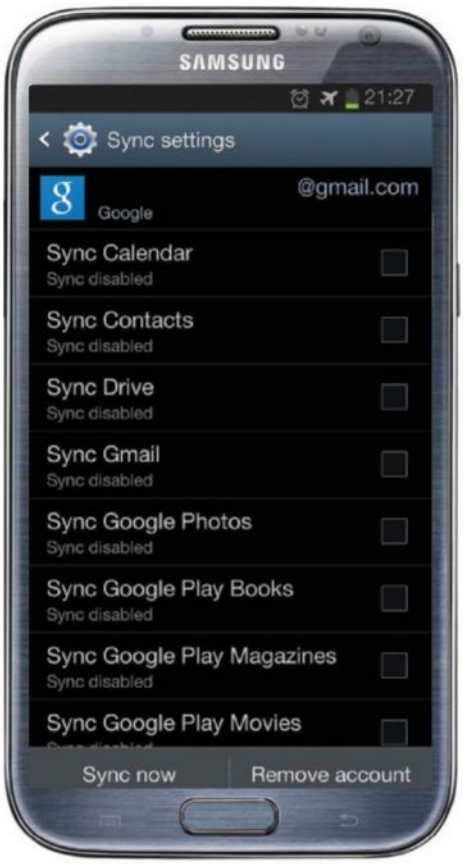



### 4: Give it a title

Give your image a name and choose whether to make it available to friends and family or to make it public. Choose to email the link to contacts or post to Facebook, then tap Share.

# Performance

## Get clued up on connections and maximising battery life

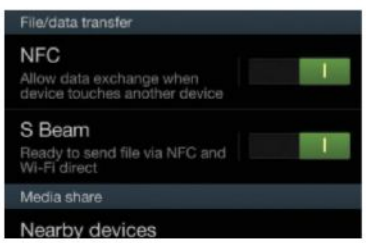



**Your Galaxy device is there to keep you connected and so keeping up to speed with all the ways you can connect and share information is important.** We show you two ways to instantly transfer files to those around you that have corresponding services. The first is to transfer via NFC, an instant touch technology rapidly gaining popularity due to its ease of use. Transferring files with NFC only requires two enabled devices to touch. The second method we look at is using Samsung's AllShare Play feature that acts both as a hub of entertainment and a quick method to share music, pictures and video with other Samsung users within range of your device.

After connections, we explore ways of prolonging the battery life on your Android phone. It runs a lot of apps and performs a lot of processes every minute it's turned on. This means that battery power can be eaten up fairly quickly, especially if you don't keep tabs on what your device is doing. The first port of call to keep your battery usage in check is the built-in Power saving mode. Switching to power saving slightly lowers the performance of your device in four areas in order to conserve battery. When switching into Power saving mode, you can customise options so you still get full power where you need it most. We also bring you a list of five extra methods of lowering battery power, such as turning off GPS-heavy navigation apps and switching off connections when they're not in use. Getting into the habit of continuously making your device as efficient as possible will mean avoiding any flat battery headaches. If you use these power-saving tips but still start to notice your battery life becoming shorter or erratic, always check new apps that you may have installed to see if they're power intensive and might be causing the extra usage.

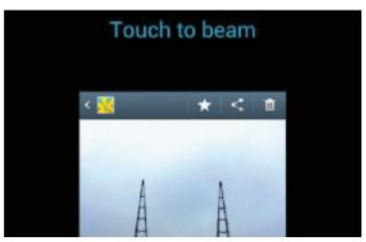
In the last two tutorials, we look at increasing your phone's memory capacity by mounting an SD card. Transferring the bulk of your large files such as music, videos and pictures onto an SD card rather than your device means that it has more internal storage free to perform its functions. We also show you how to adjust your accessibility options, which include the way your phone looks, feels and sounds. Customising these options means your phone will be easier for you to use, which makes for a much more pleasant user experience.

## Use NFC transfer | Instantly share data between two NFC-enabled devices



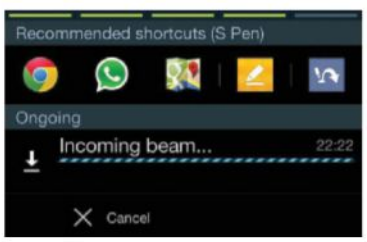

### 1: Switch NFC on

Open the Settings menu and select More settings. Under the File/data transfer section, switch both the NFC and S Beam functions on. Make sure the device you want to transfer to has also enabled the setting.




### 2: Touch to transfer

Open up the file you want to transfer, such as a photo. Touch the backs of the two devices together until you hear a beep. This means the devices have picked each other up. Tap to confirm you want to transfer the file.




### 3: See incoming beam

If you're receiving a file from another device, you'll see an S Beam notification appear in your notification panel. Depending on size, the file may take a while to transfer. Once the transfer is complete, tap to open it.

### What does NFC stand for?

Near field communication, or NFC, is a technology that allows instant transfer of files over very short distances. Usually it requires an enabled device to touch either a second enabled device or another enabled object.

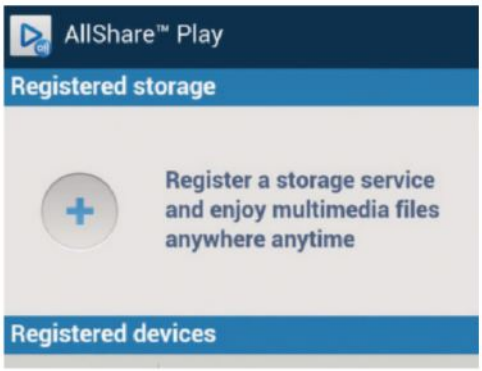
**Time needed:** 15 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Share files with AllShare Play

## Send pictures and music to other Samsung users

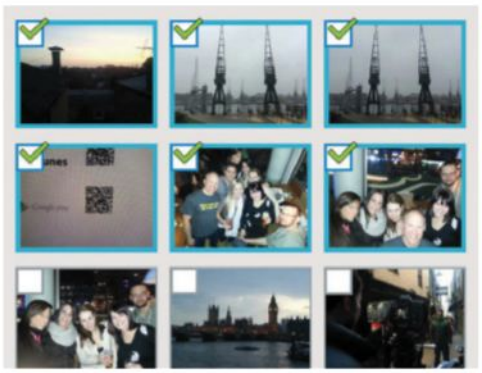
**AllShare Play is Samsung's own entertainment hub and using the feature requires signing up for a Samsung account.** Simply launch the app and follow the prompts to get started. Once you're registered, the app pulls in all the multimedia content on your phone and allows you to share it instantly with other Samsung users who are close by. It works by scanning for and picking up devices in range. Transferred files are instantly added to the other user's gallery.

## Send images instantly | Share pics with nearby Samsung users




### 1: Launch AllShare Play

Open the All Share Play icon from your home screen or app tray. Either sign in using your existing Samsung account or follow the prompts in order to sign up for a new account. Once you sign in, you will see your device appear as a registered device.

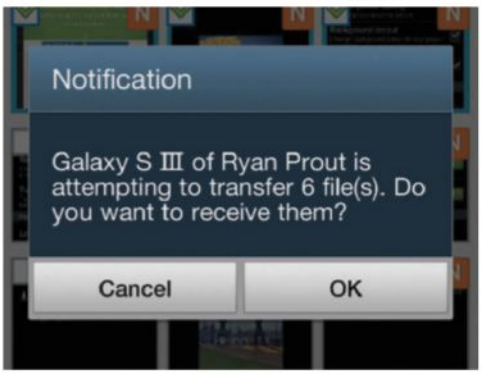


### 2: Select transfer file

Tap the device icon to open up all the media content on your phone. You will see all your images, music and videos appear with the name of your device listed on top. Make a selection of images to send, or choose Select all to send everything at once.

### 3: Choose nearby device

Tap the Share icon and then choose Send to nearby users. A list of available devices will then appear on your screen. Note that other Samsung device users need to have AllShare Play open in order to be detected. Select an available device to the start transfer.



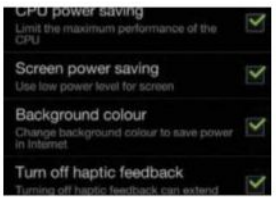

### 4: Wait for acceptance

The other user will be notified that you want to send them a selection of images and needs to accept before the transfer begins. Once complete, the images will automatically be added to their AllShare Play gallery as well as the image gallery on their device.

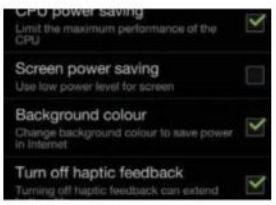
# Use Power saving mode

## Increase battery life by enabling power saving

Open the Settings menu and scroll down to the Device options and find the Power saving mode option. To switch into power saving, drag the button from the left to the right side.




Tap the option to see a more detailed view of the settings available. Here you can see the four functions that this mode affects in order to lower the amount of power your device uses.




Customise the settings by turning off a power-saving option such as Screen. If you don't want your device to dim the screen but you want all other options, then simply tap to untick.

**Time needed:** 5 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Different ways to save power

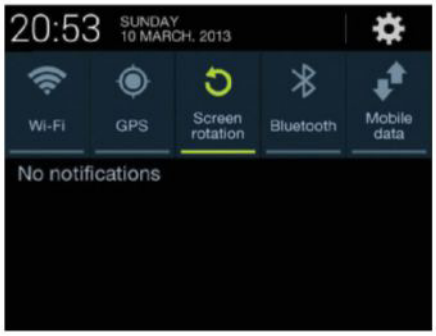
## Make your battery last a bit longer with these five easy methods

**Smartphones are like mini computers and perform an incredible number of functions, but the downside of this is that they also require a large amount of power.** The inconvenience of a dead or dying phone is something that every user will have experienced, but there are things you can do to make sure you squeeze every last minute out of your battery life without wasting it on unnecessary processes.

Connections use far more power than any other process, so it's the first place to start if you want to save energy. By switching off your 3G or Wi-Fi when you're not using it, you'll notice a difference on how long the battery lasts.

Since your phone runs a lot of processes in the background, including those of individual apps, it's important to keep an eye on just what it's up to. Some apps require far more power than others, so knowing which are battery-draining also helps. Other easy ways include dimming the screen and switching to flight mode.

## Save battery | Five ways to preserve power

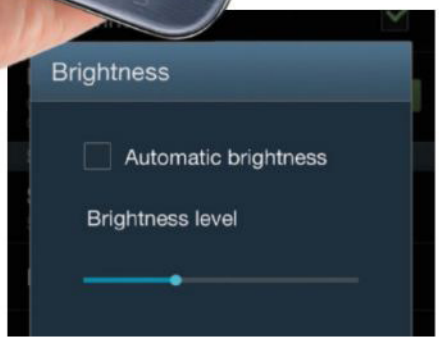



### 1: Turn off connections

Connections use up a lot of battery power, so turn them off when they're not in use. In the pull-down menu you can switch your Wi-Fi, 3G and GPS connections off with a quick tap and then turn them back on when you need them.

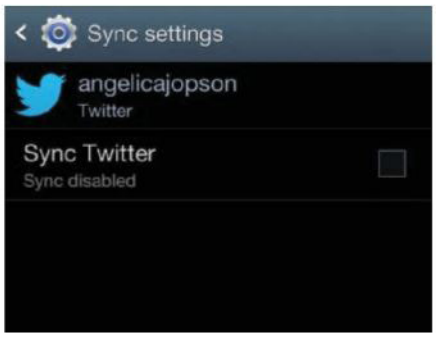
### 2: Stop navigation apps

Keep navigation apps such as Google Local switched off since they use a lot of battery by continuously using GPS to track your location. Open up the Application manager from the Settings menu to see in order to see which apps are running.



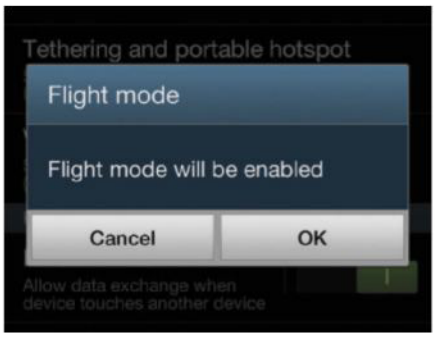

### 3: Turn down brightness

Dim your screen by opening up the Settings menu and selecting Display. Play around with the values until you find one that suits your eyes and is also kind to your battery. You can also adjust screen brightness quickly from the pull-down menu.




### 4: Switch off syncing

If left unchecked, apps automatically sync and update, using up precious battery life. Turn off automatic syncing by going to Accounts in the Settings menu; select the account, such as Twitter, and disable the sync. Remember to switch it back on to see updates.




### 5: Use Flight mode

If you know that you don't need to connect to 3G or Wi-Fi or you're running low but need your phone, then switch to Flight mode to save valuable battery life. Open Settings, then choose More settings and tap Flight mode to activate it.

**Time needed:** 10 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Mount an SD card

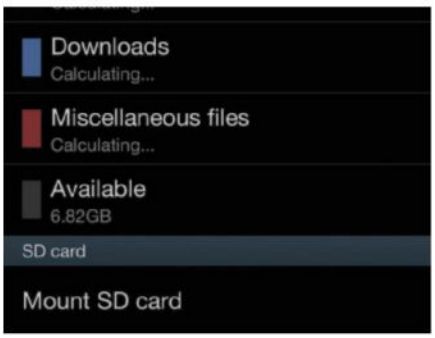
## Expand your device's storage capacity by inserting and mounting an SD card

**Most, if not all, Android smartphones are equipped with a microSD slot.** While manufacturers are constantly increasing the amount of memory available on their new phones, adding an SD card gives you even more space to play with. SD cards come in different sizes up to 64GB. By saving apps, images and music directly to the SD card, you can free up your phone's internal memory to perform all its other functions and processes.

To start the process of mounting your SD card to your phone you'll first need to insert it by switching off your device, removing the back cover and fitting it into the slot. Once you've turned your phone back on again, follow the steps to get it up and running.

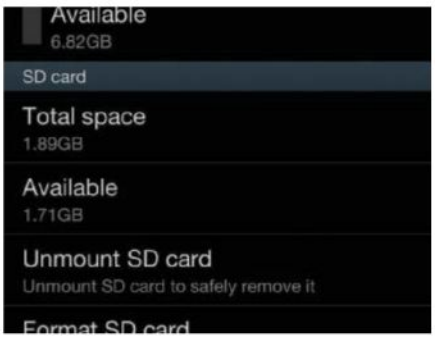
### 1: Open Storage settings

Launch the Settings menu as usual and scroll down to the Device section. From here, tap the Storage option once to open the menu. The Storage manu will give you a breakdown of how much memory is in use and how it is being used.




### 2: Mount SD card

Because you have an SD card inserted into your device, the Mount SD card option will be available on the Storage screen. Tap this once to start mounting your memory card. You will have to wait a moment for the process to complete.




### 3: View card information

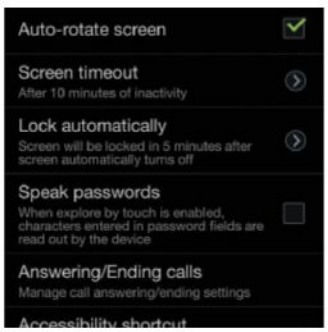
Once the card is mounted, it'll appear on the Storage screen. You'll be able to see how big the card is and how much space is still available on it. If you have previously used the card for something else, it's a good idea to format it first.

# Modify your accessibility options

## Tweak settings to make your phone easier and more enjoyable to use

### 1: Locate Accessibility

Open up the Settings menu by and scroll all the way down the page to the System settings. Locate the Accessibility options and tap once to open the menu.

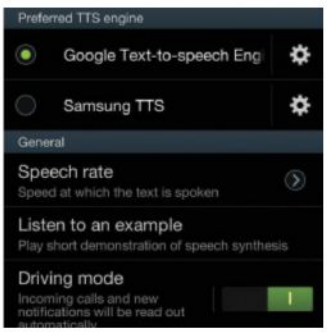



### 2: Accessibility menu

The extensive Accessibility menu is broken down into sections such as System, Hearing and Mobility. Each of these lists options to make your device easier to use in that area.

### 3: Screen timeout

Tap Screen timeout to specify how long you want your phone to wait before it locks your screen. To change the defualt, select a value between 15 seconds and 10 minutes.




### 4: Adjust text

To make text on your screen easier to read, scroll down to the Vision options. You can make the font size bigger or tap the Text-to-speech output and turn Driving mode on.

# Tricks

Use your Galaxy to its full potential with these top tricks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Type with speed with these keyboards

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Keep up-to-date with current affairs

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**120 Follow your favourite sports**
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**122 Plan a holiday**
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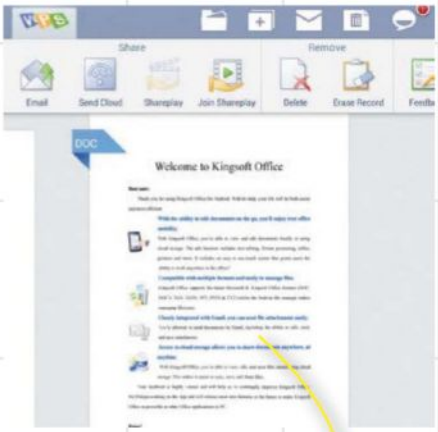
Get a good night's sleep



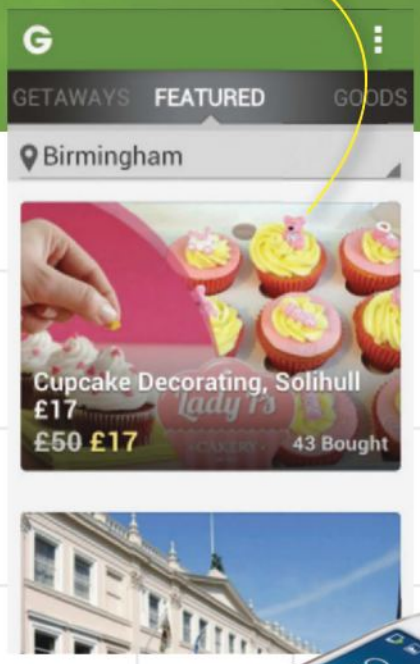

**96** Follow the news

**100** Edit on the move

**104** Listen to the radio

**110** Shop while mobile

**116** Learn to cook



## HOT TRICKS

- ✔ Learn to cook
- ✔ Book a holiday
- ✔ Get and keep fit
- ✔ Edit files on the go
- ✔ Stream movies

"Your Galaxy can help you track your finances and much more"

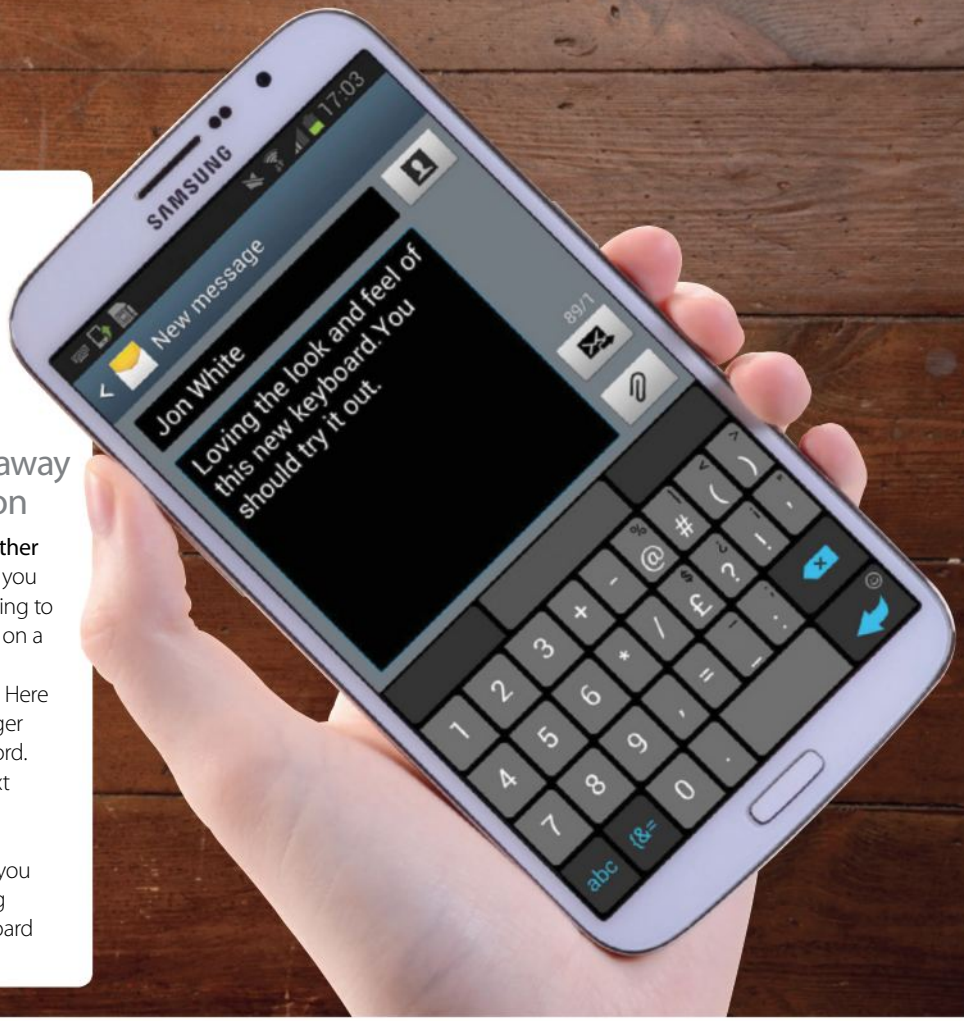
# Explore alternative keyboards

## Take the strain out of tapping away by swiping and using prediction

**Typing using an on-screen keyboard can be rather tiring and fiddly.** Either the keys are too small or you just end up bashing one that you weren't intending to hit. The delete key can often get the most 'wear' on a tablet or Android smartphone touchscreen.

That's where swipe keyboards come in handy. Here we look at keyboards that let you move your finger over the keys, joining up each letter to form a word. Some keyboards are great at predicting your next word, too.

As well as looking at these, we also consider a keyboard geared up for thumb use, split so that you are able to get a comfortable holding and typing position. Suddenly, tapping at a traditional keyboard seems rather old-fashioned.

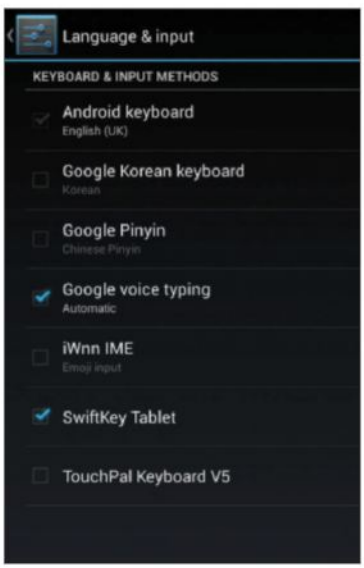



## Let your Android device predict your next word

**App used:** SwiftKey Keyboard

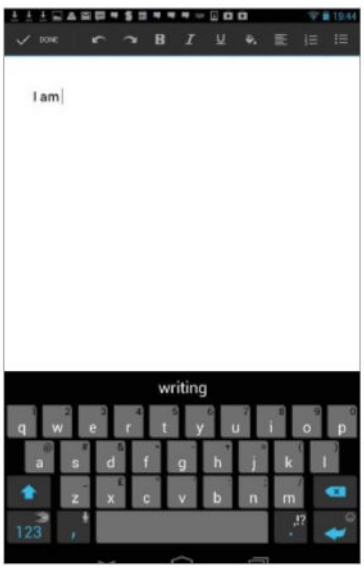
**Price:** £2.99/$3.99

**Developer:** SwiftKey




### 1: Set up keyboard

After downloading SwiftKey, it must be set up. In Settings, go to 'Language & input' and tap SwiftKey Tablet. This will disable the Android keyboard.




### 2: Start typing

As you sweep your finger over the keyboard to join up the various letters, the keyboard will work out the word that you are trying to form.

### 3: Predicting text

It will then also figure out what word you may want to type next. Tap the suggested word to insert it. The app begins to learn your style.

## Create words by sliding across the keyboard with your finger

**App used:** TouchPal Keyboard

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** CooTek

### 1: Slide finger on keyboard

With the TouchPad keyboard, you slide your finger across letters. It will show a blue line joining each one together and suggestions are made.

### 2: Making suggestions

It'll also make suggestions as you type, so that you can speed up the inputting process. These words change as you continue to swipe.

### 3: Can't swipe numbers

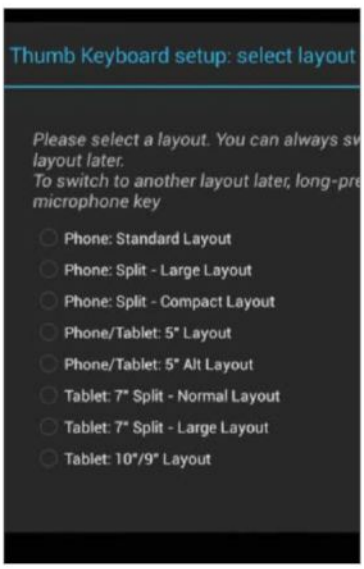
Any numbers or punctuation have to be tapped in. You can't swipe across these in the same way as you can with words, but that is to be expected.

## Use your thumbs to type using a special kind of keyboard

**App used:** Thumb Keyboard

**Price:** £1.87/$2.35

**Developer:** Beansoft




### 1: Choose a keyboard

When you open Thumb Keyboard, you're asked to select a layout. The app works for phones and tablets, as well as the in-between phablets.

### 2: The split keyboard

Whatever option you choose, the keyboard is split and formatted so that you are able to type using your thumbs. Note the duplicate 'g' and 'v'.

### 3: Adding a space

You can tap the space bar with either your left or right thumb. Also, by holding down on a key, you can call up a host of other characters.

# Stay on top of the news

## Never feel left behind by ensuring that you get the news relevant to you

**What is seen as important in the news is not always what *you* deem to be crucial.** One of the ways of ensuring that you get the news that interests you and keeps you informed in the ways that you want is by tailoring the news experience to suit your exact needs.

There are apps which allow you to pull in feeds from the web and mix them with social media so that you have a destination in which everything of relevance to you is contained. There are also apps which let you gather the output of serious news providers and magazines and have them all to hand in a similar format for ease of use.

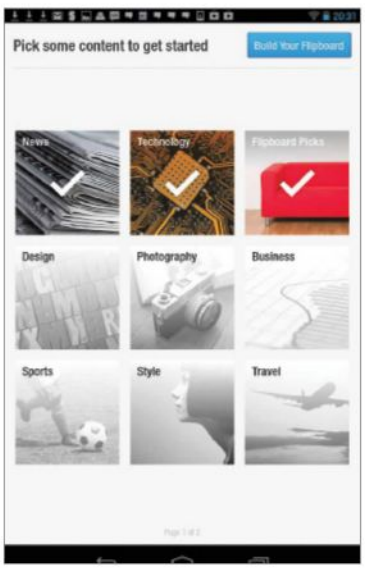
You can also take an app such as BBC News and tailor it by removing categories you don't want and adding those that you do.

## Create your own news feeds and use social media

**App used:** Flipboard: Your News Magazine

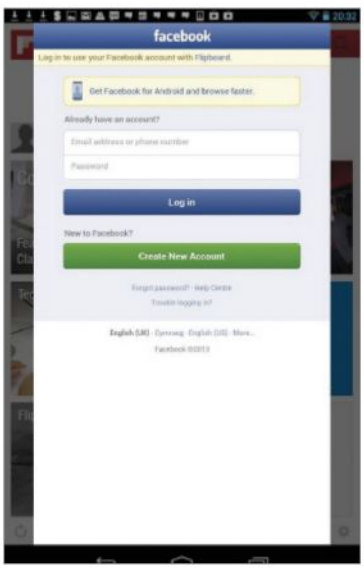
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Flipboard




### 1: Pick bespoke content

Open Flipboard and choose feeds from the content on offer. You can go back and edit these later, adding more and deleting those you don't like.




### 2: Add social media

You can add Facebook and Twitter feeds to create a news service tailored to your own needs, combining hard news with social media.

### 3: Browse the content

Flipboard is aptly named. You tap a category and then flip left and right to reveal new content, all laid out as it would be in a higher-end magazine.

## Read the latest news from recognised content providers

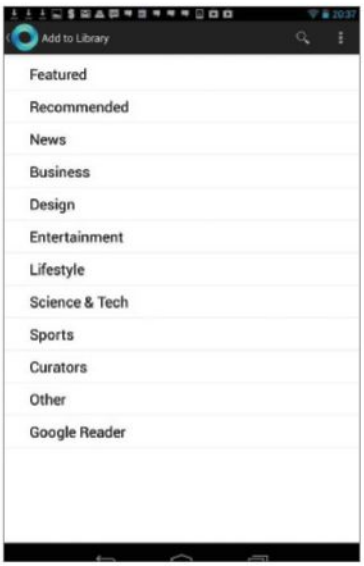
**App used:** Google Currents

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Google

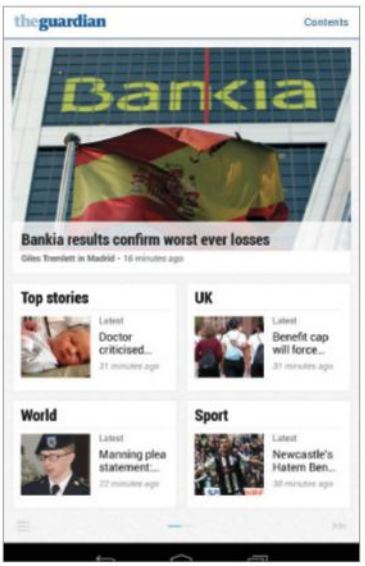
### 1: Choose a news source

Newspapers and magazines including *The Guardian* and *Stylist* are available from the start with Currents. You can add more by tapping the '+' icon.




### 2: Add extra content

When you tap '+', you can choose categories that are of interest to you, such as Sports. Other providers will be recommended. Some are paid-for.




### 3: Read the content

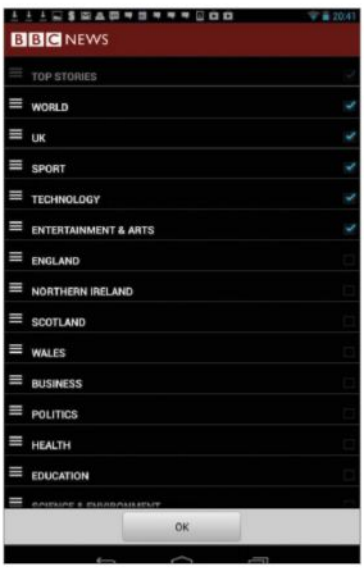
Tap on the icon of a news provider or magazine to access the content. The publications are geared up for the layout of Currents. Swipe right to left.

## Get the news you want by selecting categories

**App used:** BBC News

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** BBC




### 1: Choose your settings

Tap the settings icon (top right) to get a long list of all of the categories available to you within the app. Tick the ones you want to include.

### 2: Read the news

Once you have selected your categories, they will become available to you on the home screen of the app. Tap a story in order to read it.

### 3: Adjust text size

You are able to increase or decrease the size of the text depending on how much of the story you want on the screen at once.

# Save items to read later

## Make the best use of time by saving webpages and articles for offline reading

**If you are one of the many people who come across articles that you like so much that you want to keep them for later reading, then you need an app which lets you keep those pieces in one place.**

While you could email links to yourself, this is a messy solution. It's far better to grab whatever content you need from apps and webpages and store them. You can then share these with others via social media at a later point.

Apps such as those on these pages allow you to do just that. Even better, you can read the pieces no matter where you are: you can be in an area with no signal whatsoever and still be able to catch up on what you have saved.

## Share and save content and videos for later viewing

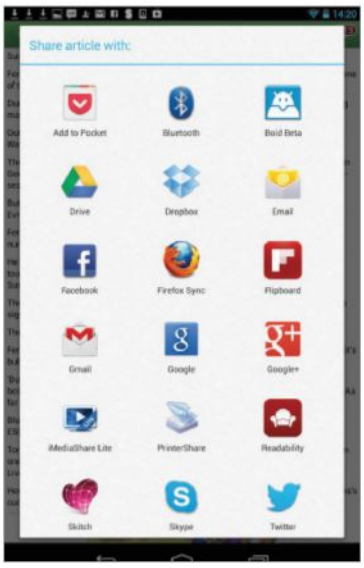
**App used:** Pocket

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Read It Later

### 1: Find an article

Open an app – here we are using Mail Online as an example. To keep a page, tap the menu icon (three dots) in the app you are using and select Share.




### 2: Selecting Pocket

You will be shown a host of services that you can share your content with. When Pocket is installed, it will display as Add to Pocket. Select it.

### 3: Go to Pocket

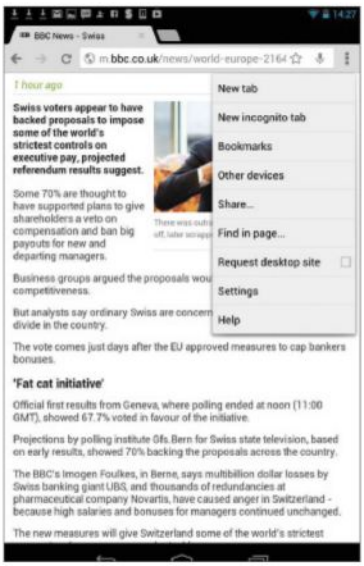
When you open the Pocket app, the item you've saved and shared will appear. Note that you'll need to register for Pocket for it to work.

## Save website pages and come back to them when offline

**App used:** Instapaper

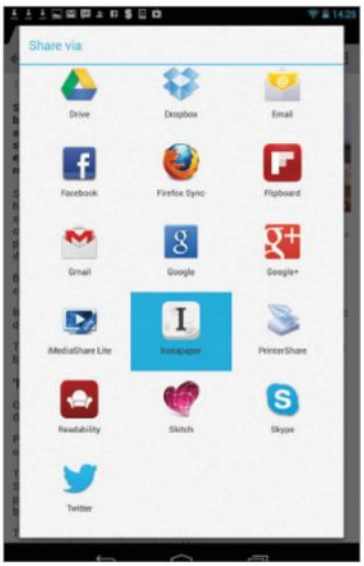
**Price:** £1.93/$2.99

**Developer:** Mobelux




### 1: Browse the web

Install Instapaper and register or log in. Go to your device's web browser and surf the internet. When you find a page you like, select Share.




### 2: Select Instapaper

Now look for the Instapaper option and select it. The page you have been looking at will be saved and this will be indicated briefly on the screen.

### 3: Read it later

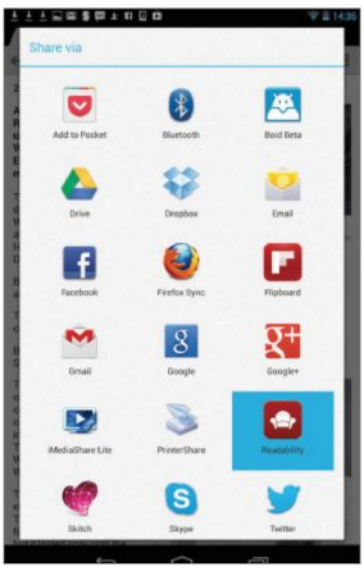
Go to Instapaper and, under the Read Later tab, you'll see the saved page. Tap it to show a page formatted by the app to use minimum storage.

## Favourite articles and share with friends via social media

**App used:** Readability

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Readability




### 1: Sign up or login

Open the Readability app and either log in if you have an account or sign up. Now, in a web browser, find an article, Share and select Readability.

### 2: Browsing saved articles

Articles will automatically be placed in the reading list of Readability. You can open them by tapping. Articles can be favourited or archived too.

### 3: Share on social media

By tapping the menu icon (bottom right), you are able to share the article. This time select either Twitter or Facebook, comment and send.

# Edit documents on the go

## View your documents and make amendments to them on your device

**If you need to take your work with you, then you need not suffer the bulk of a laptop computer.** Your Galaxy device gives you the ability to quickly open or create a document and tap away. It also lets you edit existing documents which you may have stored on your device, in the cloud or on email.

Fully featured office suites allow for swift alterations of word-processed documents, spreadsheets and presentations. Once you have finished with a document, you can share it with others via email or the cloud.

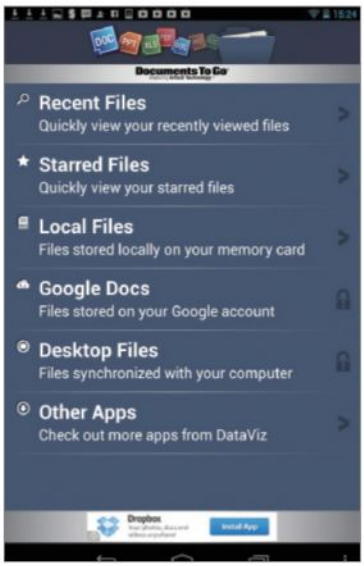
Apps such as these can revolutionise your working life and make you more efficient and you can even ensure that documents can only be seen by you.

## Download and edit documents created in Google Docs

**App used:**
Documents To Go 3.0

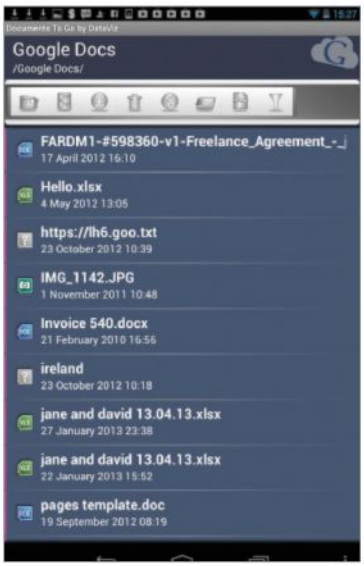
**Price:** Free

**Developer:**
DataViz




### 1: Open Google Docs

Go to the Documents To Go app and select Google Docs to find files stored in your account. You'll need to pay to unlock the full version for this feature.




### 2: Find a file

Input your Google Docs username and password to gain access to the files stored in your Google account. Tap the one that you want.

### 3: Editing the article

Now the document will open on your device. In order to edit the document, tap the menu icon in the bottom-right corner and tap Edit.

## Open a password-protected word-processed document

**App used:** OfficeSuite Pro 7 (Trial)

**Price:** £9.87/$14.99

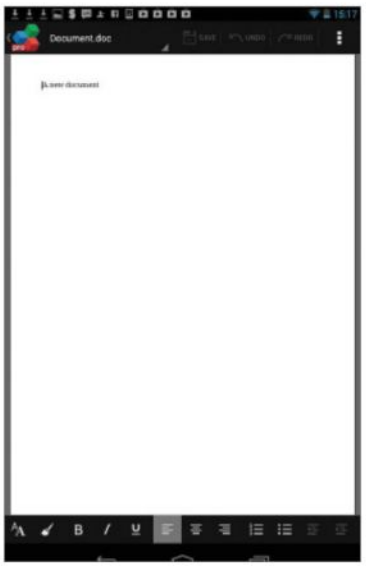
**Developer:** Mobile Systems

### 1: Find the document

OfficeSuite allows password-protected documents to open. Tap the Internal tab and search for a document. Tap the file you wish to view and edit.

### 2: Tap in the password

A password-protected document won't open until you unlock it with the password. So enter the correct password and then tap OK.




### 3: Edit the document

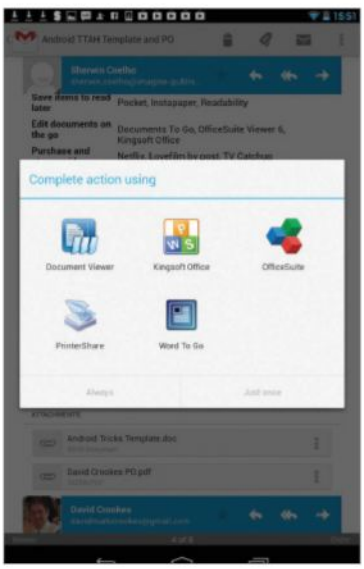
The document is now open and you can edit it in OfficeSuite. When you save your document, the password protection will remain with the file.

## Edit, send and save your email attachments

**App used:** Kingsoft Office 5.3.4 (Free)

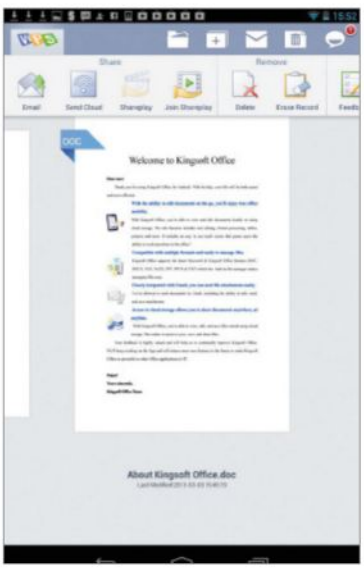
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Kingsoft Office Software Corporation



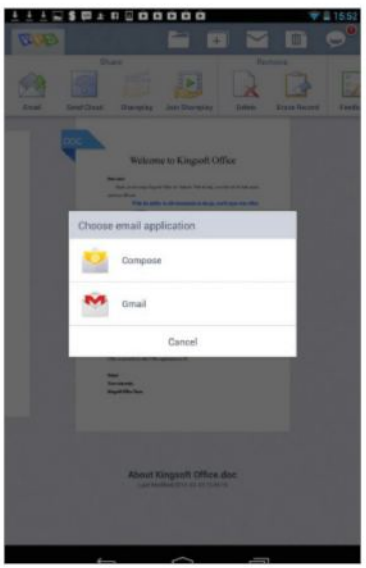

### 1: Open an email

Go to your email and find an attachment you wish to open. When you tap on it, you'll be asked how you want to open it. Select Kingsoft Office.




### 2: Send an email

You can now edit your attached document in Kingsoft Office. You can also email documents by tapping the envelope icon on the top bar.




### 3: Select email app

Select Email and choose your email app. It is also possible to share documents to the cloud with services such as Google Drive and Dropbox.

# Purchase and stream videos

## Watch TV shows and movies on your Galaxy device

**There used to be a time when watching television entailed having a portable TV with a dodgy aerial.** There also used to be a time when watching films required a bulky portable DVD player. Not anymore.

Today, you just need your Galaxy device and some great apps. Services such as LOVEFiLM and Netflix need a low-cost subscription, but they allow you to stream TV programmes and films. You can also have DVDs, Blu-rays and games sent to your home.

Other apps, such as TV Catchup, tap into Freeview and deliver free-to-air channels. Being able to watch on the go means you extend your entertainment options and never miss a favourite programme again.

## Watch live television and see older programmes

**App used:** TVCatchup

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** GZero

### 1: Find a station

Find the TVCatchup app in the Google Play Store and download it. When you launch the TVCatchup app, it will check your eligibility to watch, based on your location. If all is okay, you will see a host of channels.

### 2: Use social media

You can scroll through the channels to find one that you want to watch. In addition, you are able to share information about a programme using Twitter and let your friends know what you're watching.

### 3: View in full-screen

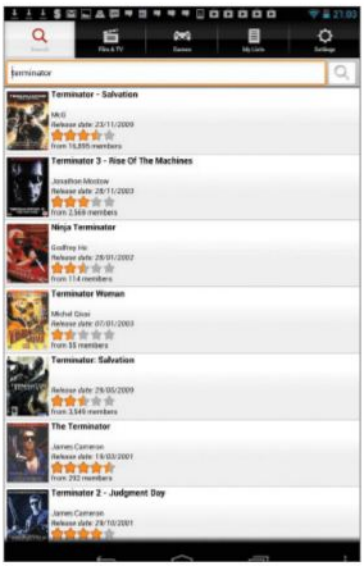
The programmes open in a small window at first. However, you can tap the Full Screen option to take advantage of the screen real estate on your device and watch with increased clarity and comfort.

## Have films sent to you via the post

**App used:** LOVEFiLM by Post

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Lovefilm

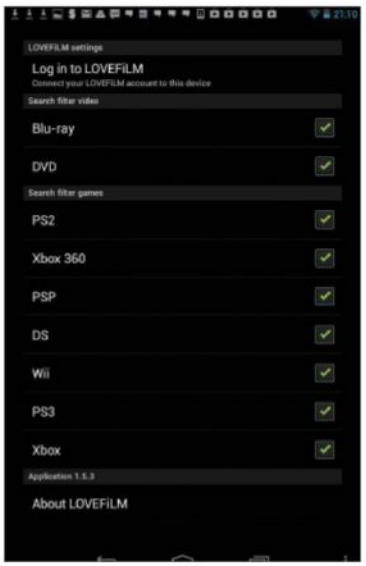



### 1: Choose a film

Use the tabs on LOVEFiLM to find movies to suit your taste, or you can use the search bar. Either way, you will see lots of choice and handy ratings.

### 2: Watch a trailer

Select a film and you can decide to add it to the list of DVDs or Blu-rays to have sent to your home. You can watch a trailer via your device, too.




### 3: Select your formats

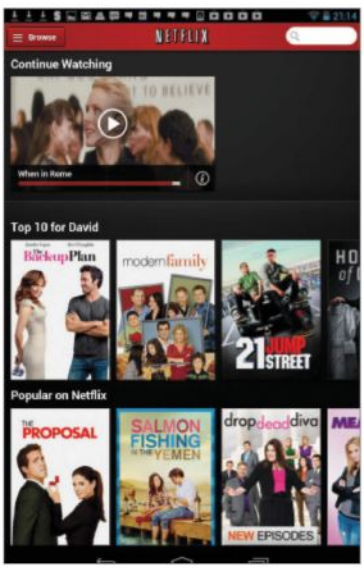
You can narrow down what the app shows you by going to the settings and unchecking the unwanted media. It also lets you stream to Android.

## Stream boxsets and your pick of films on your device

**App used:** Netflix

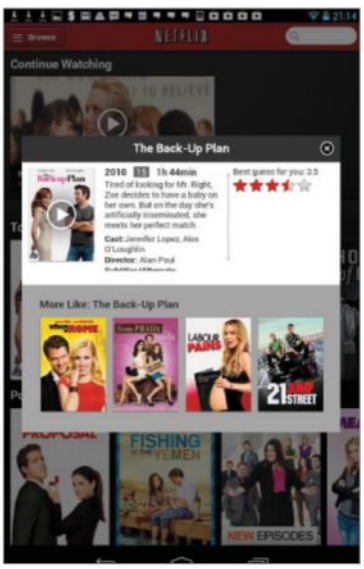
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Netflix




### 1: Browse Netflix archive

Use the search or look through the suggestions to find a movie or boxset. If you have started a film, you can pick up from where you left off.




### 2: View information

When you select a show or film, you can read up on it and check out the ratings. To begin playing a movie, tap the play icon and it will start to stream.

### 3: Control the film

Use the buttons around the main film screen to control the video. You can pause, rewind or fast-forward and you can also change the volume.

# Stream live or catch-up radio

## Stream and listen to digital radio on your device

**A lot of handsets still provide the ability to listen to analogue radio stations, but with the digital switchover looming, there has never been a better time to delve into the wealth of digital radio apps from the Google Play Store.**

Digital radio simply uses your internet connection to stream content directly to your Android device. However, you can gain access to a variety of stations from across the world or hone into the best stations closer to home with the likes of BBC iPlayer.

Radioplayer and TuneIn Radio (which offer alarm functions and a chance to catch-up on previously broadcast content), are the focus for our tutorials as we guide you in getting the most from them.

© Thinkstock

## Turn your TuneIn Radio station into an alarm clock!

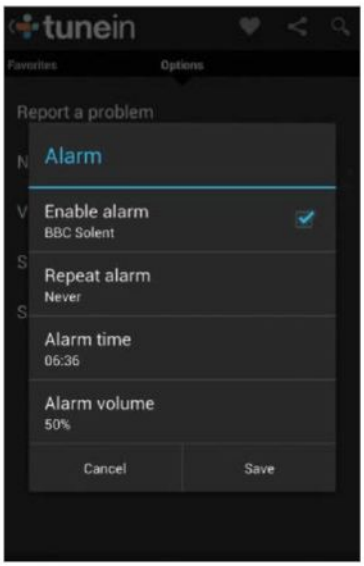
**App used:** TuneIn Radio

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** TuneIn

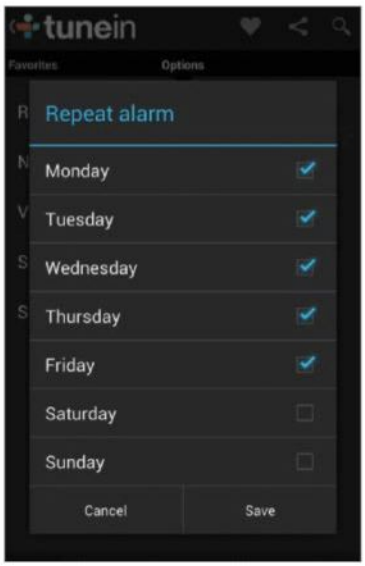
### 1: Pick your station

In the Browse tab of TuneIn Radio, select Local Radio. Next, scroll down the list of stations until you find the one you want and then tap on it.




### 2: Setting the Alarm

Press the menu icon and choose Settings>Alarm. Enable the alarm, then tap Alarm time to set the alarm call. Click Save when you're finished.




### 3: Repeat

Back at the Alarm screen, tap the Repeat option and set the day(s) you want the alarm to repeat. Tap Save. Now tap Save to confirm the alarm.

## Catch up on previously recorded radio broadcasts with Radioplayer

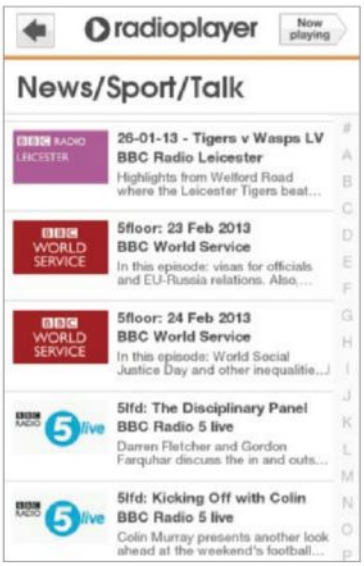
**App used:** Radioplayer: UK Radio, one app

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** UK Radioplayer

### 1: Accessing the menu

Launch Radioplayer and you'll see several stations scrolling in front of your eyes. However, look to the top-left corner and tap on the menu icon.




### 2: Category catchup

You'll now see a list of options. At the bottom of the screen, tap on Catchup. Now tap the Categories tab and select one, such as News/Sport/Talk.

### 3: Play and interact

Tap on a station to play the content. Pull down the drop-down tab to read about the station or tap Listen Live (top right) to listen to the station live.

## Set reminders for your favourite shows with BBC iPlayer Radio

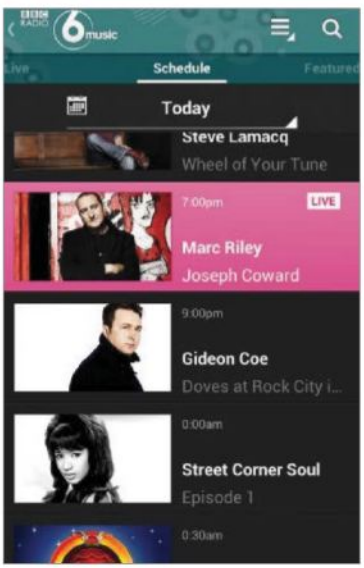
**App used:** BBC iPlayer Radio

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Media Applications Technologies for the BBC

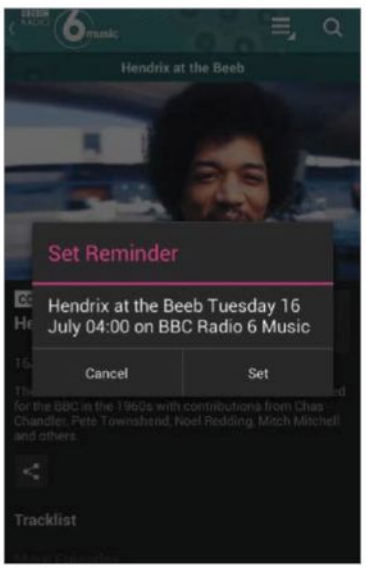
### 1: Choose station

Launch BBC iPlayer Radio and from the interface, quickly swipe between both national and regional stations using a simple radio dial.




### 2: Swipe through tabs

Once you've picked a station, you can either listen live or swipe left to show sub-categories, such as the Most Popular on-demand content.




### 3: Set Reminders

Select Schedule to view forthcoming shows. Pick one for a description, then tap on the alarm clock icon to ensure you don't miss a show.

# Make movies on your device

## Learn to add effects, transitions and music to your Galaxy movies

**You wouldn't want to edit an hour of HD video on a mobile phone or tablet, but it is certainly possible to edit short clips and it can be a quite enjoyable way to spend a few minutes.** It is surprising how good some video editors are and here we take a look at three great tools. AndroVid Pro and VidTrim Pro are perfect for preparing video clips. The latter can be trimmed, special effects can be added and they can be resized to make them more suitable for the web or for TVs. Once the clips are prepared, they can be turned into a fantastic movie that looks professionally produced using Magisto, which is a really nice movie-making app.

## Add special effects to your Android videos

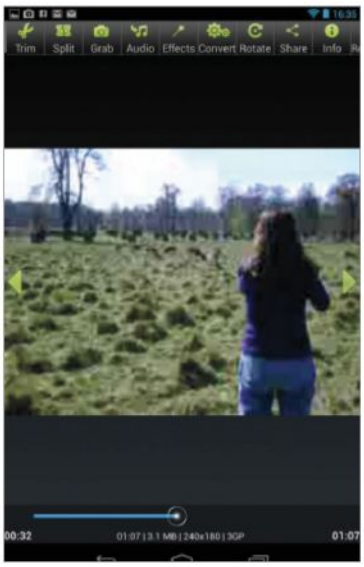
**App used:** AndroVid Pro Video Editor

**Price:** £1.59/$1.99

**Developer:** Zeoxy

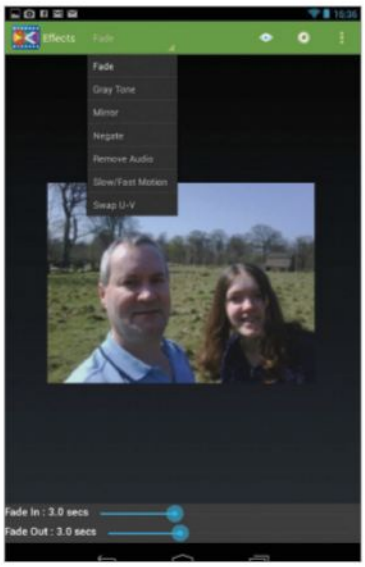
### 1: Select a video

When AndroVid starts, it displays a list of videos stored on the device. The video camera icon at the top is used to shoot a live video.




### 2: Editing functions

Select or shoot a video and it starts playing. The buttons at the top can be used to trim it, split it, rotate it and so on. Press the Effects icon.




### 3: Apply an effect

Press Fade in the top bar to display a menu with Mirror, Negate and other effects. Select one and click the gear icon to apply it.

## Resize videos for the big screen or for easier uploading

**App used:** VidTrim Pro

**Price:** £1.76/$2.84

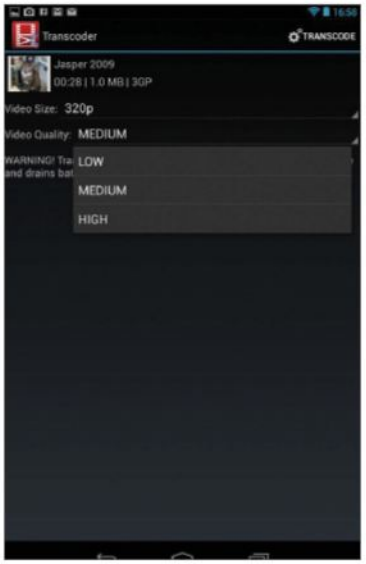
**Developer:** Goseet

### 1: Browse your videos

VidTrim Pro displays a list of videos along with thumbnail images. Use the first icon in the toolbar at the top to sort them, then press one.

### 2: Trim with scissors

Select a video and at the top is a toolbar with useful functions like the scissors. Trim the video start and end with the markers at the bottom.




### 3: Transcode the video

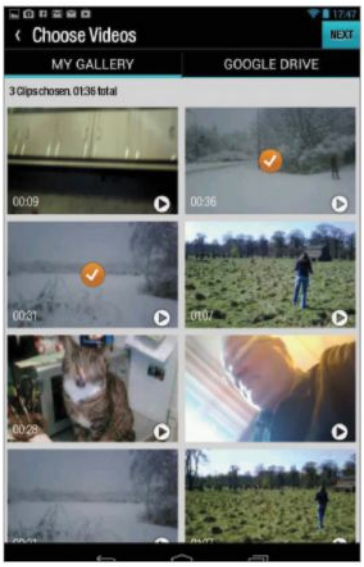
Select a video, then the Transcoder (gear icon). Select low size/quality for emailing/uploading and high for TV playback. Press Transcode to finish.

## Turn a collection of video clips into a professionally produced movie

**App used:** Magisto - Magical Video Editor

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Magisto

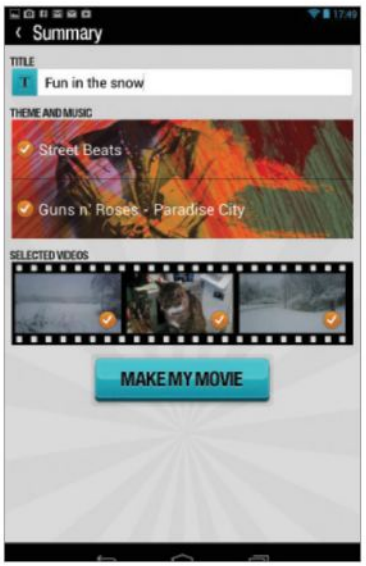



### 1: Shoot or select

On the main menu, you can shoot a video or access the gallery. Choose the gallery and then tap the video clips to include in the movie.

### 2: Themes and music

There are actually two steps here, but they are very similar. In this one you choose a theme and in the next one you choose the music.




### 3: Make your movie

Tap the title box and enter the movie title. Press the theme and music to select different ones. Once you are happy, press Make My Movie.

# Manage your finances

## With a selection of third-party apps, you can keep track of your cash and online finances

**With our current recession and ongoing budget crisis, it's never been a more important time to keep track of your finances.** Luckily the Android platform is equipped with a whole host of apps to help and we've sourced three which we feel offer a broad range of uses.

The PayPal app is useful to have for existing users of the service. We show you how to view current transactions and send a payment (note there is a transaction fee for credit card transfers).

Additionally, we have the comprehensive My BudgetBook, which allows you to manage your daily income and expenditure and gain a better overview of your finances (useful for self-employed people or home-owners wishing to track standing orders).

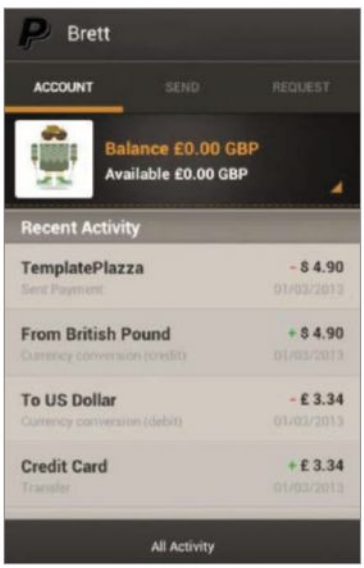
Finally, TripLog – GPS Mileage Tracker is designed to track your mileage and calculate the cost – so it's ideal for company car drivers. We'll show you how to set this up and get started.

## View recent transactions and send payments to other users

**App used:** PayPal

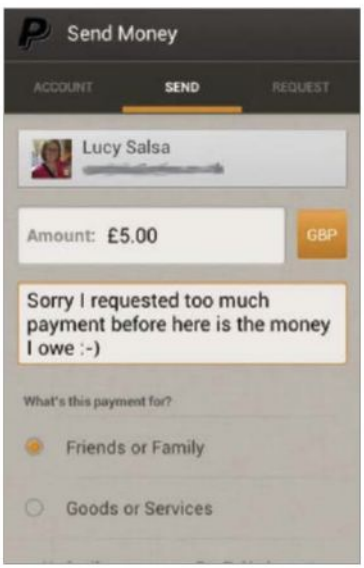
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** PayPal Mobile



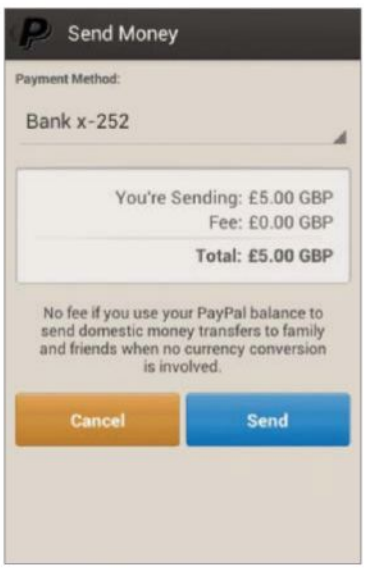

### 1: View transactions

After login, you can see your current balance and recent transactions under the Account tab. Simply tap on a transaction to view the details.




### 2: Send payment

On the main menu, tap Send. Fill in the recipient's email address and the amount. Next, fill in the rest of the form and at the base, tap Review.




### 3: Set payment method

Select a payment method from the list (for bank transfer, you need to set up your bank account via the PayPal desktop beforehand) and tap Send.

## Set up a standing order and keep track of ongoing expenses in a graphical form

**App used:** My Budget Book

**Price:** £1.99/$2.99

**Developer:** OneTwoApps

### 1: Set up standing order

In the app, tap Standing orders. Now tap New, then fill in the Title and Amount fields. Optionally, choose a category from the default list.

### 2: Set expiry date

Tap Select expiration date, then the Expiration date. Set this using the scroll wheel and tap OK. Next, set the period and tap on Save at the top.

### 3: View graph

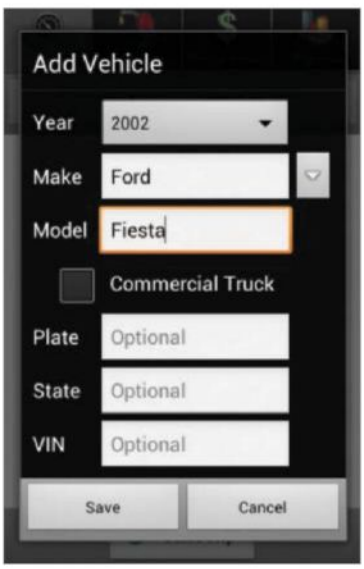
Tap the Back icon (top), then Diagram (bottom). Use the yellow arrows at the top to move through the months to see your projected finances.

## Use TripLog to track/record your mileage and view the cost of travel

**App used:** TripLog – GPS Mileage Tracker

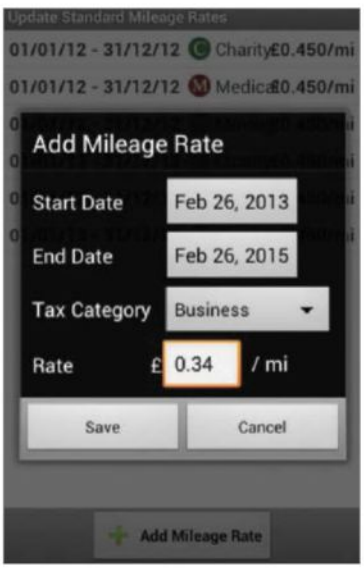
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** eSocial




### 1: Set up your car

Upon first launching the app, you're prompted to enter your country and input your car details. So fill these in and then tap Save.




### 2: Set up cost per-mile rate

Press the menu icon, then Settings> Mileage Rates. Long-press any existing business rate and delete. Tap Add Mileage Rate to enter your own. Save.

### 3: Start Trip

On the main menu, select Start Trip. Enter your start odometer reading. Tap End Trip Now to input an end reading. Enter other details and tap Save.

# Shop from your device

## Bid on items or grab a special deal - all from your device

**Now that the sophistication of smartphones and tablets has increased over the years, you can pretty much do the majority of internet-based tasks that you can do on a desktop PC.**

For example, you can grab the official eBay app to bid on auction items, purchase products from Amazon or grab the odd bargain or two from companies such as Groupon – all on the fly, from the comfort of your device.

We take a look at the aforementioned apps in our tutorials and showcase how to bid on items on eBay, scan barcodes from boxes (say from within shops) and if the price is better, buy the product from Amazon straight from your phone or tablet.

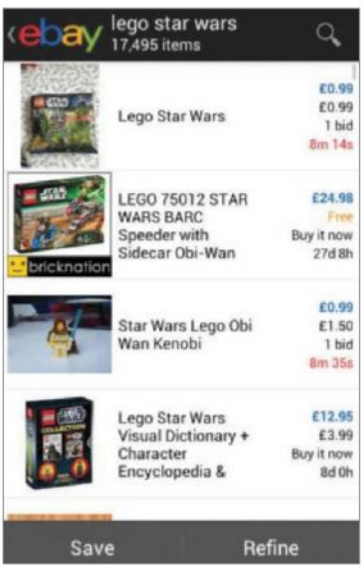
Also, we look at the money-saving app Groupon and show you how to view deals and buy items.

## Log into your eBay account and bid on auction items from your device

**App used:** Official eBay Android App

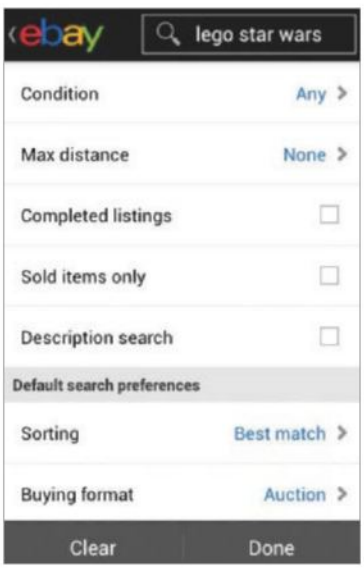
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** eBay Mobile




### 1: Search for items

Log into your eBay account by tapping Sign in. Tap on Categories, tap the magnifying glass, enter a search term and select a category from the list.




### 2: Refine search

Tap Refine, then Category and from the list choose, say, Video Games & Consoles. Scroll down and change Buying format to Auction. Tap Done.

### 3: Place bid

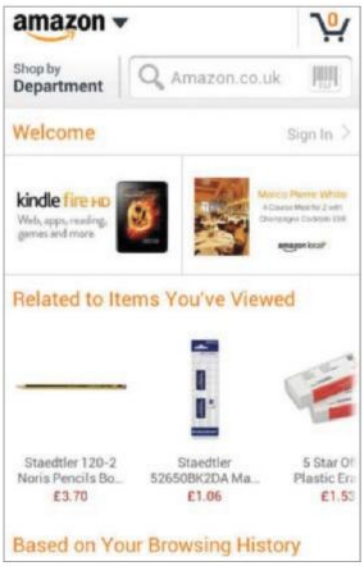
Tap on an item, scroll to the bottom and tap Place bid – specific amount. Now enter your maximum bid. Tap Place bid and then Confirm bid.

## Scan a product's barcode and purchase it via Amazon directly from your device

**App used:** Amazon Mobile for Android

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Amazon Eurasia Holdings




### 1: Scan barcode

At the top of the Amazon app's home menu (next to Shop by Department), tap on the search field. Now select the Scan a barcode option.

### 2: Use your camera to scan

Point your camera at the item's barcode. If it finds a match, the app will display the results. Next, tap on the thumbnail to view more details.

### 3: Buy item

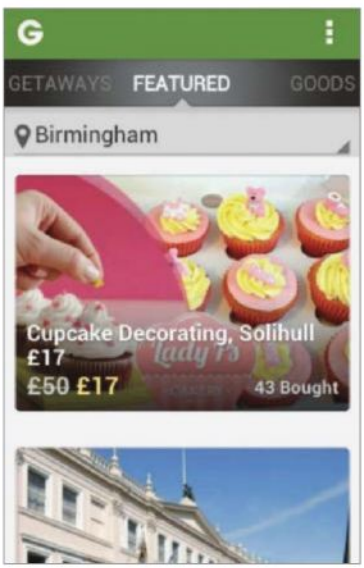
If you're happy with the price, scroll down to the bottom and tap Buy Now to log in with your Amazon account and complete the transaction.

## Access Groupon to view local deals and grab a bargain

**App used:** Groupon – Daily Deals, Coupons

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Groupon

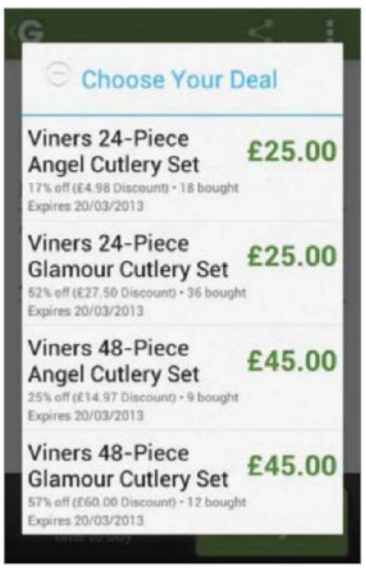



### 1: New/existing members

Launch Groupon and either enter an email address and tap Explore Deals or Already a member. Tap the screen to get to the main interface.

### 2: View the deals

Swipe left or right to see the Featured, Getaways or Goods deals. If a deal takes your fancy, tap on the large thumbnail to view more details.




### 3: Buy the deal

Tap Buy. Depending on your selection, you may need to pick from a further list. Then sign in or create a Groupon account to proceed with the purchase.

# Organise your life with lists

## Use your Galaxy device to keep track of your work and daily life

**Keeping organised is one of the best ways to ensure a stress-free environment.** Knowing where everything is and having a schedule of your daily tasks can keep you focused and motivated for longer. Thankfully, Android has several apps available to keep you on track.

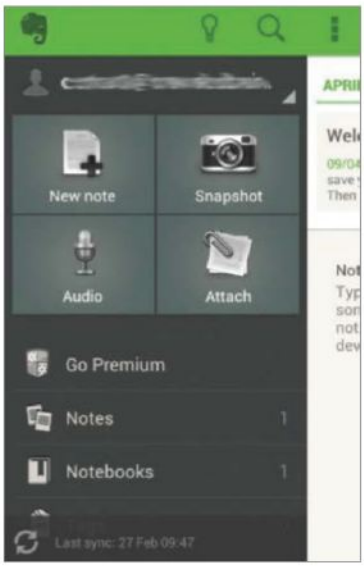
First off, we take a look at the popular Evernote app which allows you to create notes, view them in a map, upload images and sync these between multiple devices. Next on the list is Astrid Tasks & To Do List. With this tutorial we will guide you in sharing a task with your colleague. Finally, we utilise Any.DO, which offers an intuitive interface for planning your day – something which we will focus on in our tutorial as we guide you through the basics.

## Organise your receipts for easy retrieval later via a tag

**App used:** Evernote

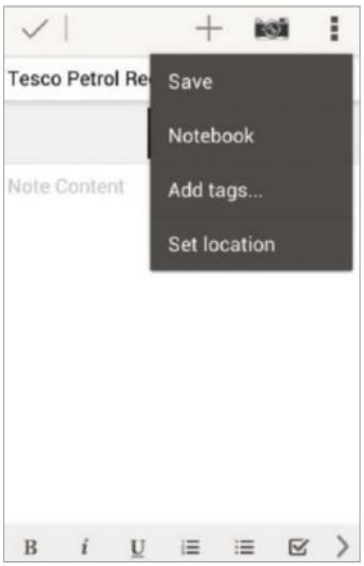
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Evernote Corporation



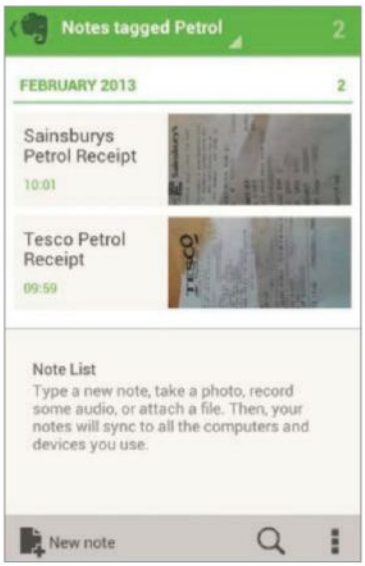

### 1: Add a snapshot

Launch Evernote and sign-in (or create an account). Next, press the back button/icon to get to the main interface and then tap on Snapshot.




### 2: Take a photo

The camera app will launch. Take a shot of your petrol receipt and tap Save. Name your Snapshot and tap on the menu icon at the top right.




### 3: Add tags & view

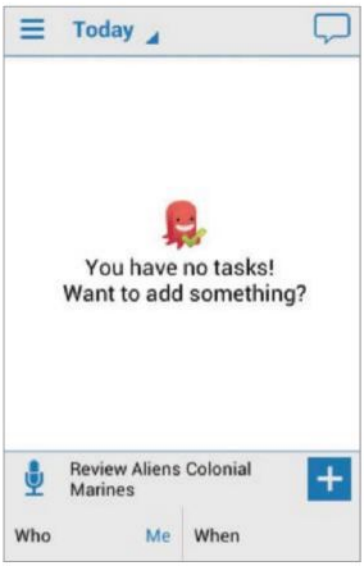
Select Add tags. Now type Petrol and tap Done. Back on the previous screen, tap the tickbox and select the Tags option to view entries under petrol.

## Create work or fun-related tasks and delegate these to others

**App used:** Astrid Tasks & To-do List

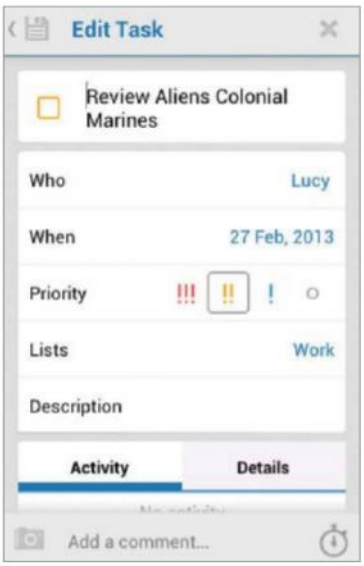
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Astrid



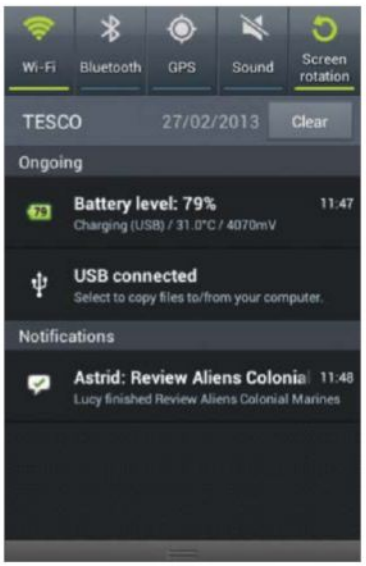

### 1: Add a task

Launch Astrid and sign in with your Google account. Tap the Add a task field at the bottom and enter your task. Next press the '+' button.




### 2: Choose user

Select your new task, then tap Who to bring up the Who should do this box. Key in a colleague's email address or choose one from your contacts.




### 3: Edit task

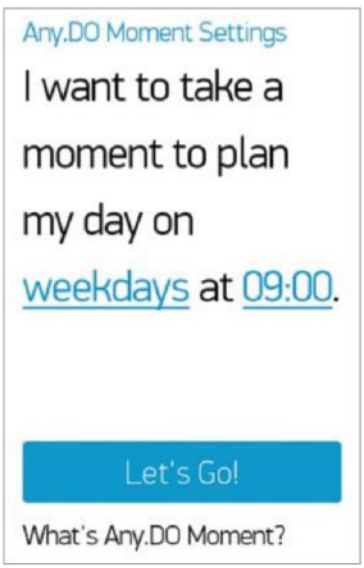
Fill in other details (eg. set priority) and tap Save. When your colleague has finished the task, you'll be notified in-app or via your notification bar.

## Plan your daily schedule fast and effectively with Any.DO's intuitive interface

**App used:** Any.DO To-do List & Task List

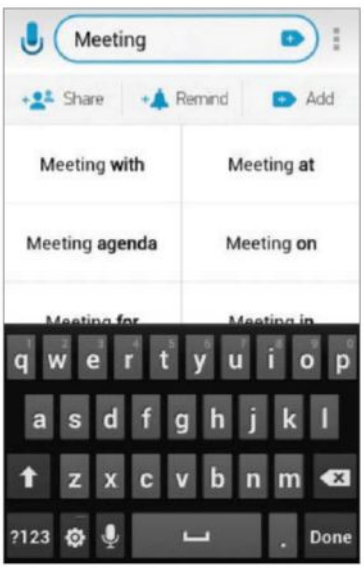
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Any.DO



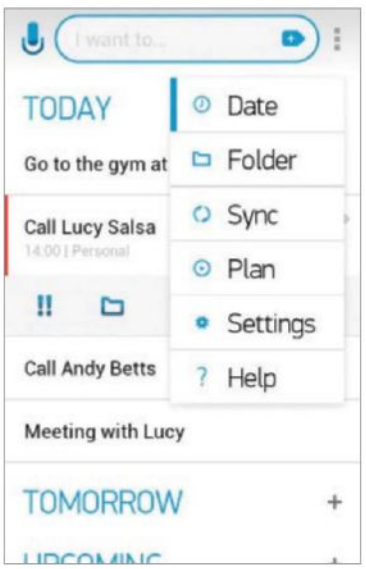

### 1: Create account

Open the app, tap Get Started, then key in your details and select the Create my account button when you are finished. Next, select Let's Go!




### 2: Input daily schedule

In the field at the top, type something that you plan to do on that day (eg Meeting with Lucy). Tap the adjacent '+' sign to add the activity.




### 3: Cross off your schedule

Added tasks will appear beneath; you can tap on one to set reminders/ priority etc. Tap the menu icon and choose Plan. Tick off completed tasks.

# Get help finding a job

## Find job listings, make valuable contacts and upload your CV

**Hunting for a job is never a fun prospect – but thanks to your Galaxy, the process is much easier than it used to be.** In the past you would be limited to browsing job listings. These days you can download an app and browse countless available job openings directly from your device. Thanks to the networking options that are available today, you can also create important new work connections while being on the move. Once you have found a job that you want to apply for, you'll then need to make sure that your would-be employer can see your CV. For this there are also apps that can upload your CV for potential employers to view.

## Harness the power of your LinkedIn contacts via the LinkedIn app

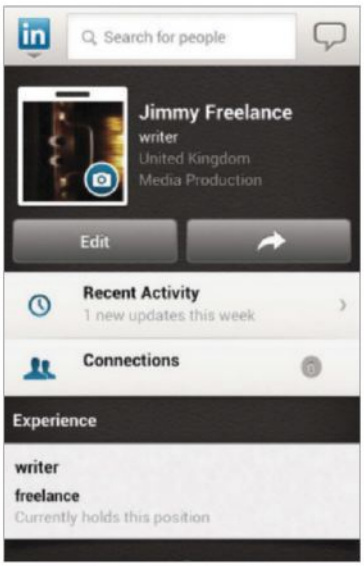
**App used:** LinkedIn

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** LinkedIn

### 1: Log in to the app

You will need to log into the LinkedIn app using your LinkedIn account details. You will then be taken to the main screen of the app.




### 2: Your profile page

The You option can be used to view your LinkedIn profile. You can upload a new profile photo, edit your details and view your connections.

### 3: Search for contacts

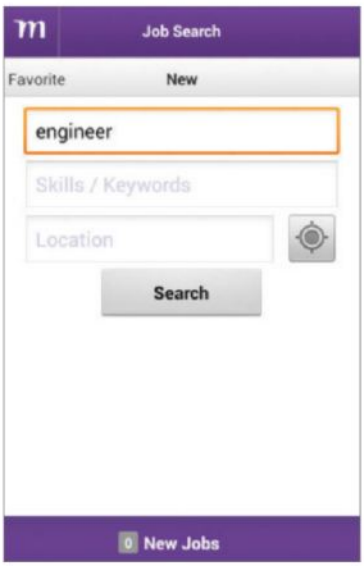
Use the search box to browse career types or other users' names. The listed results can then be selected and added to your connections.

## Search job listings directly from your Android device

**App used:** Monster Job Search

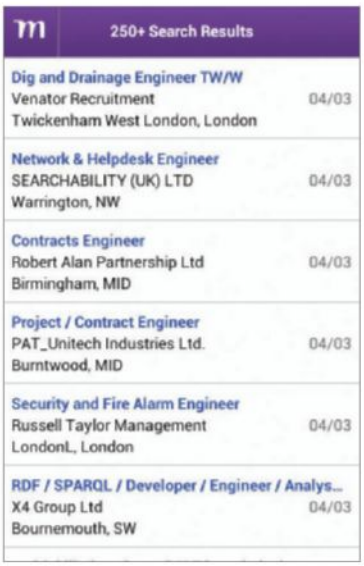
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Monster Worldwide




### 1: Log in to the app

Log into the Monster app using either a Facebook or Monster account. You'll then be able to start using the search function to locate a job.




### 2: Your search results

Enter a job title in the search box , plus any other required information. The Monster app will then display the relevant job search results.

### 3: Applying for a job

Select an entry to see the specific details for it. To apply for a role and upload your CV, select the Apply button at the bottom of the screen.

## Upload your CV so it can be viewed by potential employers

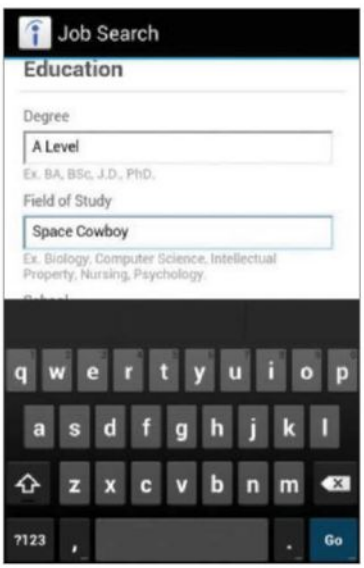
**App used:** Job Search

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Indeed Jobs

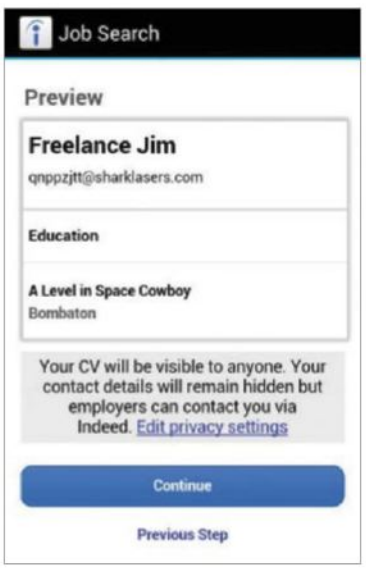
### 1: Register an account

You'll need to register for a free account with Indeed Jobs in order to upload a CV. This can be done from directly within the app.




### 2: Add your CV details

The app then runs through a number of screens where you can enter the details regarding your experience and previous education.




### 3: Upload your CV

With your details entered, the app will share the CV with the Indeed Job servers. It'll be visible to other users of the service, including any employers.

# Learn how to cook

## Turn your device into your very own personal chef

**Learning to cook can be a daunting experience.** It's not easy trying to learn new kitchen skills while having to repeatedly refer back to your cookbook. Times have moved on, however, and it is now possible to use your Galaxy device as a trusty cooking companion.

As you'd expect, there are cooking apps on Google Play that contain a varied selection of excellent recipes for all kinds of occasions. They are capable of providing video tutorials from the professional themselves. Many cooking apps also include shopping lists so you can plan your required ingredients ahead of time. Whether you're an experienced cook or have yet to get to grips with your untapped culinary skills, these apps are invaluable.

## Take cooking tips and learn recipes from a pro

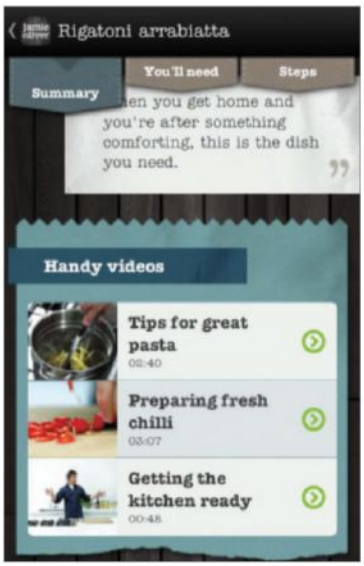
**App used:** Jamie's 20 Minute Meals

**Price:** £2.99/$3.99

**Developer:** Zolmo

### 1: Choose a recipe

Open the app and select a recipe. The main screen will include a summary of the meal, a list of required ingredients and tools, plus the cooking steps.




### 2: Jamie's video tutorials

Scroll to the bottom of the summary screen to view a selection of relevant videos. These include cooking tips to help master culinary skills.

### 3: Video playback

Tap on a video to play it. The app includes basic playback controls that can be toggled on or off by tapping on the screen.

## Find the perfect recipe for your needs or a special occasion

**App used:** BBC Good Food – Recipes

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** BBC Worldwide

### 1: Download a cookbook

BBC Good Food comes installed with one cookbook. A free extra cookbook of healthy meals is also available for download. Tap it to download it.

### 2: Browsing for recipes

Each cookbook has a selection of tabs for browsing types of meals/recipes. Drag these across and tap them to access the recipes in each section.

### 3: More cookbooks

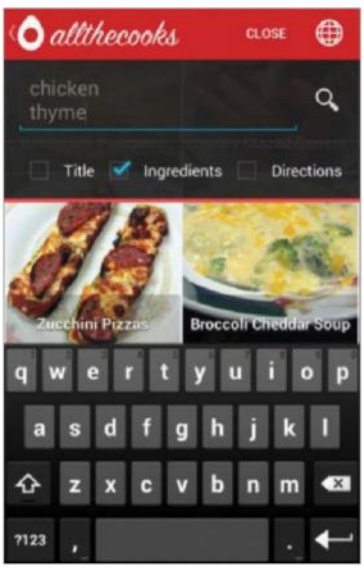
Additional cookbooks cover festive and seasonal types of recipes. These are in-app purchases and can be bought simply by tapping on them.

## Find recipes based on food that you already have on hand

**App used:** Recipe Search

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** allthecooks.com

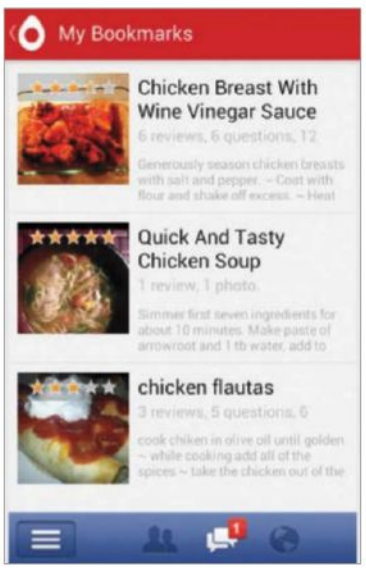



### 1: Search for a recipe

If you need to cook something with what you've got in the cupboard, Recipe Search can help. Tap the search icon and tick the Ingredients box.

### 2: Suggested recipes

Enter any ingredients that you have to hand and the app will display a list of suggestions. Tap an entry to view the full details of the recipe.




### 3: View/bookmark recipes

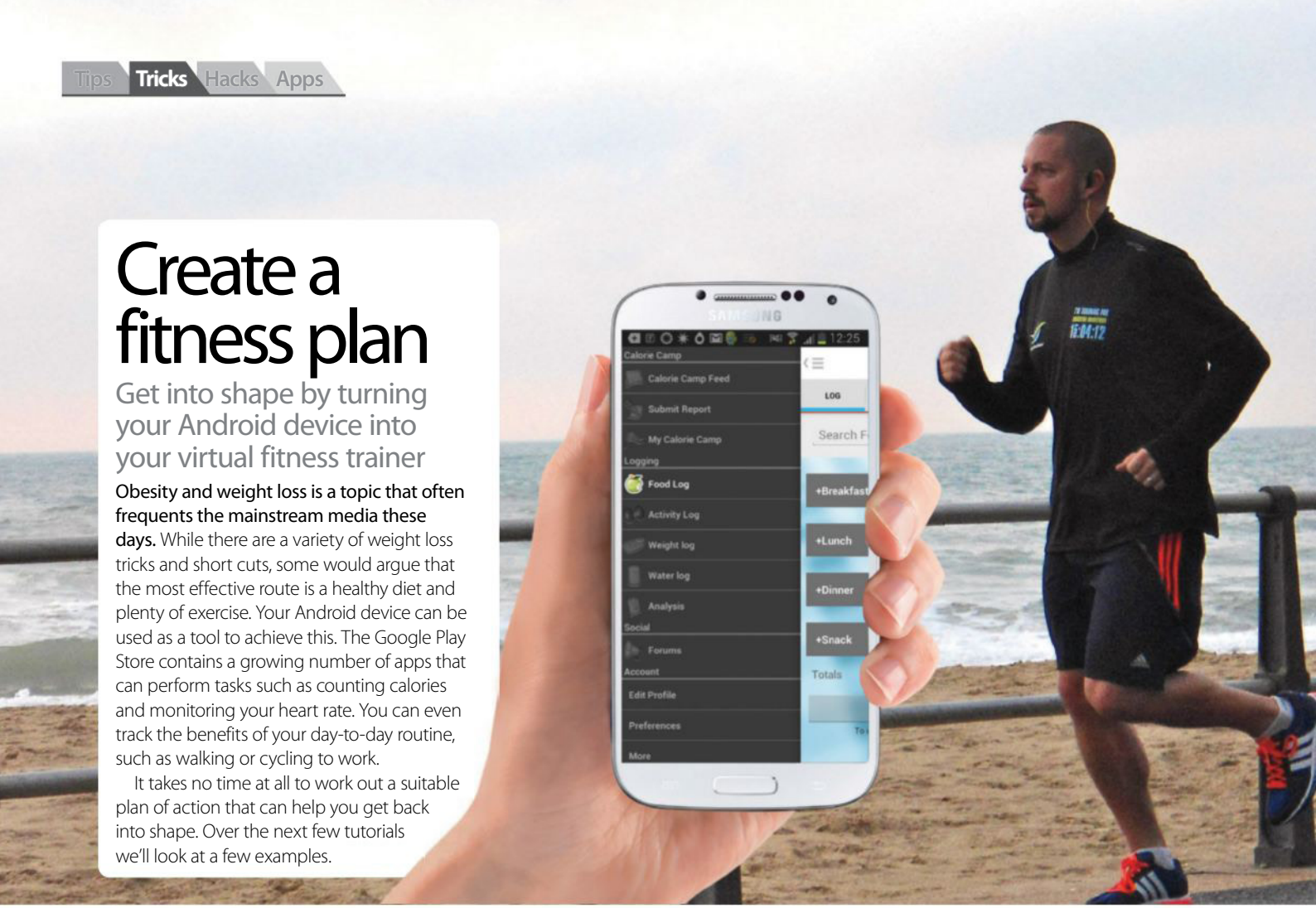
Each recipe has an image, ingredients (with optional shopping list) and cooking directions. Recipes can also be shared online or bookmarked.

# Create a fitness plan

## Get into shape by turning your Android device into your virtual fitness trainer

**Obesity and weight loss is a topic that often frequents the mainstream media these days.** While there are a variety of weight loss tricks and short cuts, some would argue that the most effective route is a healthy diet and plenty of exercise. Your Android device can be used as a tool to achieve this. The Google Play Store contains a growing number of apps that can perform tasks such as counting calories and monitoring your heart rate. You can even track the benefits of your day-to-day routine, such as walking or cycling to work.

It takes no time at all to work out a suitable plan of action that can help you get back into shape. Over the next few tutorials we'll look at a few examples.

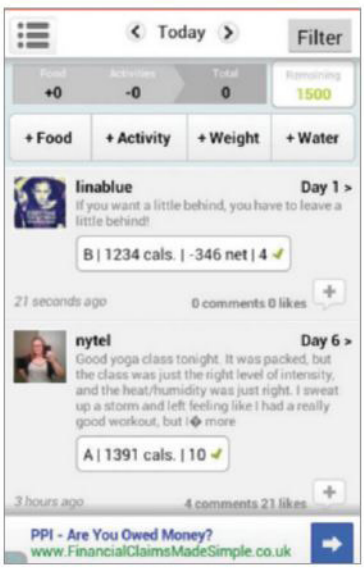



## Record your diet and get information on your daily calorie intake

**App used:** Calorie Counter

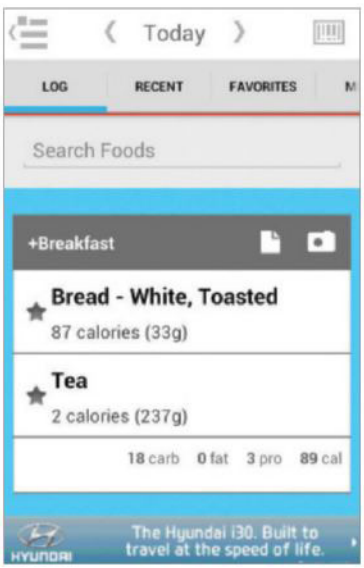
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Caloriecount.com




### 1: Register an account

First you'll need to register for a free account. Once done, the app will open in the news feed section where other users share their latest updates.




### 2: Adding your food intake

Tap the top-left icon and select Food Log to start logging your food intake. Add your eaten food using the menus and search options.

### 3: Viewing your stats

Tap the top-left icon and select Analysis from the Logging section. This will open a screen of stats based around the food you have eaten.

## Track your every movement for accurate results

**App used:** My Tracks

**Price:** Free

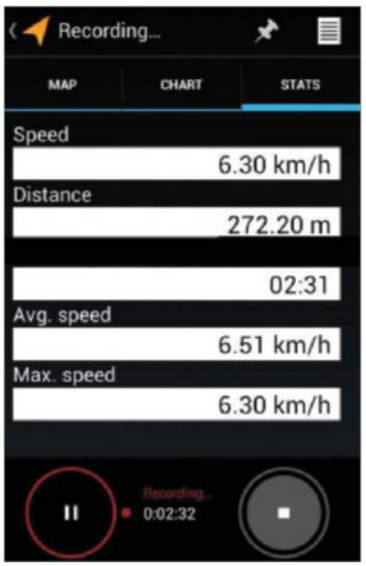
**Developer:** Google

### 1: Track your journey

Open the My Tracks app and press the record button. The app will use your device's GPS to pinpoint your current position on a map.

### 2: Real-time stats

As you continue your journey, the app will track your progress in real-time. The on-screen map will update and the app can also track your altitude.




### 3: Finish and save

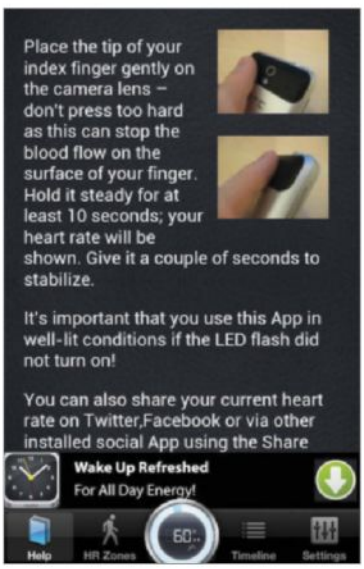
Tap the stop button when you're done. You can label your journey and save it to the app. You can open it again at any time to check your stats.

## Monitor and track your heart rate during and after your workout

**App used:** Instant Heart Rate

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Azumio

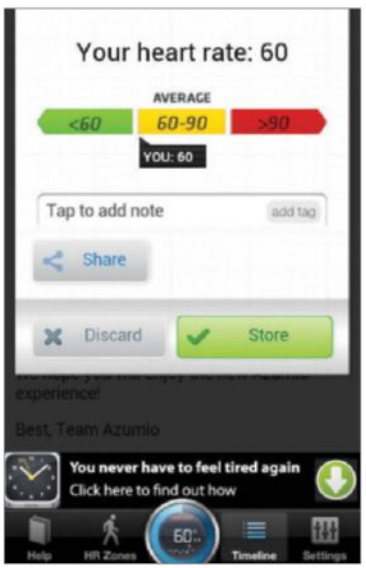



### 1: Get started

The app works via your camera and by scanning the light pulses in your finger. It includes instructions on how to get a good reading.

### 2: Take your pulse

When taking your pulse, the app will include a countdown that indicates how long the scan will take. It'll then save your result to the built-in timeline.




### 3: Your recorded result

The app will display your recorded pulse. This can be shared to other apps. You can add notes to results to highlight what task you've been doing.

# Follow your favourite sports

## Turn your Galaxy device into a news hub for your favourite sports, teams and players

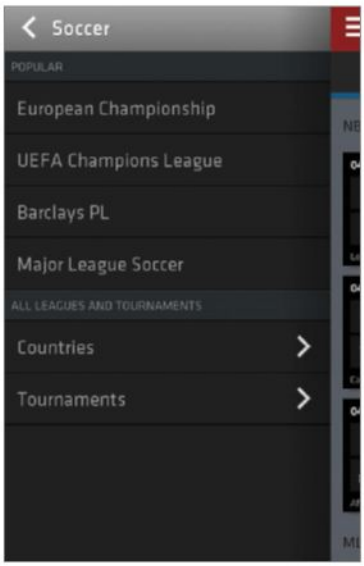
**Android is well known for its social media, gaming and productivity capabilities.** If you're into sports it can also be used as an effective tool for tracking your favourite teams and matches. There are plenty of great apps, many of them free, that can provide the latest news on various types of sports. If you have a favourite team, you can receive updates on their progress. You can find a match that you may not be able to watch live and get play-by-play updates. You may even be able to stream a game direct to your device. The key to this is the many sporting-based apps on the Google Play Store. Here we take a look at three examples to help you get your sporting fix.

## Track game progress in real-time using ESPN Scorecenter

**App used:** ScoreCenter for Android

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** ESPN INC




### 1: Find your sport type

Depending on the sport, you can keep updated on a match live on your device. Tap the top-right icon to select your favourite sport from the menu.

### 2: Select a match

The next screen shows a selection of today's matches. Tap one currently in progress. A summary will appear. Tap Gamecast to see the live feed.

### 3: The live feed

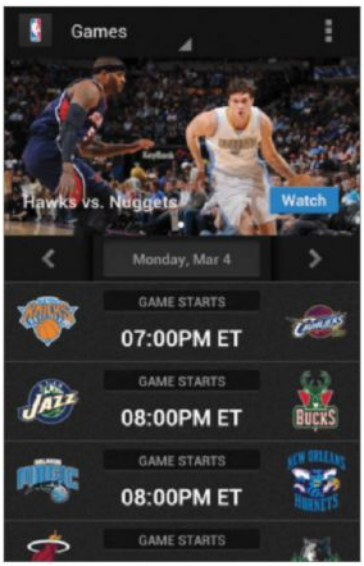
The live feed includes current scores and elapsed playtime. The main screen provides play-by-play updates with a recent history underneath.

## Track your favourite NBA players and watch their best moments

**App used:** NBA GameTime

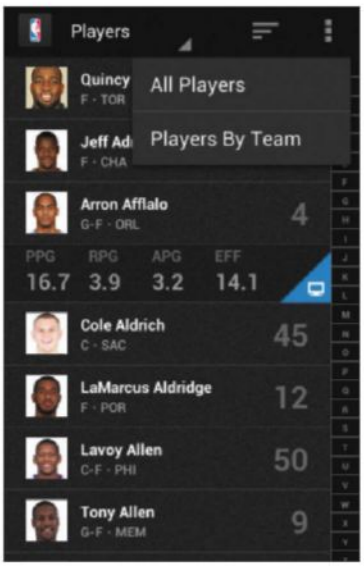
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** NBA Properties



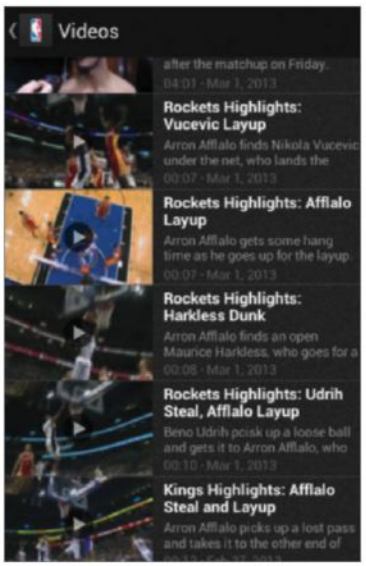

### 1: Players' section

The app makes it easy to see individual player stats. From the home screen, tap the menu icon and select Players at the bottom of the list.




### 2: Players and teams

By default, this screen opens with a list of all players. You can filter it down to a particular team by selecting the menu icon at the top.




### 3: The video feed

Tap the blue TV icon in a player profile to see clips of their recent highlights. The app may limit your access to video depending on your location.

## Catch up on the latest news in the world of cricket

**App used:** LIVE Cricket Scores & News

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** ESPN Digital

### 1: The main interface

If you want to keep up with the cricket, this ESPN app has you covered. Open the app and tap the news heading at the top of the screen.

### 2: Personalise news feed

You can also tell the app who your favourite teams are via the settings menu. It can add any related news stories to the My Team News section.

### 3: Share the news

Tap a story to open it within the app. You can use the share button to send the story to other outlets such as Facebook and Twitter.

# Plan a holiday

## Ensure your vacation is not only cheap, but easy to organise too

**Going away and planning a trip can be stressful, but with Android, the strain is taken away for a lot of tasks.** With your Galaxy device, you are able to find the latest hotels and flights, keep an eye on your expenses and work out when prices will be at their lowest. You can also use your phone to take lots of lovely photos, keep in touch and send great, gloating SMSs to those back home.

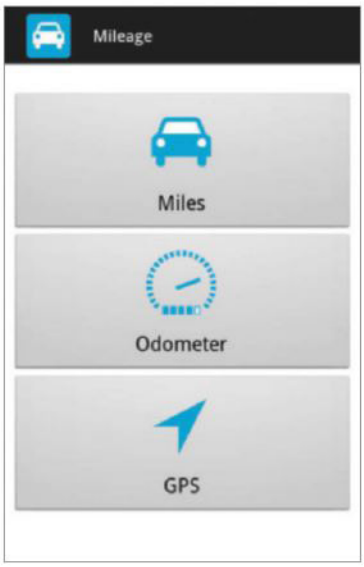
Here we look at how you can log the costs of a trip, adding receipts and an itinerary, and we also look at how you can check the best deals on hotels and flights while you are planning your trip. Happy holidays!

## Keep an eye on what you are spending on your holiday

**App used:** Expensify

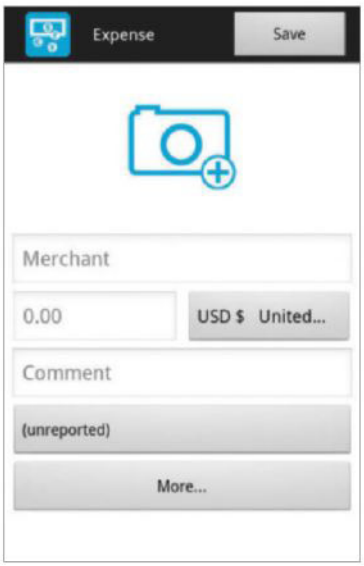
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Expensify



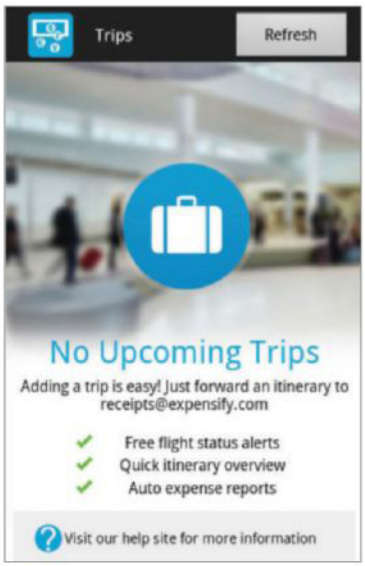

### 1: Add car mileage

If you want to keep an eye on your mileage, go to Mileage in the app, select Miles and input the miles you've done and the price of fuel.




### 2: Add an expense

You can also tap Expense and input the company or organisation you have paid, the amount and a comment. This builds up your budget for the trip.




### 3: Send receipts

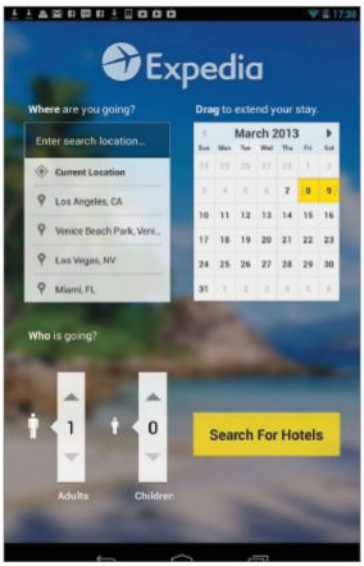
Once you have your email address validated, you can send itinerary and receipts to receipts@expensify.com. They will then appear in the app.

## Get the best hotel deals from the best vacation service provider

**App used:** Expedia Hotels & Flights

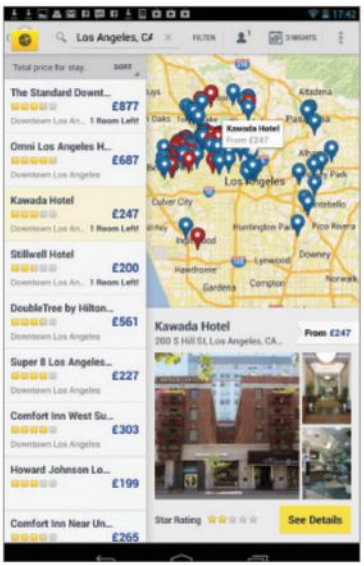
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Expedia



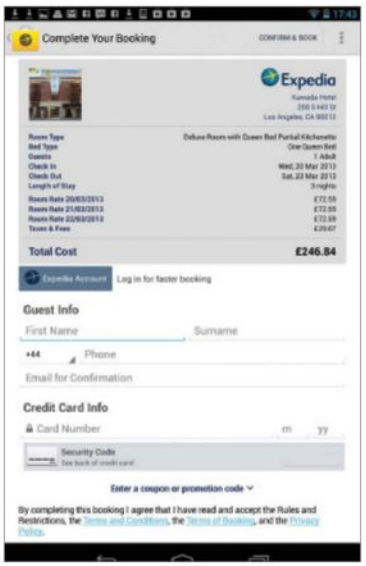

### 1: Input the dates

Search for a location via the search box and select the dates you'll be away. Input the number of adults and children and tap Search For Hotels.




### 2: Find a hotel

Expedia lists available hotels based on your search term. There is also a map. Select a hotel by tapping it. You will see an overview of the hotel.




### 3: Book a room

When ready, tap Select Room, then Enter Booking Info. Give your name, address and card details. You'll receive a booking confirmation via email.

## Create a price alert to get the cheapest possible flights

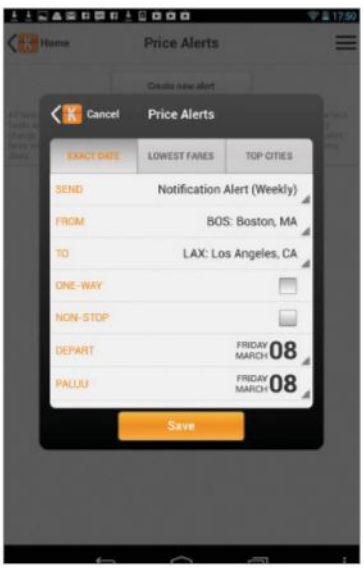
**App used:** Kayak

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Kayak.com

### 1: Select price alerts

Tap on the Price Alerts icon on the home menu. Then select Create new alert. This will show prices inclusive of taxes and fees but not baggage costs.




### 2: Input the dates

Tap in the start and destination airports and select whether your flight will be one-way or non-stop. Input the dates you will depart and arrive.

### 3: Choose a notification

Tap on Notification alert and select how often you want to get an email or notification. Select Done. When the prices change, you'll be told about it.

# Sleep in peace

## Your device is all you need to ensure a good night's sleep

**Insomnia is a horrible thing, leaving you groggy and unable to enjoy the finer things in life.** Thankfully there are apps to help resolve this problem - from those that generate noise in the background which are designed to create a constant that will help you nod off to sleep, to those that sit in the bed with you, monitoring your sleep patterns and ensuring you wake up at the right time.

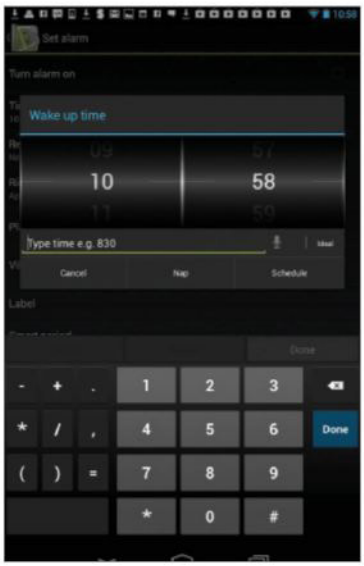
With your Galaxy device, you do not even need a clock, since they are more than capable of displaying the time throughout the night in the style of an alarm clock. With the large font size of the time and the ability to nod you off to sleep, the problem may soon be getting out of bed rather than not being able to sleep in it.

## Let your device wake you up at the right time

**App used:** Sleep as Android

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Urbandroid (Petr Nálevka)

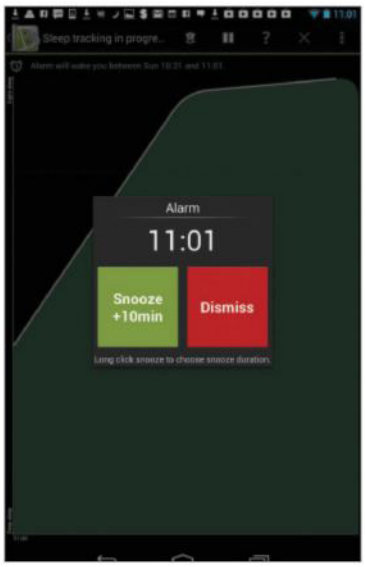



### 1: Set alarm time

Tap the '+' icon and select the time that you wish to wake up. You can use the scroll wheel, type the time or speak it. Tap Done when finished.

### 2: Start Sleep Tracking

Select the Sleep Tracking mode and then place the device on your bed. It will wake you up at a time when it feels you are ready to stir.




### 3: And wake up…

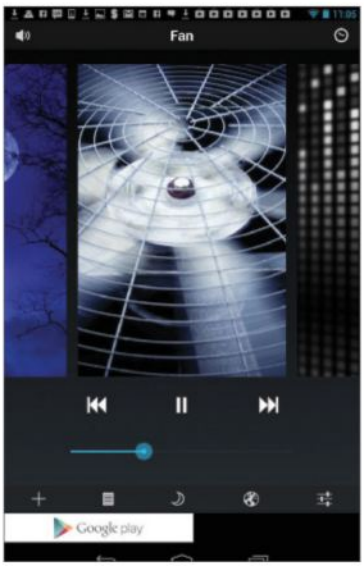
When the app feels you are ready to wake, it will sound an alarm. You can snooze or turn it off. A graph shows your sleep pattern during the night.

## Sleep to the sound of crashing waves, thunder, or a fan

**App used:** White Noise Lite

**Price:** Free

**Developer:** TMSOFT




### 1: Select a noise

Choose from a variety of noises, from a clock to a fan, each designed to continue in the background and help you nod off to sleep.

### 2: Alter the settings

After selecting a sound, tap the menu icon to change the volume, balance and pitch and to ensure the app works the way you want it to.

### 3: Go to sleep

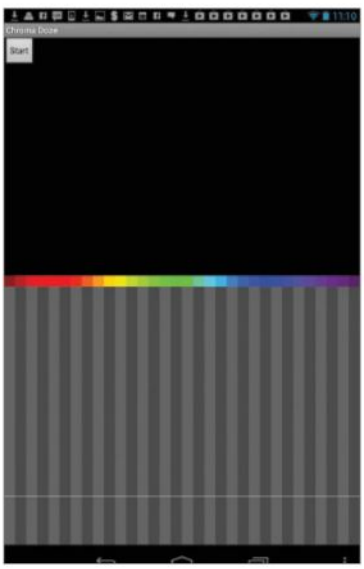
Press the moon icon and the app will show a clock that will continue through the night while the chosen sound plays in the background.

## Allow white noise to play in the background at the level you want

**App used:** Chroma Doze (white noise)

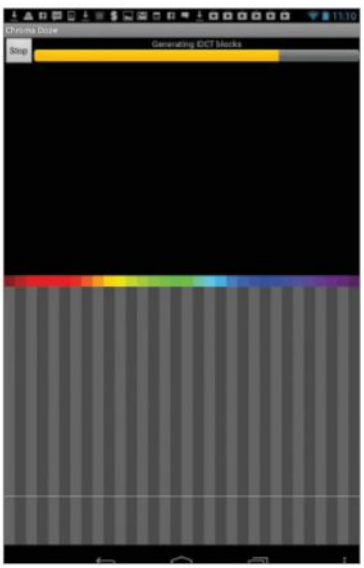
**Price:** Free

**Developer:** Paul Marks



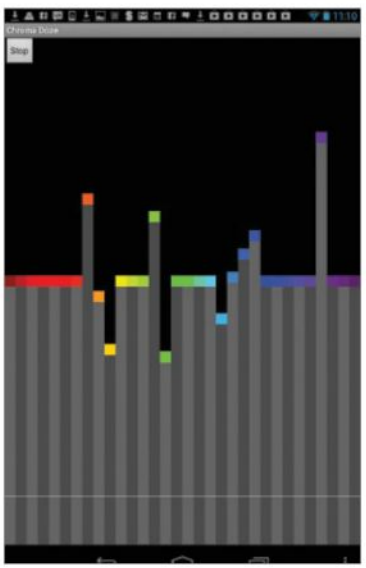

### 1: Playing the noise

It is said that white noise helps you to relax and this app will let you tailor the sound to suit your level of tolerance. You will see a series of bars.




### 2: Tap Start

Tapping Start generates the IDCT blocks and this allows you to listen the white noise, as represented by the bars that appear on the screen.




### 3: Alter the bars

To change the sound, make alterations to the bars by tapping and moving them up a level. The IDCT blocks are regenerated each time. Now sleep.

# Hacks

## Adapt your Samsung Galaxy device to meet your needs

## Feature

**128** Supercharge your phone
Push your Samsung Galaxy to its limits

**134** Cook your own Jelly Bean ROM
Make your own Android ROM

**136** Customise the whole Android user interface
Switch between modes on the fly

**138** Use themes to customise your phone
Give your device a whole new look

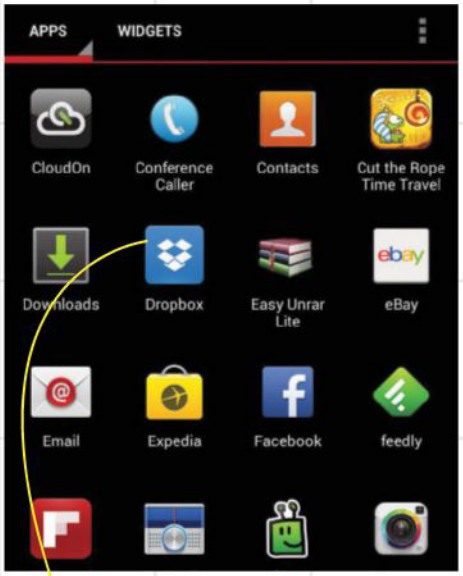
**140** Design and create your own widgets
Using Ultimate Custom Widget

**142** Convert your Samsung to a PS3 controller
Take gaming to the next level

**144** Improve performance by tweaking the kernel
Get a faster phone with better battery

**146** Boost your memory by moving apps to ROM
Instantly increase your device's storage

**148** Customise ROMs with APK Swapper
Create a custom ROM for your needs

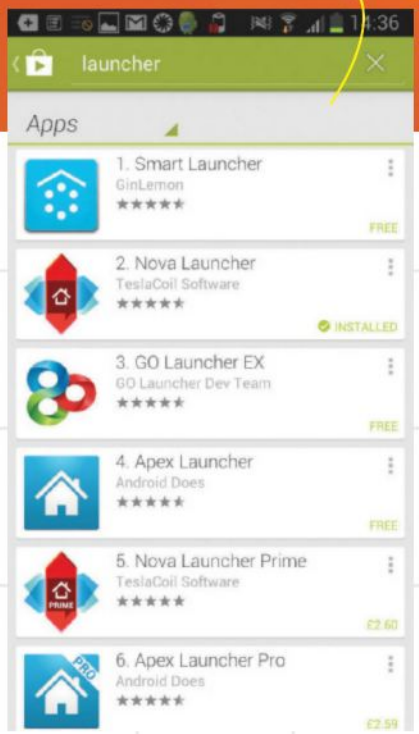


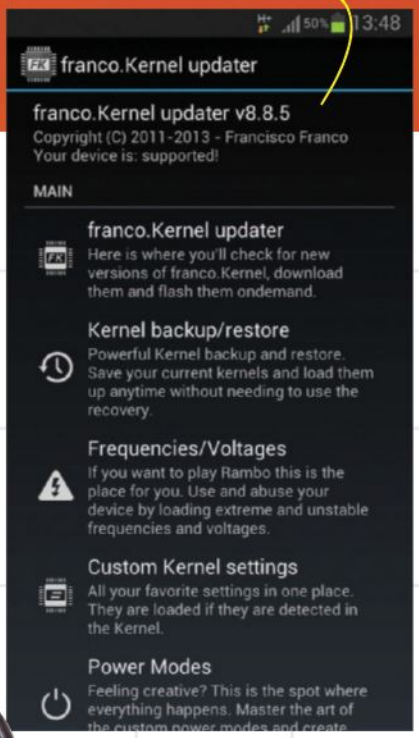

**134** Learn to cook your very own Jelly Bean ROM

**138** Get new themes with the help of launchers

**140** Design and create your own widgets

**144** Tweak the kernel for performance improvements





**HOT HACKS**

- ✔ Cook a ROM
- ✔ Boost memory
- ✔ Fix wrong hacks
- ✔ Create widgets
- ✔ Expand storage

Push your Galaxy to its benchmark-busting limits

# SUPERCHARGE YOUR PHONE

One of Android's greatest benefits is the way you can turn a device into whatever you want it to be. Don't like the way the software looks? Just download a different launcher and some themes. Don't like one of the built-in apps? Get a new one from the Play Store and set it to run by default. The only thing you can't change is the hardware. Or can you?

We're unlikely to ever get to the stage where you can crack open your phone or tablet and drop in a new processor. But a rooted Android device can be tweaked to make sure its existing hardware is performing to its maximum potential. Through a few tweaks, or some more advanced steps, you can supercharge your phone, taking it to benchmark-busting levels. The most obvious way to enhance the speed of your phone is to make adjustments to the speed of the hardware. These don't always have to be complicated. Something as simple as dropping in a faster SD card can give you tangible benefits in certain areas, especially if you're a heavy user of your phone's video shooting capabilities. The SD card is often the biggest bottleneck when shooting HD video, where the large amount of data being produced needs to be written to the card as quickly as possible. A slow card can result in dropped frames, resulting in jerky playback on your device. Extra speed benefits can also be squeezed out of any memory card with a few easy tweaks.

So long as your phone is rooted you can install a utility called SD-Booster (free from the Play Store) and set it to increase the read ahead cache for the card.

It works on both internal and external cards, and you can measure the effect of the changes you make using the SD Tools app from the Play Store. In our tests we were able to produce an improvement of up to around 20 per cent in some instances although in other cases, it gained no benefit at all.

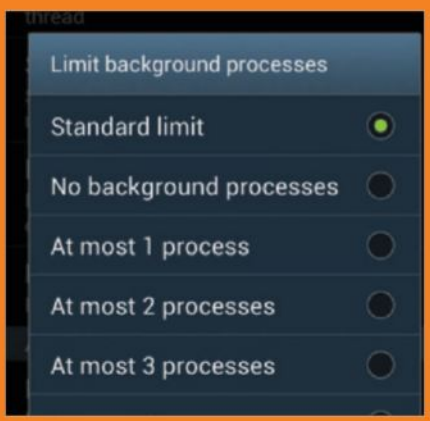
But SD card enhancements are small fry compared to going to work on the CPU. If you have a compatible kernel (and in most cases you will need to flash a new one for this) you can overclock the processor. Essentially this sets the processor to run at a much faster speed than it was originally set, and comes with certain trade-offs with regard to battery life and stability.

But what you can look at more safely is the governer used to manage your CPU speed. Governers determine how quickly the processor

# Hack-free speed tips

## Get a new launcher

Most Android phones come with the manufacturer's custom skin which contains additional software and functions over what you would get from the Vanilla build of Android. While these skins often add useful features, they can also be quite large and demanding on the phone's resources and cause it to be slowed down. Changing to a third-party launcher (like Nova or Apex) can bring about noticeable improvements in speed. These are faster and free from lag, but, in some cases, the stock launcher will be loaded into the memory as well.



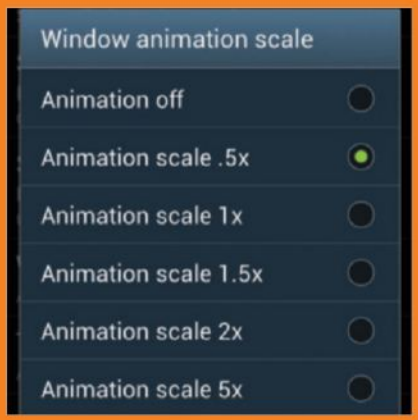

**Limiting background processes will give foreground apps more priority**

## Change your multitasking settings

Delving into Android's developer settings can bring about a few improvements to performance. Go to Settings>Developer options and first of all turn them on to make all the options accessible. Now scroll down to the Apps section and select Limit background processes. This sets the amount of processes that can continue to run in the background. By default the Standard Limit is what the manufacturer chooses as the best option, but you can also restrict the number, giving greater priority to the app running in the foreground. Experiment with the setting to find what works best for your smartphone.

## Shorten animations

Also in the Developer options is the ability to change the Animation settings for your device. This has no actual benefit to the speed of your device but can make it seem faster. The Window animation scale, Transition animation scale and Animator duration scale all control the duration of the animations that appear as you open windows and switch between screens. The longer the duration, the smoother they appear, but if you set them to be shorter (or even off altogether) the device feels much snappier. Set the Window animation to 5x then tap the Transition animation button to see its immediate effect. We recommend .5x for all.

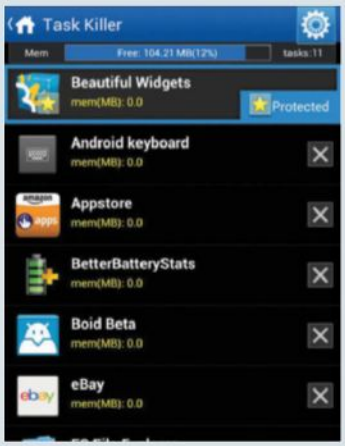



**Changing your Android device's Animation settings can make your device appear quicker**

gets up to top speed and how quickly it drops back down again. Every kernel supports multiple common governers and each governer has their own effects. Examples include OnDemand, which quickly ramps the CPU to its maximum top speed, and then slowly drops it back down again, having a somewhat negative effect on battery life but improving the smoothness of performance; and Powersave, which locks the processor to top speed, with the idea that the faster any task is completed the faster the phone will drop into idle mode, where it uses little power at all. Overclocking directly affects the actual speed of the processor, but the governers are more concerned with the perceived speed of a phone. While a lot of the changes you can make on your way to supercharging your phone can show proven improvements in tests, for most of us speed is actually more important. Upgrading your phone to the Jelly Bean OS, for instance, will bring about perceived speed increases because one of the key changes in that update was the so-called 'Project Butter' which bumped the animations you see as you swipe around the various home screens to a silky smooth 60 frames per second. This effectively eradicated the sense of lag that was sometimes evident on even the most powerful Android phones. Not all devices are up to 60 fps, but those even on ageing

# True or false?

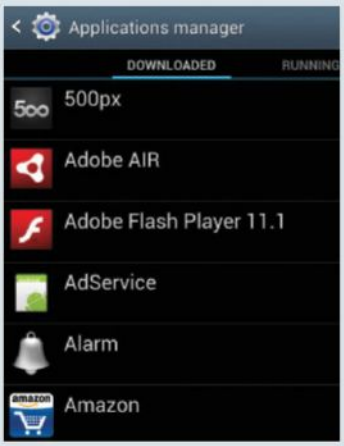
## Do these four ways of speeding up your phone really work?




**FALSE!**

### Killing tasks

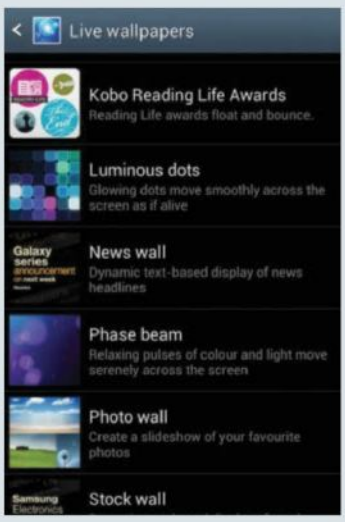
When you first pick up an Android device one of the first apps most people will recommend you install is a task killer. Android is a very powerful multitasking OS which enables apps to continue running freely in the background. The theory goes, therefore, that you should vigorously close these apps to keep as many resources for your foreground app. Wrong. Unless they are specifically doing something, like checking your Twitter feed, background apps sit idle, and Android will reclaim any resources whenever it needs them. Closing background apps will slow you down.




**FALSE!**

### Uninstall unused apps

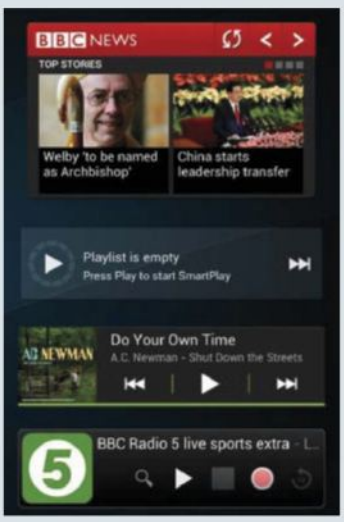
Ever since the early days of the PC, one of the tried and tested methods of speeding up a computer has been to remove apps you don't use, and generally clear any junk out of the system. Maybe on a system with a hard drive this is true, but on your phone or tablet with its flash-based storage, it scarcely makes any difference. So long as you don't see the low storage warning then you are free to keep whatever you want on your device. The exception is any app you don't use that runs in the background – you don't really need three weather apps all running simultaneously do you?




**FALSE!**

### Remove live wallpapers

Live wallpapers are just like normal wallpapers, only they're animated and they move. They're fun and different, but purely eye candy and therefore seen by many as being an unnecessary indulgence. So is there any speed benefit to not having them? For the most part, there isn't. Live wallpapers only animate while they are on display; the moment you switch away it stops. So unless you spend a large amount of time staring at your home screen, a live wallpaper is an indulgence you, thankfully, can afford on almost all Android devices. That said, while it is on, you might notice a little lag creep into your home screen swiping, especially on older hardware.




**TRUE!**

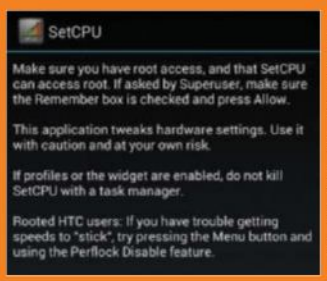
### Removing widgets

Widgets are one of the best and most unique things about Android, and with most devices coming with anywhere between five and nine home screens, manufacturers are most certainly encouraging you to use as many as you can. However, most devices are set up to keep the home screen in memory so that when you switch back, it is instantly there and doesn't need to reload (this is in itself one of the ways manufacturers increase the perceived speed of their devices). The more widgets you have, then, the more memory they use. If you're a heavy widget user expect to make trade-offs. A smart choice would be to retain only the widgets you use most often.

# Overclocking secrets unveiled

## How to overclock your smartphone

Overclocking increases the clock speed of your processor, giving it an instant upgrade in speed and performance. You need a rooted device and compatible kernel to overclock (most stock kernels are not compatible). Be wary of setting the speed too high, as it will reduce battery life, and may cause the device to become hot.




**1:** Open the Play Store and search 'SetCPU'. Purchase the app and open it. Your phone needs to be rooted, so grant SuperUser permissions when prompted. The app will then auto-detect the preferred settings of your phone's kernel.

**2:** You can manually set the upper and lower limit for your CPU speed using the sliders. So if you want to increase the speed of your device, slide the 'Max' scale all the way to the right. If you want to save battery, slide it a little to the left.

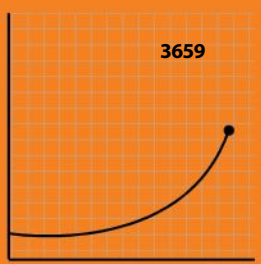
**3:** SetCPU also comes with a set of automatic scaling settings. Smartass is the default and best for normal use. Performance means that the CPU is set to run at maximum speed, while Powersave does the opposite and runs at the minimum.

## Test results

We tested out the effects of overclocking – and underclocking – to see whether there are any discernible differences in performance. Using a Galaxy S III, a quad-core device clocked at 1.3GHz by default, we underclocked at first to 800MHz and tested the performance using the Quadrant benchmark software. It was considerably slower. In real world use we found the Jelly Bean ROM to be as smooth as ever, but generally the experience was sluggish. Using the Siyah kernel we overclocked the processor to 1.6GHz and the benchmarks were amazing. Note that prolonged use of a device that has been overclocked could cause damage. Setting it to 1.7GHz rendered the device unstable. Using it sparingly is the best idea. If you have a specific task that would benefit from a boost then it may be worth doing it temporarily, but return the setting to the default for normal use.

## Underclocked

To demonstrate the effect of changing the clock speed of the processor we first underclocked to 1GHz. This could have the effect of prolonging battery life, although only in some circumstances. Some tasks will take longer to complete at 1GHz than 1.4GHz, so extend the length of time the processor is running on maximum.

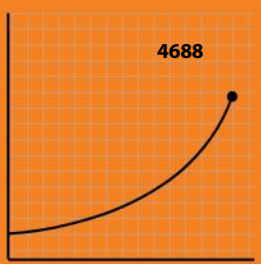



The Quadrant benchmark showed the Galaxy S III processor underclocked to 1GHz was more than a fifth slower.

**-22%**
FASTER

## Default settings

To give us our comparative benchmark we used the Siyah kernel clocked to the recommended default speed of 1.4GHz. This gave us the equivalent of what Samsung intended, with its combination of fast and smooth performance and long battery life. For everyday use, the default settings are the way to go.

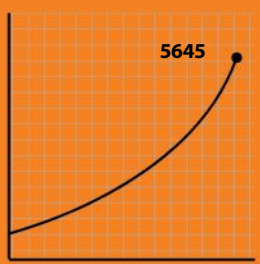



The Quadrant benchmark gave us a score that was faster than most devices – the S III is still a leader.

**0%**
FASTER

## Overclocked

Finally we overclocked the S III. The maximum setting of 1.8GHz proved very unstable on our test device, so we opted for 1.7GHz instead. Using this as standard could have an adverse effect on battery life, so proceed with caution. With heavy testing the device also started to get warmer than we were comfortable with.




The Quadrant benchmark test showed that the overclocked phone was now a fifth faster than at its default.

**20%**
FASTER

hardware should be able to receive that perceived boost in performance. The same principle can apply to changing some of the software in your phone. A new launcher, such as Nova or Apex, can appear faster than TouchWiz, and many apps can feel more responsive than others. One area where this applies is with the web browser. It is likely to be one of your most used apps, but Chrome can be quite slow on some devices, and will eat so much of your phone's memory that it will grind any other task you've got running to a halt. Dolphin Browser and Firefox are both faster, as is the old stock Android browser. This is included on most Galaxy phones still, but if it's missing from yours you can normally find the original apk of it at the xda-developers.com website, or simply by extracting it from a ROM you have downloaded. All you need to do is unzip the ROM and you'll find it in the \system\app folder. The other thing you can do along similar lines is to remove the bloatware from your phone. Many manufacturers install extra applications and services to their devices. In most cases they are completely benign and serve as little more than an irritant if you don't use them. But often they will be set to run in the background, using minimal resources, but resources, nonetheless, that could be put to better use elsewhere. With a rooted device you can use Titanium Backup to locate the unwanted apps and 'freeze' them. Make sure you've done a full Nandroid backup first, as freezing the wrong one can cause problems to your system. Which brings us to our final topic, preserving resources for use by other apps. Android is excellent at multitasking so there's no real need to close apps manually, but you can free up extra memory by taking control of which apps run when you boot the phone. Most boot manager apps in the Play Store don't work, they simply close apps that open after the phone has booted. Startup Manager is one of the few that does work. It requires root so is able to remove applications from the list altogether.

> "Perform a Nandroid backup before removing bloatware"

There are so many ways you can supercharge your phone, whether you want to earn bragging rights about your benchmark performances, or simply need to inject some extra energy into your ageing hardware. Most of the techniques explained here are relatively straightforward, have minimal risk and can be undone if you don't like their effects. So, go on, get experimenting and push your phone to its benchmark limits.

# Flash a faster ROM

## Can your choice of ROM affect your phone's speed?

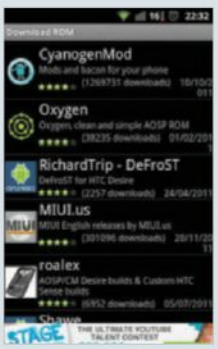
After the main hardware components, the CPU, GPU and memory, it is the software that has the biggest effect on how fast your phone or tablet can run. Devices with essentially the same specs can deliver performance levels depending the build of the OS they're running. This is where the 'skin versus Vanilla' debate comes from. Most manufacturers will adorn their phones with their own custom skins and software, adding features but also making the device sluggish. The argument goes that a Vanilla build of Android with no extras (like the Nexus) will always be leaner than even the optimised manufacturer skin (TouchWiz) and that the latter is responsible for any lag you may encounter. To test whether or not this is true we took a Samsung Galaxy S III and tested it out with three ROMs. The first was the stock TouchWiz ROM that comes pre-installed on the handset; the second a tweaked, custom version of the same TouchWiz ROM and the third a ROM based on Vanilla Android. Our test results below.

## How to install a custom ROM

Installing a custom ROM is the most effective way to customise an Android device, whether it's an elaborate new take on Android or a ROM that's built for speed

### Choose a ROM

**1:** Open ROM Manager, scroll down the main menu and select Download ROM. A list of suitable ROMs for your device will appear. Choose a ROM and a list of version releases will be displayed. Select one and tap on the Download button.




### Download and install your ROM

**2:** The ROM will download followed by a pre-installation menu. Select both Wipe Dalvik Cache and Wipe Data & Cache. Select Backup Existing ROM should you wish to save your current setup. The phone will reboot and flash.

### Flashing the ROM

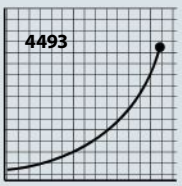
**3:** The flashing process should take a short amount of time to complete (and a bit longer if you're backing up). Once the new ROM has booted up it may be slow for the first few minutes while the Dalvik Cache is rebuilt. It's easy!

## Test results

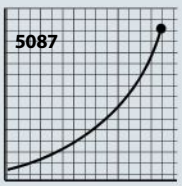
How does your choice of ROM affect the speed of your phone?

| | Stock ROM | Stock-based custom ROM | Vanilla ROM |
|---|---|---|---|
| **About** | The stock ROM refers to the combination of Android and TouchWiz as delivered direct from Samsung on your Galaxy device. Our test device was running the latest available version, in the form of the Jelly Bean update, with default settings and all the apps from the original ROM still in place. | Android Revolution HD is ostensibly the same as the stock ROM. Also updated to Android 4.1.1 it is visually identical, to the extent that you would not know that you were running a different ROM. Under the hood, though, is it as different as you can imagine as it has been cleaned up with over 30 tweaks and enhancements. | Paranoid Android is a tweaked version of Vanilla Android with a few usability enhancements such as the ability to switch between phone, tablet or hybrid views, but no additional bloat. Google's range of applications need to be flashed separately, and the entire package comes in at a mere 177MB – compared to the hefty 752MB for Android Revolution. |
| **In use** | In real world use the ROM is fast, and with the Project Butter improvements to the Jelly Bean OS, is now smoother than it was before (it was already pretty smooth to begin with). The ROM also has plenty of additional software and bloat that may serve to slow it down. | Our real world tests proved to be no different to our experiences using the stock ROM. Android Revolution was fast and responsive and all the Samsung-added apps were present and correct, ready to be used. All in all, a familiar and easy ROM to use, as you would expect. | Vanilla Android is clean, fast and lean and a pleasure to use. The stripped-back design is entirely consistent throughout the operating system and you can customise it as far as you want or need to. Not all features of the phone are supported, however, with MHL for video output being the main one. |
| **Result** | Using the Quadrant benchmark app we were able to get a score for the stock Samsung Galaxy S III experience that we could use to compare with the other ROMs. The score puts the device on a par with the HTC One X. | We installed all the performance improvements in Android Revolution, but kept the stock kernel. The Quadrant benchmark test showed a 12% performance improvement – a nice boost for a ROM that changes little about how you use your Android. | The benchmark test results were a surprise, as the bloat-free OS offered no benefit over the stock ROM and much less than a highly optimised TouchWiz-based ROM. Note that Paranoid Android is based on CyanogenMod 10, which is not yet finalised. |

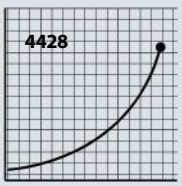
**0%** FASTER




**12%** FASTER




**-1.5%** FASTER



**App used:** Android Kitchen **Price:** Free **Time needed:** 30 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Cook your own Jelly Bean ROM

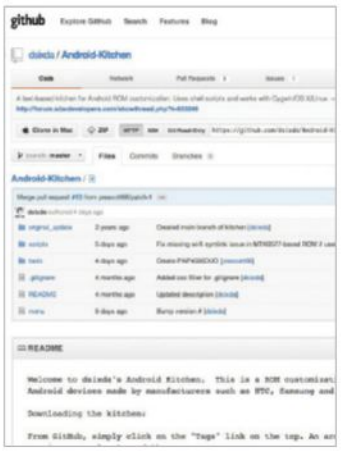
Want to get Jelly Bean on your phone but can't find the right ROM? Our guide will show you how to make your own

**Head over to the internet's many Android hacking communities and you'll find literally hundreds of custom ROMs designed for pretty much any phone or tablet you can think of.** Each one gives you a different experience, whether it be faster, or leaner, or stripped back or packed with extra functionality. And while you can normally find something to suit your requirements you don't need to limit yourself what is already out there: You can create your own ROM.

Android is an open source operating system, and open source ethos runs firmly throughout the Android hacking community. You can pick a ROM that you like, and further tweak and tailor so that it meets your needs. It is complicated, though, and starting from scratch requires you to be either a developer or keen to learn and fast to grasp. The best place to get started is using 'Kitchen' apps that enable you to take a ROM and repackage it with your own tweaks.

For this project we're using dsixda's Android Kitchen, which runs on Windows, Linux and Mac, and can be used to modify existing shipped ROMs, custom ROMs or your own Nandroid backups. You can add or remove apps from the ROM and make assorted other tweaks, including using own scripts if you are a developer.

"The best place to start is using 'Kitchen' apps that enable you to take a ROM and repackage it with your own 'tweaks'"




## 1: Prepare the tools

To begin you will need to download and install dsixda's Android Kitchen. Depending on whether you're using Windows, Mac or Linux you may need to download a few other things as well in order for it to work. Follow the FAQ at http://bit.ly/Xks0xs.

## 6: Rename the ROM

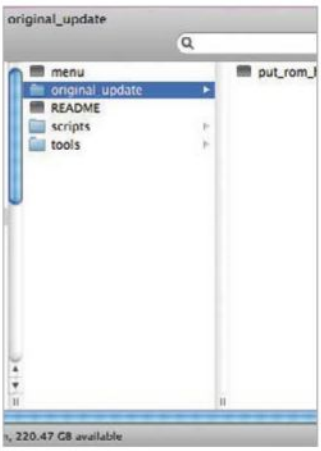
The simplest bit of personalisation you can do with your ROM is to give it a new name. In the Kitchen, press 7 and enter. You will now see the original name. Press 'y'. Type in your new name and hit enter. This will show in Settings>About when you boot the ROM.

## 2: Pick a source ROM

You will need a ROM to use as your source. Compatible ROMs differ based on device. Some can use CyanogenMod or AOSP ROMs, or you can create a Nandroid backup from your phone and use that. We're using a stock Galaxy S III ROM.

## 3: Run the kitchen app

Unzip it and open up a Terminal or command line prompt. This differs based on the OS you're using. First change to the kitchen directory using the command 'cd' followed by the path to the kitchen folder. Then type ./menu to launch the Kitchen.

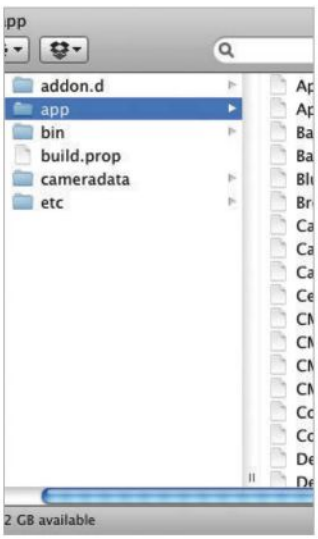



## 4: Import base ROM

Locate the source ROM that you have copied over from your phone. You can use this to add or remove apps. To import it, simply drag and drop the ROM (do not unzip it if it is in the .zip format) into the 'original_update' folder in the Kitchen directory.

## 5: Add the ROM image

Now look at the Terminal window. You'll see a menu of options. Hit 1 and press enter to add your ROM to the working directory so it can be edited. You will get a few options such as backup plus a choice of ROM images. Choose the right one.




## 7: Add/remove apps

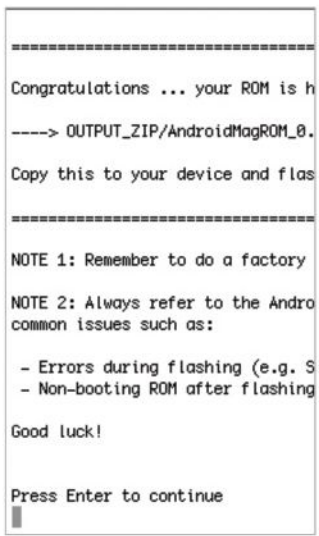
ROMs often feature apps you don't need. When in the Kitchen you can add or remove apps by adding or deleting the .apk file in the system/app folder in the WORKING_myrom directory. This is an easy way to customise the features of your ROM.

## 8: ZipAlign the APKs

After adding new apps you'll need to zip align them. This optimises the apps for when installed with a ROM, and improves performance. In the Kitchen menu press 5 and enter, and then press 'y'. Now use option 23 to check for any errors.

## 9: Rebuild the ROM

Starting with minimal changes. Experiment with more advanced functions later. When done, build you ROM by pressing 0 in the menu, then 99. Select 'y' when asked whether to sign the ROM. The ROM image will be saved in the Output_zip folder.




## 10: Flash your ROM

Once the file is completed compiling, copy it to your SD card then flash it as you would do any other ROM. If it fails simply restore your Nandroid backup to get your phone fully working again, and then go back to make some more tweaks.

**App used:** Paranoid Android **Price:** Free **Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Customise the whole user interface

## The Paranoid Android ROM enables you to switch between phone, tablet and hybrid modes on the fly

"Paranoid Android combines the phone, tablet & hybrid UI"

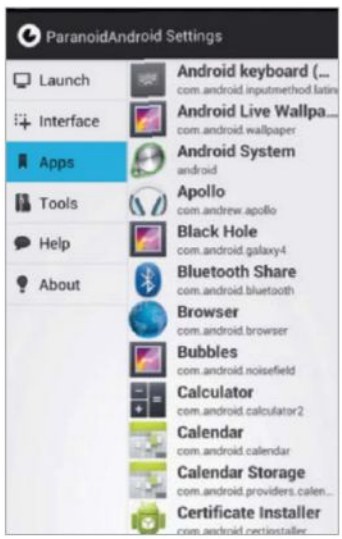
**It seems as though screen sizes on Android are on a never-ending increase.** The leading phones are now typically around 4.7 inches in size, while the Galaxy Note II is five and a half. And then there are the tablets as well that can go anywhere from seven to ten inches. As a result, Android has multiple options for the user interface. Phones have the phone UI, designed for one-handed use, tablets have a UI designed for two hands and more landscape use, while the so-called phablet devices like the Note II have a combination of the two – still based on the phone design but attempting to make use of the larger screen real estate they have available to them.

But even with these options in place you cannot guarantee that what comes installed on your phone is absolutely the right choice for you. If you're a power user, for instance, you might wish your apps could fit more information onto the screen at any given time. Or maybe if you find the size of a device like the Galaxy S III too large for one-handed use you would rather move the notification bar to the bottom of the screen, a style seen on Android tablets.

With the Paranoid Android ROM you can make all these tweaks and a whole lot more. Paranoid Android combines the phone, tablet and hybrid user interface designs from the various versions of Android, and makes them all available for you to choose from. It's certainly not a one-size-fits-all solution – you can change the home screen layout, or have just certain apps display in tablet mode on a phone. Read on to discover what Paranoid Android can offer you and your Galaxy device.

### 1: Flash the ROM

There are versions of Paranoid Android for most popular devices, including the Galaxy S III, HTC One X and Nexus 7. Flash the ROM using the usual method. You will now find a Vanilla Android 4.1 OS, albeit with plenty of extra features, many of which you will not use.




### 6: Tablet apps on phones

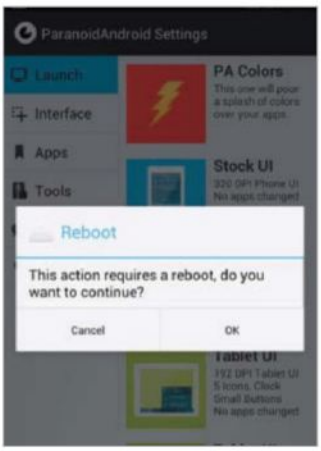
While the Interface setting is a global option you can also make tweaks to how your apps perform on a case-by-case basis. Select the Apps option and a complete list of the apps installed on your phone – system and third-party – will be displayed. Pick the one you want.

## 2: Locate the Settings

Navigate your way through to the Settings screen, which is shown in the tablet-style split screen mode. Under Interface there are several options for customising Paranoid Android. We're concerned with the Paranoid Settings. Tap that.

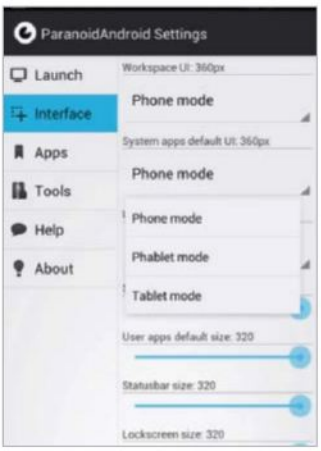
## 3: Adjust the launcher

The Launch settings enable you to adjust the launcher. Choose between stock phone UI, phablet mode with slightly smaller text, and Tablet UI, which puts notifications at the bottom. Pick your DPI – a smaller number means smaller text and icons.




## 4: Reboot or continue

After each setting changes you'll be prompted to reboot the smartphone in order to activate the changes. You can press Cancel instead to continue making your changes to the settings. A subsequent reboot will then apply to all changes.




## 5: Interface options

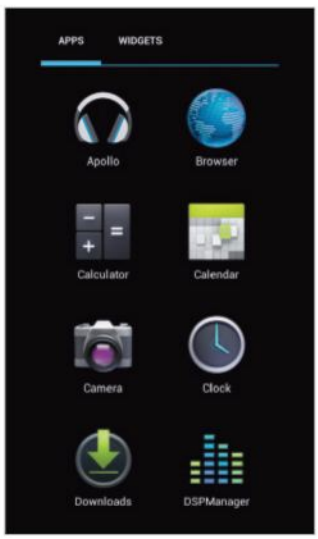
Tap on Interface. Here you can choose the default look for your screens, system apps and third-party apps. You can, for instance, force all your apps to display in tablet mode on a device where they'd normally be used in phone mode, (eg. Nexus 7).

## 7: Tweaking an app's appearance

Experiment with the options available to see how they affect the way the app looks. With each change, hit the Launch button. Choose between phone, tablet and phablet modes, and increase the info on the screen.

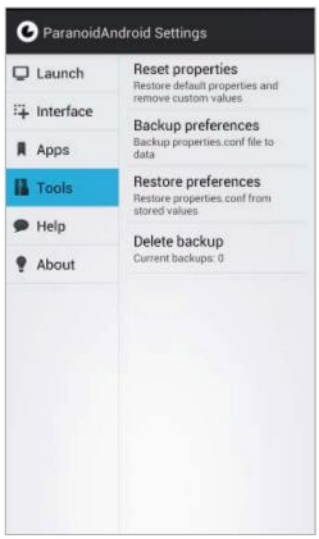
## 8: The result

Here's an example of a subtle but very useful change made on the Galaxy S III. The notifications shade has been set to tablet mode, making it appear at the bottom of the screen. This puts it within reach of your thumb, which is a useful tweak to have.




## 9: Going wrong

Experiment with the settings to see the impact they have. You will occasionally come across a new look that you're not so keen on. We've managed to increase the size of the icons so that there's only two columns of them in our Apps pane.




## 10: Revert to the start

All your changes can be undone easily. If you get lost and wish to start again, go to Tools and choose Reset properties to return to default settings. You can also back up your settings so they can be used within the same ROM on another device.

**App used:** Apex Launcher **Price:** Free **Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Use themes to customise your phone

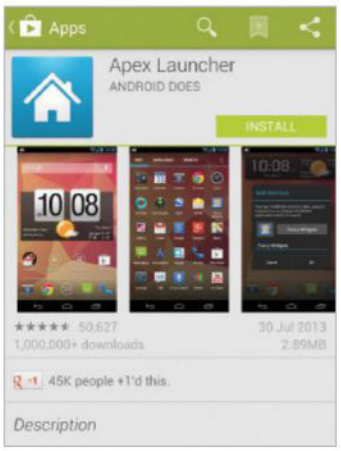
## Give your phone a whole new look by exploring the world of launcher themes

**Customising your phone can go a whole lot further than just changing your wallpaper.**

One area that is quite easy, but not especially well-known, is using themes from third-party launchers. Launchers replace the home screen and Apps pane on your device to give a new look instantly, as well as additional benefits such as faster performance or extra features. They also support themes. These, which can be designed by anyone, can completely change the look of the launcher – replacing not only the wallpaper but the fonts and app icons, as well as applying a skin that gives the entire visual side of the UI an overhaul. For this tutorial we're focusing mostly on Apex Launcher, which is our preferred launcher due to its simplicity and the way it best replicates the look and feel of Jelly Bean even on devices that are already heavily skinned, such as the Samsung Galaxy devices.

Applying a skin does not slow the launcher down at all, so they can be used without any adverse effect on performance. We also take a look at GO Launcher EX, which is a far larger and more ambitious launcher replacement. This comes with dozens of additional add-ons that can be used to create something as comprehensive as TouchWiz on any device. Note that while many skins are free, some are not, but since they are all installed via the Play Store the 15-minute trial period still applies, enabling you to test them without committing to the purchase and get your refund if you dislike it.

"Applying a skin does not slow the launcher down at all. They can be used without affecting performance"

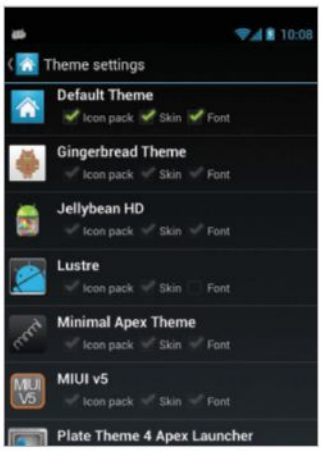



### 1: Install Apex

Install the Apex Launcher from the Play Store. There are both free and paid versions and you can access a few extra features if your phone is rooted. Press the Home button on your device and set Apex as your default launcher when the prompt appears to do so.

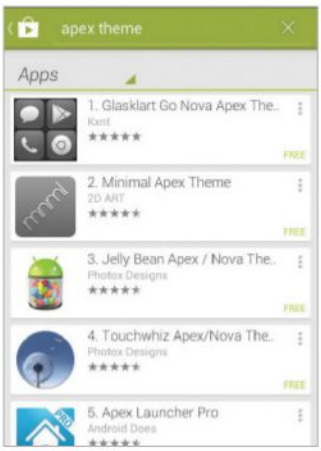
### 6: Pick and mix

If you only want to utilise one part of a theme, such as the background, then reapply the default theme as before and repeat step 4, but deselect those elements that you don't wish to use. You can apply individual parts of different themes, enabling you to produce your own.




## 2: Choose Theme settings

Press the menu button on your home screen and select Theme settings. You will now see a list of all the themes installed on your device. There's only one initially, but this list will fill up as you download more.




## 3: Download a few themes

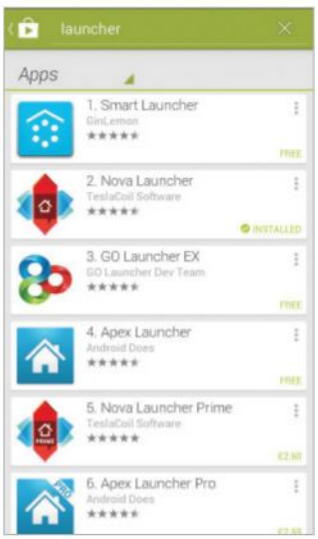
Tap the Get more themes button and the Play Store will launch with a list of available themes. Some are free and some are paid-for, and they download in the same way apps download. Grab half-a-dozen to choose.

## 4: Get a preview

Back in the Theme settings screen, your downloads are now displayed. Tap on one and you'll see a full preview. Themes include icons, fonts, wallpapers and skins as separate elements so you will be able to choose only parts that you like.

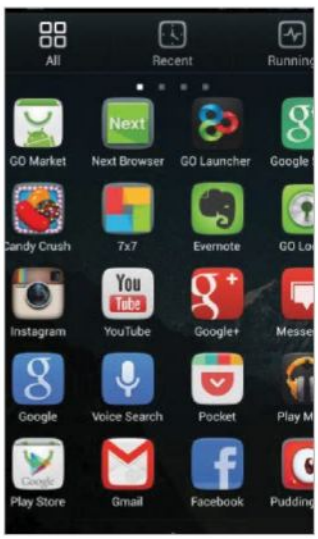
## 5: Test them out

Click the Apply button and the theme will be instantly installed and the app will exit. You can now take a full look at the changes the theme has made. A common change is that popular apps will have new icons assigned to them.




## 7: Alternative choices

Most third-party launchers support themes, although only the most popular will have a wide selection to choose from. GO Launcher EX is quite large and complex as a launcher, but does have an enormous number of themes you can make use of.




## 8: Installing GO themes

After installing GO Launcher EX, tap the menu button and select Themes. You can now browse through all the available themes for the app. They are downloaded through the Play Store like with Apex, and while most are free, not all of them are.

## 9: Apply themes

In the Themes screen in GO Launcher EX, swipe along to the Installed tab to see your available themes. Some Apex themes are also compatible with GO so they may also appear here. Tap on one and choose Apply to install it. Repeat until you're satisfied.

## 10: Back to normal

If you want to revert your phone back to its original state, simply uninstall the third-party launchers you've got. You will need to reset your wallpaper. Uninstall your downloaded themes from the Play Store to remove them from your device.

**App used:** Ultimate custom widget (UCCW) **Price:** Free **Time needed:** 25 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Design and create your own widgets

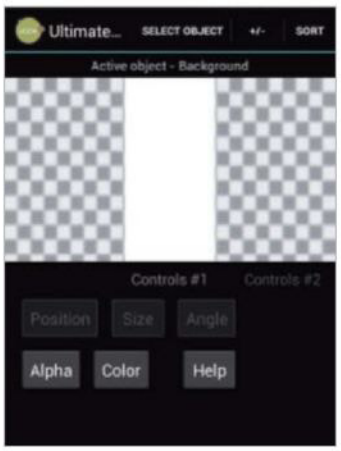
## With UCCW, the Ultimate Custom Widget, you can design and build your own unique widgets

**Widgets are the most unique part of the Android experience.** Often the quality of a widget will determine whether we even continue using an app or not, such is their value. But, for ultimate control, you can always create your own, giving your phone its own truly unique style in the process. UCCW (Ultimate Custom Widget) is a free app from the Play Store that enables you to create surprisingly advanced widgets without the need for programming knowledge and with only a very small amount of design ability. Mostly all you need is an idea.

UCCW can be quite a daunting app when you first load it up. The UI is not the simplest to use and it does appear to be quite complex. However, the principles behind it are quite simple, and you will be able to create a rudimentary widget all of your own very quickly. All you need is a background image that forms the basis of your widget and then you place the dynamic pieces of a widget – the clock and date, weather forecast, Gmail alerts, battery information, etc. – on top of that image. These all fit together remarkably well.

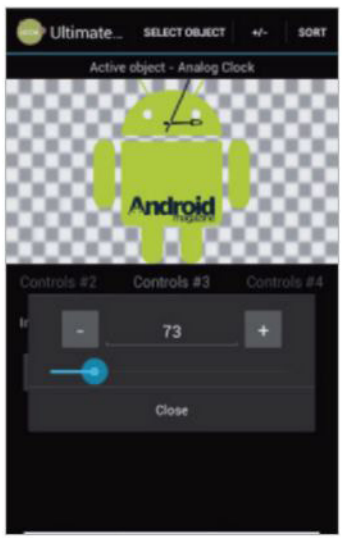
In this tutorial we're creating a simple clock widget using a personalised version of the Android mascot as our background image, as a way of introducing you to the wonders of UCCW. It is an incredibly powerful app with almost unlimited scope for creativity. To see great examples of what can be done visit **http://bit.ly/OCMO1H**. You'll get a nice idea of how to use your images, combine them with functionality and the level of customisation and creativity you can use.

"The UI is not simplest to use and it appears quite complex but the principles behind it are easy"



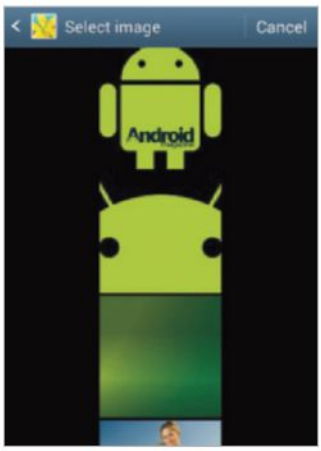

### 1: Open UCCW

Download and open UCCW. The interface takes a while to get used to, but basically you add elements to the widget one at a time and tweak them each individually. Select them with the Select Object button then swipe left and right to uncover additional editing options.



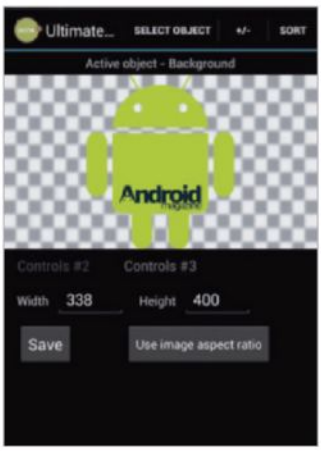

### 6: Resize the clock

Now swipe to Controls #3 and tap the Scale button. You can now adjust the size of the clock object using the slider, and then tap the '+' and '-' buttons for more control. Use this in conjunction with the Position option in step 5 to get the clock in just the right spot on your widget.



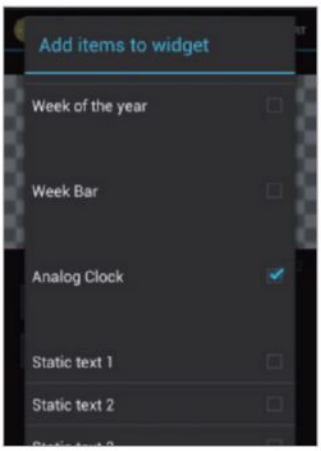

## 2: Choose your background

Pick the background image you will use. Create this separately on a desktop and copy it to your device. Save it as a .PNG file if you want to have a transparent background. The total must be less than 160k pixels.




## 3: Set the aspect ratio

First swipe to Controls #2, hit the Image button and locate the image you wish to use. It will be displayed in the window. If it has been squashed out of shape swipe to Controls #3 and tap Use Image Aspect Ratio and Save. You might need to reload it.




## 4: Add a clock

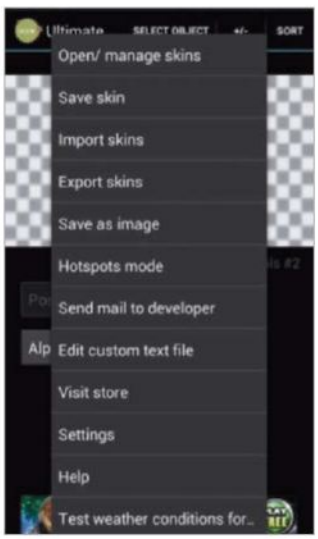
Begin adding dynamic objects that will make up your widget. Tap the +/- icon to see a list of what you can use. Tick to add items. It's best to do one at a time until you're familiar with the software. We're using the Analog Clock object first.

## 5: Put it in place

The clock appears small in the top of the screen. Use Select Object to choose the clock. Use the Position control to move it towards the location on your background image you want. Tick the 'Faster movement' option to move it quicker.

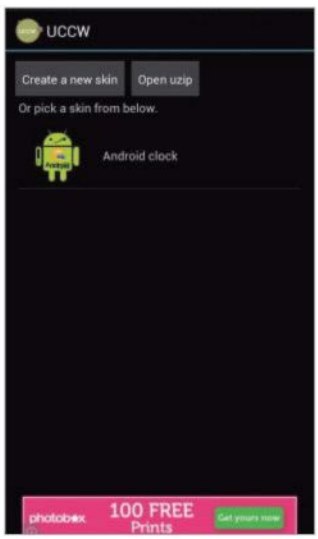
## 7: Add extra features

Repeat steps 4, 5 and 6 with other objects you want to include in your widget. We've added 'Icon forecast day 1' and 'Battery Bar'. Experiment with the other settings for the objects. You can change colours, add effects and a lot more.




## 8: Save your widget

To save your widget, press the menu button and select Save skin. Give the widget a recognisable name so that you are able to identify it properly when you choose to apply it to your home screen. You can also export your skin if you wish.




## 9: Add to home screen

Add your widget in the normal way, picking UCCW from the widget list and choosing whatever size you want – your widget will be resized as you need it. Place the widget on one of your screens and tap the Touch here icon that appears.

## 10: Widget in action

You can now see your very own widget in action. You can add as many UCCW widgets as you need. By default, tapping the widget will open the UCCW app for editing, but you can add hotspots to the widget to launch specific apps when you touch it.

**App used:** Sixaxis Controller (& Compatibility Checker) **Price:** £1.65/$2.53 **Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Convert your Samsung to a PS3 controller

## For a better gaming experience, convert your Galaxy into a wireless PlayStation 3 controller

**Mobile gaming has become incredibly popular over the past few years. However, for hardcore gamers it still falls down in one crucial aspect – the relatively poor on-screen controls provided.**

Whether the game in question provides a software joypad or requires taps and swipes for you to work towards victory, touch-screen devices simply aren't ideal for serious gaming. Controls can stick, be unresponsive or generally let you down – something that can prove particularly frustrating on the more expensive, high-end titles.

Fortunately, there is an excellent solution to this problem, one that can help you gain an edge, particularly in multiplayer or online gaming. Bluetooth enables you to wirelessly connect traditional physical game controllers to your Android phone or tablet, offering a far superior, console-like gaming experience. Using a low-cost app and your Sony PlayStation 3 wireless controller, prepare for some fantastic gaming experiences on your Galaxy device.

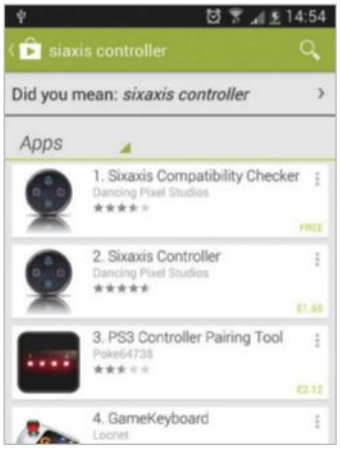
To achieve this, you will first need to install software to integrate your phone or tablet, find the Bluetooth address for it and then add this to your PlayStation 3 controller. After confirming that your phone or tablet is compatible with the joypad, you can then proceed, installing the drivers and pairing the devices via Bluetooth.

Finally, all that should be left for you to do is configure Galaxy to use the game controller and fine-tune your favourite mobile games to respond more accurately so that you can achieve gaming success.

Once you've tried it out and experienced the far more responsive, accurate controls, you'll wonder how you ever managed with software game controllers!

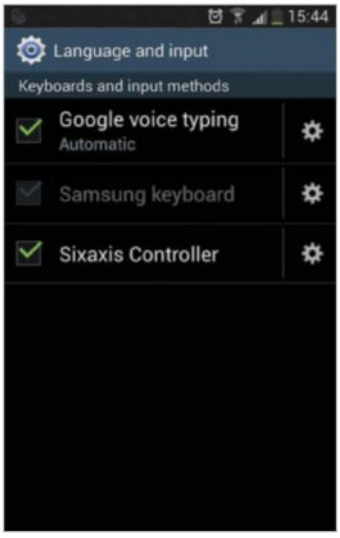
So follow our step-by-step guide and gain more control over your games.

"Touch-screen controls aren't ideal for gaming. They can be unresponsive and let you down"



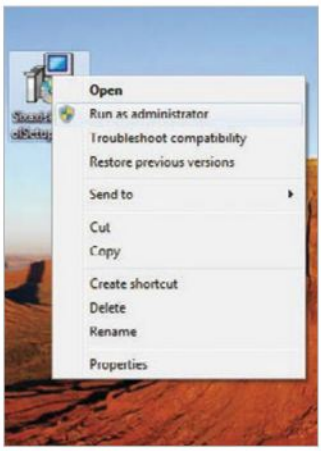

### 1: Install the app

Search Google Play for Sixaxis Controller and install the free Sixaxis Compatibility Checker which will also be displayed. Are your phone and controller compatible? Run the app and press Start. If successful, a message will display the Bluetooth address – make a note of this.




### 6: Assign input method

The Sixaxis Controller app will prompt Android to add your PS3 controller as an input device. You will also see a warning advising that the app may be able to collect personal data. Click OK to agree to the change. Sixaxis Controller will now be listed as an input method.




## 2: Connect joypad

Connect your PS3 wireless pad to a PC via USB. Download the free SixaxisPairTool, unzip and install it (Linux users should download the sixpair utility.) Open the folder, right-clicking SixaxisPairTool.exe and selecting Run as Administrator.

## 3: Bluetooth address

With SixaxisPairTool running, enter the Bluetooth address into the Change Master field. Click Update and wait for confirmation. Disconnect your controller. Next, install the Sixaxis Controller app from the Google Play Store.

## 4: Pair your controller

You can now pair your controller with your Android device. Run Sixaxis Controller and select Start to activate the driver. Tap the power button on your PS3 controller to make it detectable. Within a couple of seconds the devices will be paired.

## 5: Alter input method

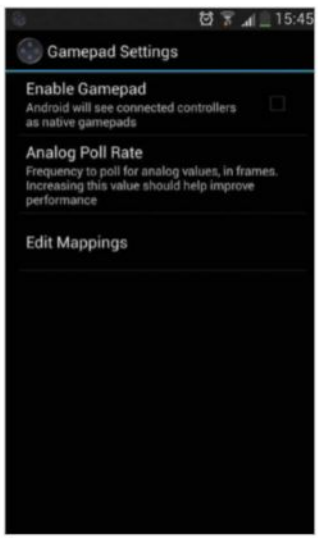
Although the controller is now paired, it cannot yet be used for games. To do this you will need to change the current input method for your Android device. Tap the Change IME button. This launches the Keyboard and input methods settings screen.

## 7: Control with Sixaxis

The input method still needs to be activated, so switch back to the Sixaxis app and tap Change IME. Select Sixaxis Controller as the active input method. To check it is working, move your controller – the cursor should move around the screen!

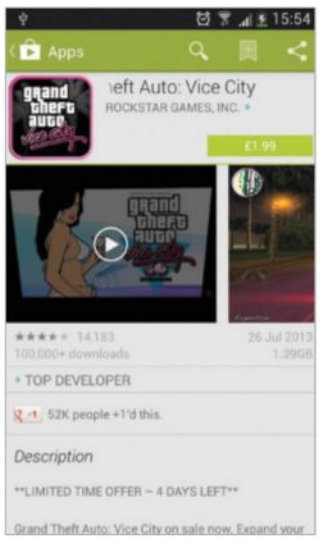
## 8: Launch a game

Time to test it out. Open Apps and find a game that you think would benefit from improved control. Avoid puzzlers and aim for arcade games or RPGs – something that requires intensive gameplay and interaction to get good results.




## 9: Sixaxis gaming

In most cases you should find that the basic controls are all you need to play. To adjust these, tap the small box to the right of the Sixaxis Controller entry in the Keyboard and input methods screen and select Gamepad Settings>Edit Mappings.




## 10: Compatible games

Most Android games should accept input from the Sixaxis controller. For the best gaming experience you'll need to head to Google Play and look for games that demand intense play, such as *Need For Speed* or *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City.*

**App used:** franco.Kernel updater **Price:** £3.45/$4.99 **Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Expert

# Improve performance by tweaking the kernel

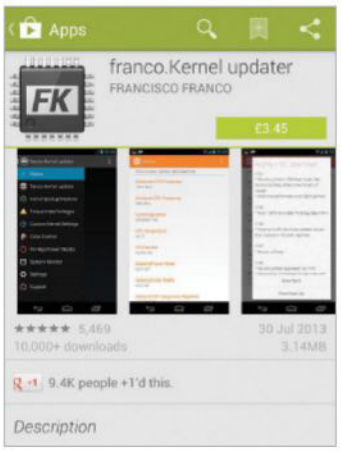
## Want longer battery life, or a faster phone? Using a custom kernel you can get both

"The kernel can have a massive effect on the performance of your device"

**When you first step into the world of Android hacks, it is likely you'll head straight for the custom ROMs and other mods that make tangible and visible changes to how your device looks or functions.** But there is another area you can focus on that is somewhat more abstract but can have an even greater impact on your device. It is the Android kernel.

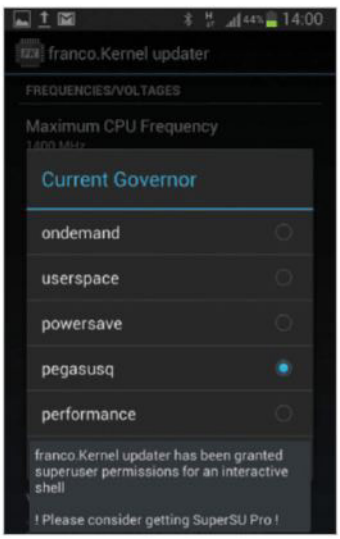
The kernel sits at the heart of every Android device. It is the crucial component that connects the hardware and the software. Every time the operating system requires access to the hardware - which is for pretty much everything it does - it goes via the kernel. Every screen tap, swipe and scroll; every time you increase the screen's brightness, access the data connection or open a file the software and hardware are communicating with each other, and the kernel is managing it.

As a result tweaking the kernel can have a massive effect on the speed and performance of your device. You can overclock it so that the processor runs faster and delivers more power to apps that need it; or you can reduce the voltage, so that the battery life is longer. Tweaking the kernel is a techie process but the controls are accessed via an app, which at least cuts down on the amount of knowledge you need to get started. For this tutorial we're using Franco's kernel, which is available for many devices and can be installed through the app on the Play Store.



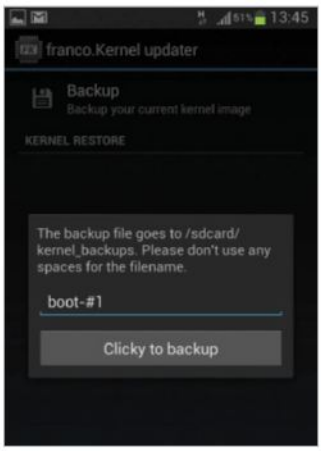

### 1: Install the app

Head over to the Play Store to download the franco.Kernel Updater app. There is a free alternative that will enable you to flash the custom kernel but it doesn't have the control panel for configuring it, so the paid option is much better.



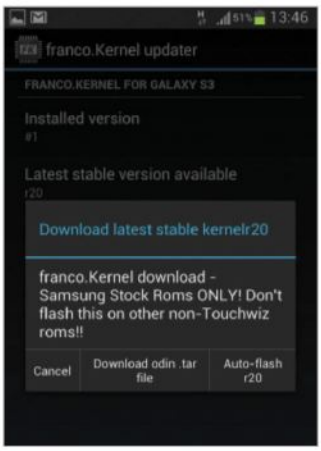

### 6: Set governer

The Governor option controls how the processor functions. Performance will keep the processor running at top speed for all tasks – great for benchmarking but terrible for battery. Ondemand ramps up the speed quickly, when needed. Select what works for you.




## 2: Back up your kernel

Your phone needs to be rooted in order to be able to flash a different kernel (and also needs to be compatible with franco's kernel). Within the app, select Kernel backup/restore and then hit 'Click to Backup' to save your current kernel.

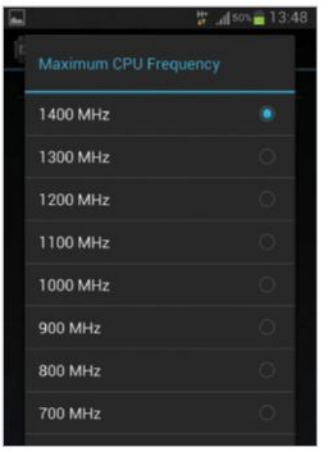



## 3: Flash new kernel

You can now flash the new kernel. From the main screen select franco.Kernel updater. You'll see which version you've got and the latest version. Tap the Download button to start downloading the kernel. Choose the auto-flash option to install it.

## 4: Start configuring

Flashing the kernel only takes a few seconds and your phone will reboot afterwards in order for your to be able to use it. Once that is done, re-open the Updater app and you can begin browsing through some of the configuration options.

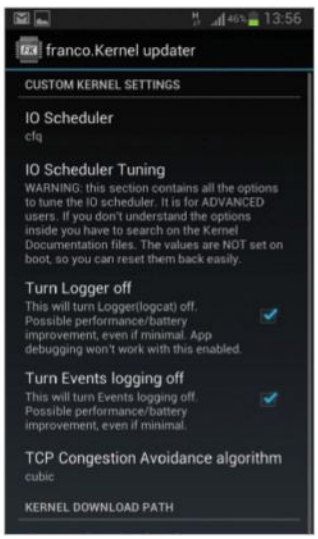



## 5: Set frequencies

Choose Frequencies/Voltages and set the maximum and minimum frequencies for your processor. Setting a higher maximum frequency makes the processor run faster, but may also reduce battery life. A lower frequency works vice versa.

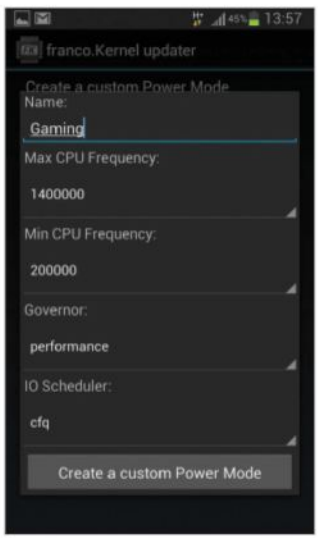
## 7: Adjust voltages

Tap the 'Set on boot' options for CPU and Governer to ensure they are used when you restart your phone. Head to Voltages. This reduces the power the CPU uses. Reducing it will extend battery, but too much use will make your phone unstable.



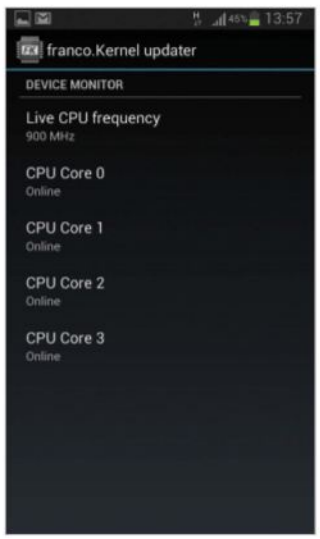

## 8: Custom settings

Back at the main screen of Updater select Custom kernel settings. Tick the boxes next to Turn Logger Off and Turn Events logging off for a small benefit in battery life. Ignore the other options here, since they are for experimental use only.




## 9: Power Mode

Once you have familiarised yourself with the basics of how kernels work, and how the changes you make impact on performance, you can create your own custom Power Mode. Examples could include a high-power mode for gaming.




## 10: Check Device monitor

Finally the Updater app gives you a real-time view of how the cores in your processor are working and at what speeds. This gives you a useful insight into how the processor works and how much power certain apps use.

**App used:** Titanium Backup Pro **Price:** £4.49 **Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Intermediate

# Boost your memory by moving apps to ROM

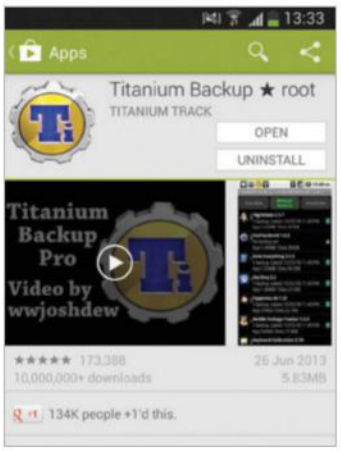
## Instantly increase your device's memory by making full use of the system space

"Get an instant memory boost by unlocking wasted memory in your system ROM"

**With Android devices increasingly moving away from SD cards and new must-have apps being added to the Google Play Store all the time, space on your average Galaxy device is very much at a premium.** Although cloud services are improving, you'll still want to install all sorts of apps on your local memory. If you're struggling for space, you can get an instant memory boost by putting any wasted memory in your system ROM to good use.

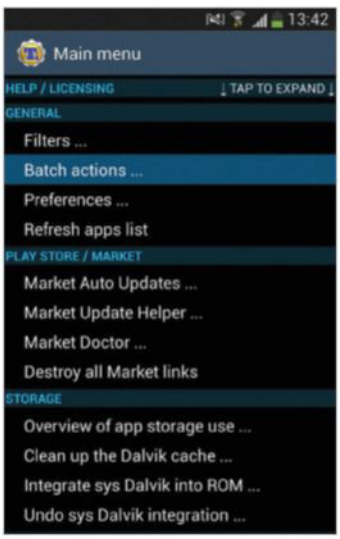
There are two major problems with the system space on your typical Android device. This is where the Android system itself lives, but even then there's usually some space left over that you can't access by default. Secondly, when you update pre-installed system apps (for example Gmail) you're actually installing the newer version as a complete download in the user space. The older version in the system space is masked rather than overwritten, creating unnecessary duplication and eating up memory.

The Titanium Backup Pro app can solve both of these issues. Once you've rooted your device you can move apps into the system space, making use of this previously-wasted memory and freeing up more internal memory in the process. You can also integrate updates of system apps into the ROM, preventing unnecessary duplicates from being installed in the user memory. We show you how to do this in the following tutorial.



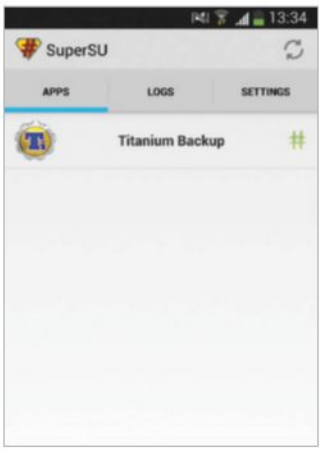

### 1: Install the Titanium Backup app

Titanium Backup has all the features and functionality that you will need. Download it from the Google Play Store. To access all its features, you'll need to purchase the Pro version, so make sure you download the license key too.



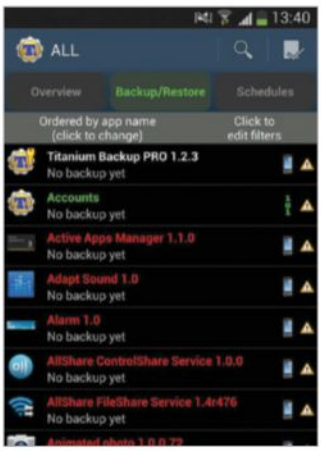

### 6: Updating pre-installed apps on your device

To force your device to overwrite the pre-installed version whenever an app updates, open Titanium Backup and press your phone's menu button. This will bring up the main menu. After doing this, tap the Batch actions... option.



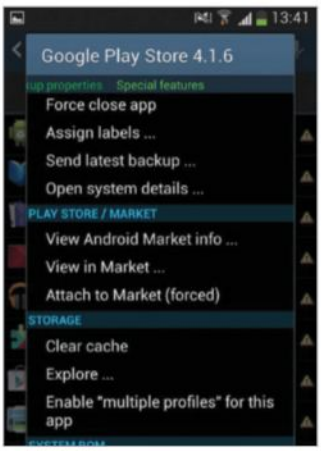

## 2: Grant Superuser permissions

Open the Superuser app that was installed when you rooted your device, and check that Titanium Backup is on the allow list. If not, tap Titanium Backup in the list and toggle the happy/sad Android icon in the toolbar.




## 3: Review your available memory

Open the app. You will get an insight into how much memory is available on the system ROM, compared to your internal memory or any SD cards. Tap the Backup/Restore button to review all of the available apps.

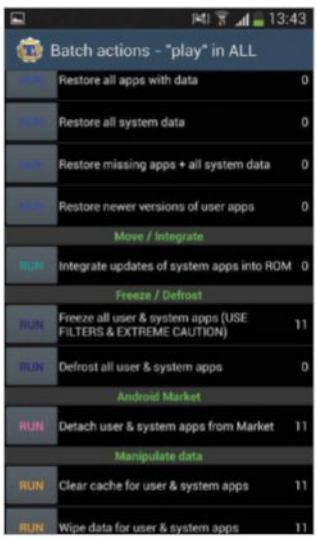



## 4: Convert to system

Long press on the app you wish to move to the system ROM. In the subsequent menu, slide the screen to the right to access the Special Features section. Scroll down to the System ROM subheading and tap the Convert to system app option.

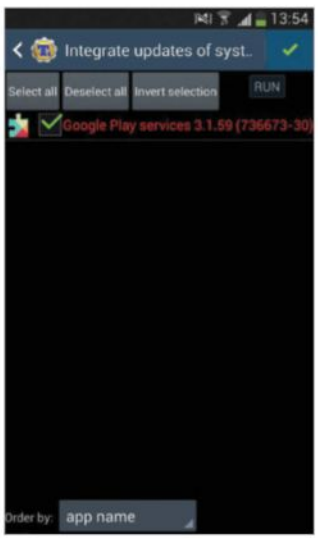
## 5: Has it worked?

Once the process is complete, open the app to check it's running correctly. If you encounter any serious issues, you can always reopen Titanium Backup and return to the System ROM section. Tap Convert to user app option to undo.



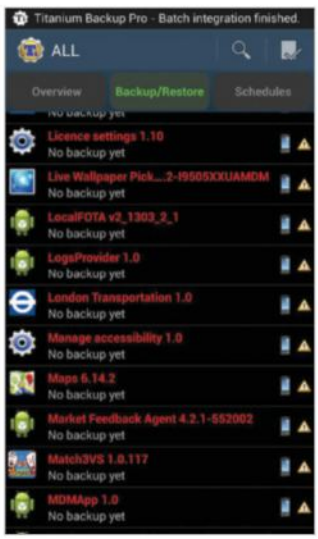

## 7: Move/Integrate

Scroll down to the Move/Integrate subheading. Here, you can review the allocation of all your apps across the internal memory and any available SD cards. Below this, you will find the Integrate updates of system apps into ROM option. Tap Run.



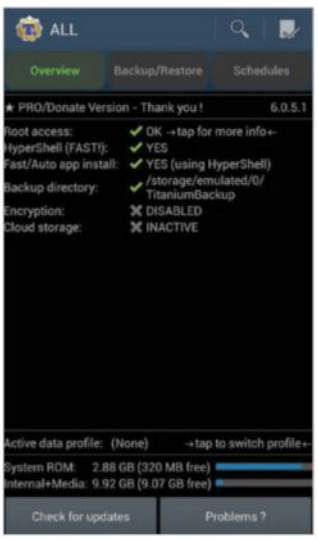

## 8: Integrate updates

Review the list of apps and select which one(s) you're integrating updates for. You can toggle the Order by box if you're looking for a particular app. Once you're happy with your selection, tap Run. This process may take a minute to complete.




## 9: Check it's worked

Once the process has run, you'll see an update in your notifications bar. If you return to the Move/Integrate section, you'll see that the tally in Integrate updates... has gone down. Future updates will now overwrite the existing version.




## 10: Now repeat

Spend some time converting user apps to system apps, and ensuring that all of your system app updates overwrite rather than duplicate. This will ensure you're squeezing all the possible memory out of the system ROM, and thus freeing up memory.

**App used:** APK Swapper **Price:** Free **Time needed:** 20 minutes **Difficulty:** Beginner

# Customise ROMs with APK Swapper

## Make a custom ROM perfect for you by removing and adding apk files

**Once you've rooted your device, the first step for most people will be trying out all the major custom ROMs.** This can take time, particularly if your device has really captured the hacker community's imagination. However, eventually you'll start to think about the tweaks that could make a custom ROM perfect for you. Maybe you had to track down all of your favourite social media apps after flashing, or wasted time uninstalling book, magazine or movie apps you didn't want.

Adding and removing apps before flashing is one of the easiest ways to give a ROM your own slant. It also saves you from hunting around the Google Play store, as the ROM flashes with exactly the apps you want. Adding and removing apps is done via the application package files (apks), which hold all of an app's code and resources. Deleting an apk is essentially the same as deleting an app.

If you're new to hacking Android devices, things like this can seem a bit daunting. That's where the APK Swapper app comes in. APK Swapper is a great tool to get you started. This easy-to-use app downloads onto your computer, where it allows you to add and remove apk files with just a few clicks of the mouse. It will also unzip and re-zip your custom ROM, making it a truly end-to-end process. In the following tutorial, we show you how to get the most out of this beginner-friendly tool.

> "You'll start to think about the tweaks that could make a ROM perfect for you"

### 1: Download APK Swapper

Download the latest version of APK Swapper from the XDA Developers forum (**http://forum.xda-developers.com/showthread.php?t=1568913**) Read through the last few pages of discussion to check for any bugs or issues.

### 6: Remove unwanted apps

To remove an apk, right-click on the file and select Delete .APK. The apk will then be removed from your ROM. This change is only applied to a temporary version of the ROM. You'll need to create a new zip to make the change permanent.

## 2: Launch the app

Once the download has finished, extract the zip file and you're ready to go. Double-click the APK Swapper app to launch and leave it running in the background. You can also look at the Readme file and Changelog for more information.

## 3: Choose a ROM

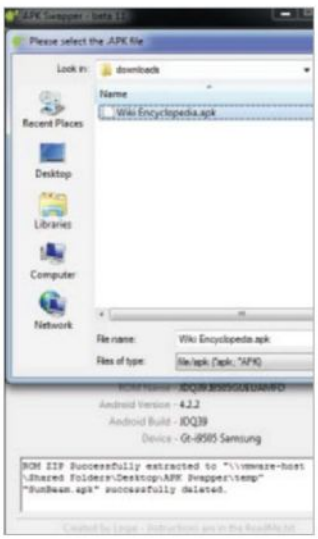
The number of custom ROMs vary from device to device, but the XDA Developers forum is a good place to go for inspiration if you don't have a particular ROM in mind. Type your device into the search bar to locate the dedicated forum for your device.

## 4: Unpack your ROM

Download your ROM of choice onto your computer, but don't unzip it. Drag and drop the zip file into the blue bar inside APK Swapper. APK Swapper will automatically unpack all of the ROM's apk files. This may take a couple of minutes.

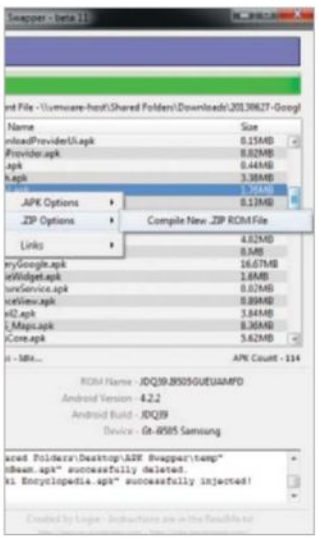
## 5: Do your research

Once APK Swapper has finished extracting, it will list all of the apk files. Most of the names are self-explanatory, but if you're unsure you should always consult the internet before altering them in any way. Deleting the wrong apk can make a ROM virtually useless.



## 7: Add apps

To add an app, ensure you have the corresponding apk to hand. Right-click anywhere within APK Swapper's list and select Inject new .APK from the .APK Options menu. Locate the apk file on your computer and APK Swapper will inject it into your ROM.

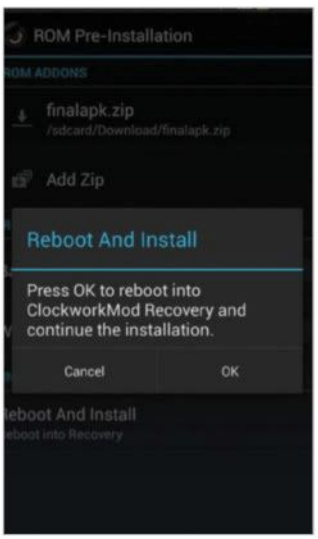


## 8: Zip your ROM

Once you're happy with the result you can zip the file ready for flashing. Right-click within APK Swapper's list section and select .ZIP options followed by Compile new .ZIP Rom file. Enter a name and a location for your zip. APK Swapper will do the rest.

## 9: Flash your ROM

Always create a backup before flashing a new ROM. Connect your device to the computer and drag the zip file onto your SD card. Flash as normal by opening ROM Manager. Tap Install ROM from SD Card and scroll through your files until you locate the zip.




## 10: Test your ROM

Give your tweaked ROM a spin. If you encounter any issues, or don't like it, restore it from the last backup. The great thing about Android devices is that there are countless ROMs waiting to be customised to your exact needs. Happy experimenting!

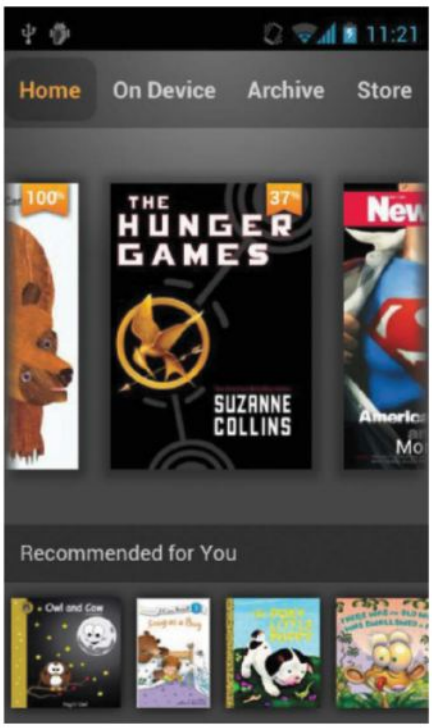
# Essential Apps

With over 1,00,000 available apps, the Google Play Store is not far from knocking Apple's App Store off its hallowed pedestal as the go-to place for the best apps. Almost all of the popular favourites are now available on the platform, developers are looking to Android to expand their consumer base, and its open source nature means it's easy for people to get their apps onto the store. But, as always, there are apps at either end of the quality scale, so in this feature we will show you the top apps available for you to download today for your Samsung Galaxy device.

SAMSUNG
12:48
Movies
TV
IMDb
Latest Trailers
Gravity
"I've Got You"
In Cinemas
THE HEAT IS COMING
The Heat
The Smurfs 2
Screening Times Near You
Notifications
Notifications
Coming Soon
SAMSUNG
5:21 PM
Shopper
Search product
PREPARE A FEAST
HOME SWEET HOME
MUST-HAVE TABLETS
Sale
Find products near
San Francisco, CA

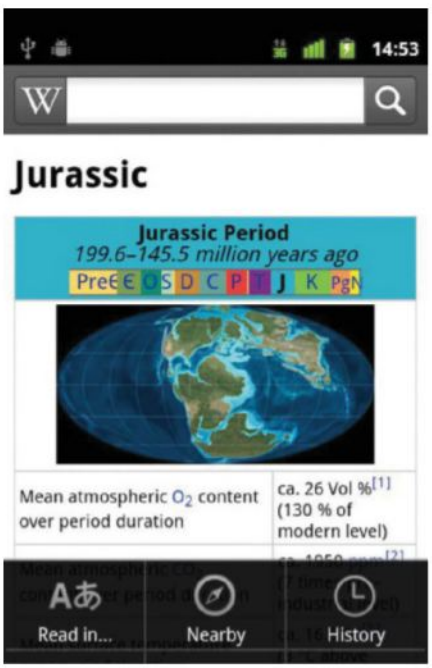
# Books & Reference

The internet is the greatest encyclopedia the world has ever seen, with a tremendous amount of accumulated knowledge being added every day. The rise of apps means that we now have greater access to this information than ever before. No longer do you have to sift through raw and unappealing data or attempt to struggle to read out-of-print classics on ill-fitting web pages or as PDFs. With more and more readers adopting eBooks over traditional print, the way information is disseminated has been radically transformed. As a result, eReaders are now big business, as demonstrated by Amazon and Google's heavy investment in the industry to try to control the lion's share of this lucrative market. Hopefully this high level of competition will continue to keep eBook prices down and encourage creative new innovations, such as we've seen from the development of improved in-app searching and the ability to share books across multiple devices.

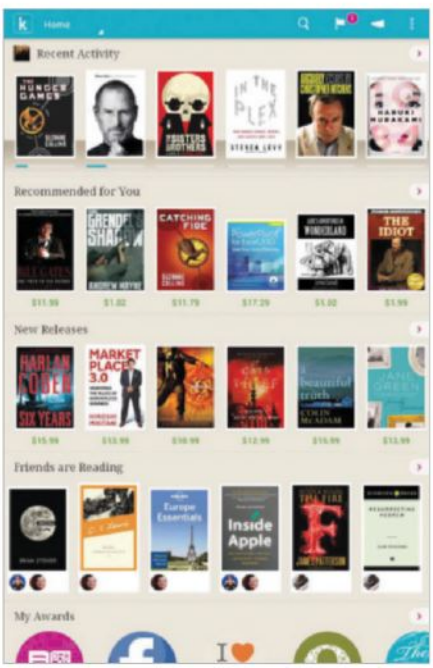



Explore a huge range of books on Kindle, from the latest releases to out-of-copyright classics

> "The way information is disseminated has been radically transformed"




Wikipedia – a trusted source online, now a tap away




Explore Kobo's 1.8 million free eBooks

## 5 essential apps

### Kindle

**Price** Free **Developer** Amazon Mobile

Over a million books and magazines are available on Kindle, and thousands of them are free. It's a testament to the Play Store that this doesn't make Kindle exceptional in itself. However, the app has some impressive extra features. Simply tap and hold a word to view its definition in the built-in dictionary or use Google and Wikipedia links to get re info. Whispersync also allows you to synchronise bookmarks, notes and the last page you read across multiple devices.

### Wikipedia

**Price** Free **Developer** Wikipedia Foundation

Wikipedia is the community-driven online encyclopedia, containing 20 million articles. Wikipedia for Android is more than just a gateway to the website. You can scan for articles related to an area, making it a great travel guide when abroad. All articles can also be saved to read offline. With the latest app update, you can also edit pages while on the go, making this a complete app with a seamless overall experience.

### Google Play Books

**Price** Free **Developer** Google

There isn't a great deal of difference between the leading Android eReader app, Google Play Books, and Kindle. Both offer a vast library of books, both price their books about the same, and both have the ability to sync books across devices. As might be expected, Google offers an excellent search function. Google Play Books also imitates real books a little more closely, with page numbers and page-turning effects, along with a variety of reading options.

### Kobo

**Price** Free **Developer** Kobo Inc

One of the very best eBook libraries around, Kobo has more than two million titles on offer, with 1.8 million of those being free to download. Add to this its cool social features like reading stats that you can compare with friends, and the ability to enter debates on pages and you have bookworm heaven.

### Audible for Android

**Price** Free **Developer** Audible

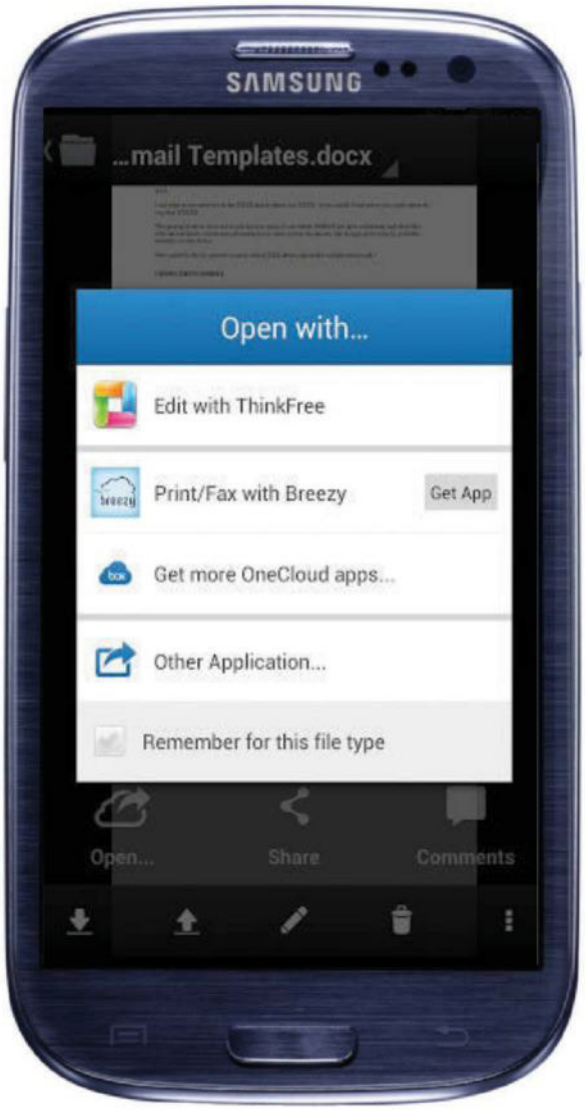
Audible for Android offers over 60,000 audiobooks. For a monthly subscription, you can download as many audiobooks as you like from the in-app store and even listen to them offline. Despite being audio only, this app offers similar functionality to eBook readers, allowing you to attach notes and bookmark your favourite parts.

# Business

Mobile phones and big business have been synonymous since the first portable phones came out in the eighties. However, with the right apps on your Galaxy device, smartphones don't just allow you to speak to a client wherever you are. It's even possible to carry your very own portable office suite in your pocket. Increasingly sophisticated programs mean you can open and edit word documents, calculate profit and loss in spreadsheets and work on presentations - all from your phone.

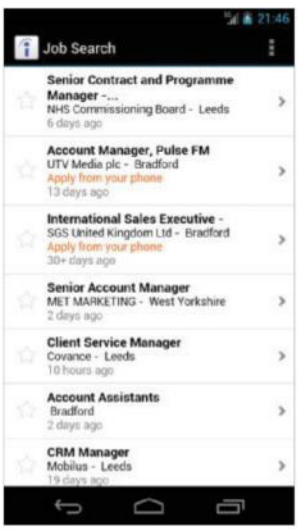
If you don't want to eat up your smartphone memory with desktop-size files, you can also use remote access apps to view and edit the files on your work computer from your device no matter where you are.

Other business apps make the most of your smartphone's other capabilities – for example, to find business clients on the internet, or photograph your receipts so you have proof of purchase. Read on to discover the top five apps we think could give your business the competitive edge.




Upload your media files in Box

Remotely access a computer with LogMeIn




Apply for jobs from the comfort of your device with Job Search

## 5 essential apps

### Quickoffice Pro HD

**Price** £3.74/$4.99 **Developer** Quickoffice

Create, edit and share Microsoft Office documents on your Galaxy device using Quickoffice Pro HD. The ability to open and edit Word, Excel and PowerPoint files, as well as PDFs, really adds an extra dimension to your smartphone beyond communication and browsing the internet. The app also supports Google Docs and the file manager works seamlessly with your email attachments, locally saved files and cloud storage accounts, so you have a complete office suite no matter where you are.

### LogMeIn Ignition

**Price** £20.14/$29.99 **Developer** LogMeIn

LogMeIn Ignition for Android lets you remotely access your Mac or PC. While the hefty price tag will put many off this app, it is one of the most robust of its kind out there. In addition to a polished interface and reliable connection, LogMeIn allows you to connect with more than one computer and offers impressive navigation and control over your desktop, even allowing you to make Ctrl+Alt+Delete commands.

### Box

**Price** Free **Developer** Box

Adding to the choice of cloud storage apps available is Box, a one-stop place for storing all your files, big or small. Upload speeds to Box are surprisingly quick and once added to the server, you'll still have full access to the files on any Box account on your phone, tablet or desktop computer. There's also a helpful tutorial included if you're new to using cloud storage on your device and syncing between multiple personal computers and devices.

### Job Search

**Price** Free **Developer** Indeed Jobs

A fantastic aggregator of content when it comes to finding a new job, Job Search brings together information from jobs boards, recruitment agencies and company websites from around the world. The app also allows you to create a CV so you can apply for jobs instantly and within the app should you find that dream position that you've been looking for.

### MDScan: Mobile Doc Scanner

**Price** £1.99/$2.99 **Developer** STOIK

Transform any image into a PDF, using MDScan. Simply point your camera at a document and MDScan automatically detects borders, corrects distortion and equalises brightness to create a clear, legible copy. While the interface is rather disappointing for a paid app, it is highly functional.

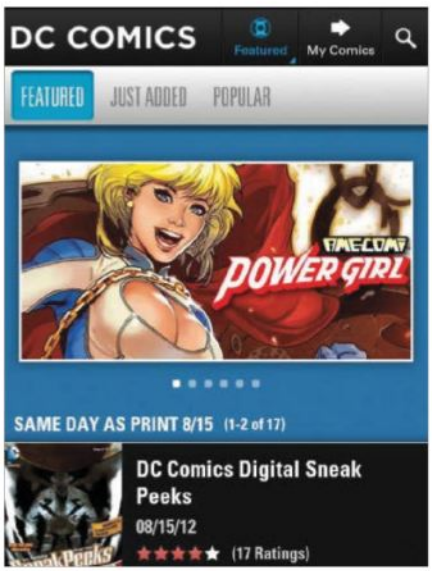
# Comics

Following the rise of the eBook and reading novels on smartphones, comic books have also gone digital. Perhaps due to their visual nature, it makes sense that comic-book reading apps are so popular on Android. Compared to Apple iPhones, Galaxy smartphones have much larger screens, making it easier to view action-packed pages or to zoom in on panels for detailed study.

The comic-book-reader industry is divided into two camps: those simply providing platforms to view your pre-existing collection of digital comics, such as Dark Horse Comics and those providing a virtual shop front to sell the latest issues, such as the official Marvel Comics and DC Comics apps. One area where the Google Play Store is failing, however, is in creating original comics exclusively for the digital reader. You can even find fully interactive comics, as shown by The Avengers Iron Man comic that puts you in control of our metallic hero and his surroundings.

Access your Marvel and DC comics all in one place

Read comics such as Dark Horse Comics




DC Comics is great for die-hard comic fans

Pose Tool 3D is a great app for budding artists

## 5 essential apps

### DC Comics

**Price** Free **Developer** ComiXology

DC Comics is the official app for reading the adventures of Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman on your Galaxy. Powered by the popular ComiXology comic ereader, all the familiar functions are here. From purchasing comics in-app, to syncing them across devices, and the unique Guided View mode that allows you to view individual panels one by one, which is easier to read on a small screen than a whole page. Featuring nothing but DC content, this app is ideal for die-hard fans.

### Pose Tool 3D

**Price** £2.47/$3.99 **Developer** AlienThink Inc.

This posing tool will help give you inspiration when you're drawing, sketching or sculpting. You can customise the figure to the exact position you need them to be in and then use the artist tools at your disposal within the app to pinpoint details even more. Once you've perfected your figure, you can then save them on your device, or share them with your friends via Facebook and Twitter.

### Dark Horse Comics

**Price** Free **Developer** Dark Horse Comics

It is surprising that Dark Horse Comics has been so late to join the comic app market on Android. With the firm being so closely linked with videogame tie-in comics, such as *Mass Effect*, you'd think it would be an early adopter of multimedia reading. The app itself is good, with the store reflecting the publisher's diverse range, including manga as well as superhero comics, and offering single-issue stories at reduced prices and an extensive list of first issues absolutely free.

### Marvel Comics

**Price** Free **Developer** Marvel Comics

Featuring the world's most popular superheroes, the Marvel Comics app contains hundreds of comic books ready for you to download. The interface offers a variety of different reading views, and comics cater to plenty of ages. The comics aren't free, however, and you'll need to buy issues individually.

### Comics

**Price** £1.99/$1.99 **Developer** ComiXology

Remains the only place on mobile where you can get access to both Marvel and DC Comics in the same place, as well as many others. The app also comes with patent pending technology that allows you to read a comic panel by panel, each one filling your screen.

Enter web address or use Google search

Quick tabs provide one-touch access to favourite sites

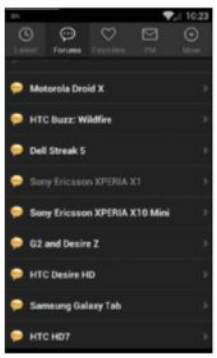
Manage your bookmarks, history, downloads and settings here

Customise these websites by clicking Manage

# Communication

It doesn't seem so long ago that we could only talk over long distances via telephone calls. But over the last 15 years, mobile phones have broadened the spectrum of how we can communicate so that we can now make video calls, send instant messages, files, photos and more – all for free. Some might say, thanks to Google's C2DM (push) technology that allows us to run apps constantly in the background without losing battery life, we have entirely removed the need for SMS and MMS text messages. However, the app market is also full of apps promising to deliver SMS messages and make calls to landlines cheaper than standard networks can, proving that apps can do traditional communication better than non-smartphones can.

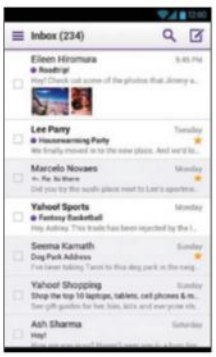
We've rounded up our five essential apps to get you started. Read on to discover how to communicate like never before.




Take on new hacking projects by using the XDA Premium app

Create a group with up to 50 members using WhatsApp Messenger

Use Sky Cloud WiFi to find open Wi-Fi accounts in your area




Manage your Yahoo! email account with their official Mail app

## 5 essential apps

### Opera Mini

**Price** Free **Developer** Opera Software ASA

In terms of web browsing, Opera Mobile is one of the most established on the Google Play Store. Whether you're looking to browse the web for a casual search or use the internet on a regular basis, Opera caters for both markets merging traditional techniques with some slick new shortcuts. It's remarkably quick to use, but because there are so many features to uncover, it'll take you a while to discover everything it can do. Best of all, tablet users are able to enjoy Opera Mobile for free as well.

### XDA Premium

**Price** Free **Developer** xda-developers

If you're looking to get started in the world of hacking, then look no further than the XDA Premium app. This forum is filled with various posts about new ROMs and hacking techniques you can use to unlock new features on your phone or tablet. XDA includes a wealth of tricky hacks for users who like to customise and push the limit of what their Android devices allow.

### Yahoo! Mail

**Price** Free **Developer** Yahoo! Inc

Yahoo! Mail is a thorough email client that easily matches the likes of Gmail and Hotmail. You can merge all your Yahoo! accounts into this one app and systematically manage your outgoing and incoming emails whenever and wherever you may be. There's a good variety of settings to help you customise your inbox even further and by conencting it to your Yahoo! Mail desktop client, you'll be able to manage your inbox wherever you go.

### Sky Cloud WiFi

**Price** Free **Developer** BSkyB

If you have a Sky broadband account, then use Sky Cloud WiFi to find free and accessible WiFi connections in your local area. As well as pointing out local WiFi hotspots, the app will also notify you of any local attractions, restaurants and shops that have an accessible WiFi network around you.

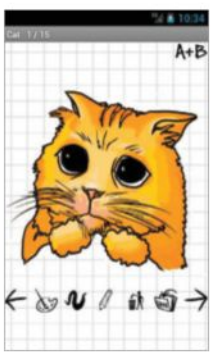
### WhatsApp Messenger

**Price** Free **Developer** WhatsApp Inc

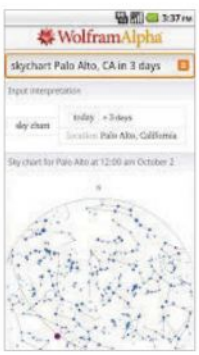
The app that has seemingly killed off the text message. WhatsApp allows users to stay in contact via instant messages regardless of platform. The app is completely free and also supports multimedia file sharing and group messages containing up to 50 participants, a seriously impressive feature.

# Education

As mobile devices become more integrated into classrooms, educators and students are looking for new ways to apply them to the learning process because these devices can add a new dimension to the subjects. Applications on all of these devices can help automate current classroom (or out-of-the-classroom) processes and present new ways to learn that have previously been unexplored. As we know, it is sometimes the way that a person learns new information itself that affects how well they are able to retain it. Technological progress has made it possible for children and adults alike to learn from almost anywhere and Android is no exception. Whether students need help defining a word, locating the lumbar spine or practising French vocabulary, there's almost always an app for that. Because of the imaginative methods employed by many of today's developers, the innovative methods on offer provide fresh impetus to even the most staid of subjects.

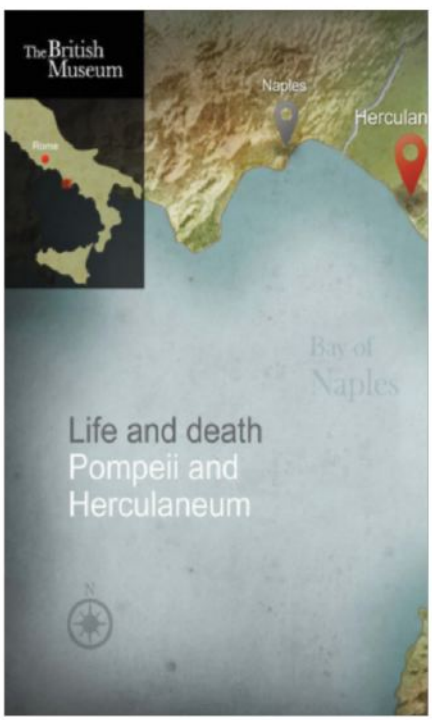



Create beautiful sketches using the How To Draw app on your Galaxy




Ask a question about any subject and WolframAlpha will answer it

"Technology has made it possible to learn from almost anywhere"




Relive history with the Pompeii and Herculaneum app

## 5 essential apps

### Mobile Observatory

**Price** £3.49/$4.49 **Developer** KreApp Software

Find out more about the stars and planets around you with the Mobile Observatory app. There's a wide range of information regarding individual stars and their exact locations, as well as a guide to each planet. Some of the scientific jargon is a little daunting, but there's no doubt you'll learn something new with this app after you've really played around with its features for a while.

### Pompeii and Herculaneum

**Price** £1.99/$2.99 **Developer** British Museum

Released to celebrate a huge exhibition at the British Museum, Pompeii and Herculaneum is an interactive app that details the different aspects of life before and after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. There are maps and video clips as well as artefacts that form part of the real exhibition all on show here, all forming a great history app that you can enjoy on your Samsung device.

### TED

**Price** Free **Developer** TED Conferences

TED is filled with various keynotes and speeches from some of the worlds most enterprising people. No matter what your interests may be, TED covers a wide range of categories, so you're guaranteed to find something of interest. Each speech varies in length and you can download them on to your phone or tablet to watch whenever you want. While watching a keynote, check out the discussion feature that lets you see what other people make of it.

### How to Draw – Easy Lessons

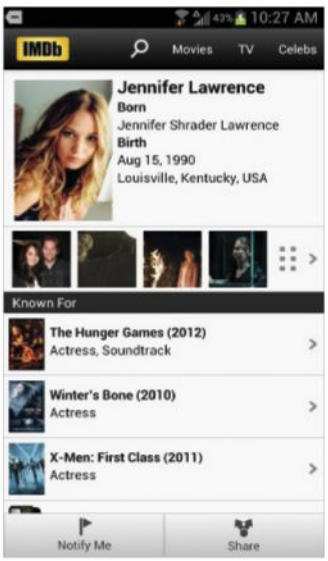
**Price** Free **Developer** ArtelPlus

Learn to draw a variety of animals and faces with this instructional app. Using your fingers or a stylus, you can draw directly onto a guide, viewing your sketches on top of the guide or viewing them as separate layers, like with tracing paper. Add colours, use different brushes and save your favourite creations.

### WolframAlpha

**Price** £2.48/$3.99 **Developer** Wolfram Alpha

Unlike Google, WolframAlpha computes an answer rather than providing a list of documents or webpages that might contain the answer. Simply type a word, phrase or question into the app and it will analyse it and give you an exact answer, which might take the form of an article, graph, table or illustration.




Find out about your favourite movies in IMDb

Have a laugh with The Onion

"Inject a little frivolity into a mundane day"

# Entertainment

There's never an excuse to be bored when you own a Galaxy device. That's because there's a nearly never-ending selection of fun apps to be discovered in the Entertainment section of the Google Play Store. Many are available for free, or at least available for pocket-money prices, with more being released all the time.

There are some people who dismiss entertainment apps as childish due to the frequent ranking of Tamagotchi-style animated animals or face-changing 'booth' apps, such as Fatbooth and UglyBooth, in Google Play's Top Paid billboard. However, these apps, along with innumerable soundboard apps, can inject a little frivolity into an otherwise mundane day.

For those that need a little more than activity than reading jokes, the Entertainment section also offers some great portal apps that give you a direct link to your favourite websites, including IMDB and The Onion News Network. Other apps actually aid you in seeking out real-life enjoyment, such as looking up movie times and reviews, or finding a concert near you.

## 5 essential apps

### IMDB

**Price** Free **Developer** IMDB

If you need information about a specific movie, TV show, actor, designer or music composer, then look no further than this app. IMDb is the ultimate catalogue of the TV and movie industry, allowing you to discover new things to watch. There's a dedicated forum for you to discuss topics with other members. You can also leave reviews of your favourite and worst movies and create playlists of your most recommended films that other people should watch.

### SketchBook Mobile

**Price** £1.32/$1.99 **Developer** Autodesk

Professional standard drawing and painting materials at your fingertips, SketchBook Mobile is a great place to spend some time if you are creatively-inclined. Extensive drawing tools mean you can do almost anything in this app, and the level of zoom available means you can be as detailed as you wish when it comes to your creations.

### StumbleUpon

**Price** Free **Developer** StumbleUpon

StumbleUpon has been a popular social-bookmarking website for years and the app follows the same premise, providing you with entertaining webpages, videos and photos. As you Like and Dislike randomly generated webpages, the app learns your interests and recommends content for you. Webpages can be set as favourites so you can come back to them any time. Unfortunately, the search engine doesn't filter webpages not optimised for smaller screens, sometimes making for awkward reading.

### Flixster

**Price** Free **Developer** Flixster Inc.

Browse the cinemas in your local area to find the times and showings of movies. In some cases you can even book advanced tickets to see the movie and even choose the seats that you want to sit in. Flixster also includes a full streaming service of certain movies for a small subscription fee.

### Onion News Network

**Price** Free **Developer** The Onion

Watch satirical news stories from the popular website The Onion. While it is a shame that this app only includes video content and doesn't make use of the website's many written articles, you are able to sort by show, view editor's picks, access popular segments and search The Onion's archives for spoof stories from yesteryear.

# 5 essential apps

## Barclays PingIt

**Price** Free **Developer** Barclays Bank

When it comes to convenience, one of the first apps that should spring to mind is Barclays PingIt because of the way it completely removes hassle from banking transaction. The app makes it possible to essentially send money via SMS using just a mobile number. It's even possible to add messages and pictures to your transactions for that more personal touch. The beauty of this app is that it means your account is never beyond your reach.

## My Budget Book

**Price** £1.49/$2.29 **Developer** OneTwoApps

See your balance on the opening screen and track all of your earnings and expenses. Filter data by months, years or financial quarters, sort transactions by category and create graphs to see where your money is going. You can also take action managing multiple accounts and make transfers in-app. With access to so much sensitive information, the app also comes with an optional password and allows you to back up files for safekeeping.

## PayPal

**Price** Free **Developer** PayPal Mobile

Use the PayPal app to manage all your online payments you make on your various credit and debit cards. The app acts as a thorough account manager allowing you to distribute money between your accounts and track the history of payments you've received and sent. Its best use, however, is linking it to your eBay account to create a flawless payment system that you can access and use time and time again.

## Google Finance

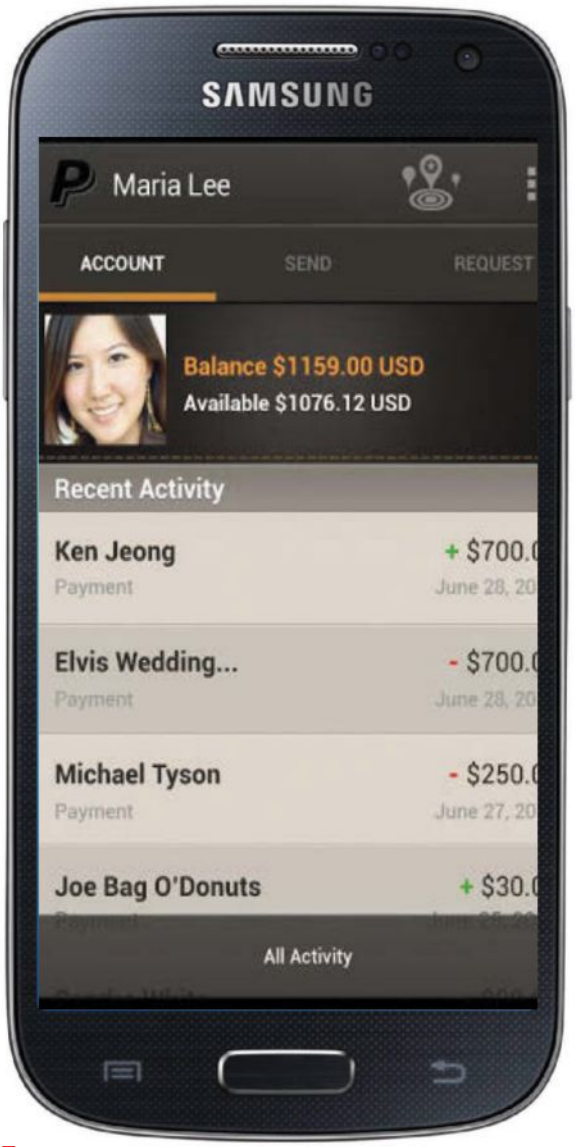
**Price** Free **Developer** Google Inc.

As with any Google app, you're going to get a brilliant all round app and Finance is no different. Find the latest stocks and share prices with constantly updating charts and read about what's making the latest headlines in the world of global finance.

## Currency Converter

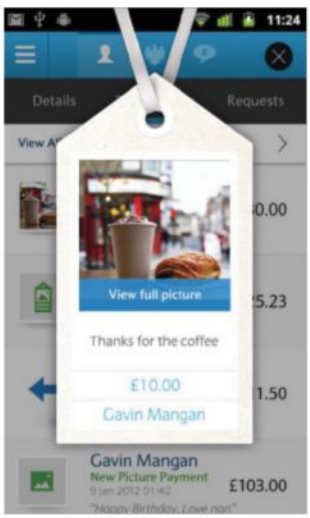
**Price** Free **Developer** Pocketools.com

Check the exchange rate of the world's currencies with this informative app. As well as it providing a basic conversion, you're able to set a preferred list of currencies for quick use. You can also see a graph of every currency's value over time, ranging from up-to-the-minute readings through to the last five years.




Make transactions between your PayPal account and bank account

Manage your accounts and make money transfers with My Budget Book




Barclays Pingit removes the hassle from banking transactions

# Finance

Managing your money shouldn't get in the way of living your life. That's why personal finance apps are such a natural fit for Android. They let you track your stocks, convert currencies, calculate how much you owe and pay your expenses – all on the go. The best apps are those that take advantage of Android's finger-friendly interface or features such as location-awareness. For example, GPS or Wi-Fi can be helpful in finding the way to the nearest ATM. As so many financial apps are developed by banks, a lot are free or available for a nominal charge, so there's little to lose by trying them. Keeping track of your money can easily become a daunting task, but we have some recommended apps here that range from delivering up-to-the-minute market news, to managing your budget on the go, converting currency, even just helping you split restaurant bills fairly between friends.

It's all about survival in Temple Run 2

Find all your favourite characters from The Simpsons

Enjoy quality games such as Grand Theft Auto III

# Games

With the power of a Galaxy device in your pocket, it's now possible to play the latest games at any time and in any place. Some true blockbusters await you in the Google Play Store, with action-packed shooters, edge-of-your-seat racers and addictive platformers available.

Of course, controlling these games with accuracy is key. Until you've played a game using touch-controls, it's hard to imagine how intuitive and easy it is. Puzzle and strategy games are easier to handle than ever before and it's possible to rearrange the on-screen buttons to accommodate the size of your device. With in-built accelerometers it's also possible to control games simply by tilting your device.

Here we've rounded up what we think are the best five games currently available for Android devices. Some can be completed in mere minutes, making them perfect for commutes or long queues, whereas others are focused, lengthy titles that offer unlimited hours of fun.

This pocket edition is still very much a full version

Fire Angry Birds at the Pig Star in this franchise cross-over

## 5 essential apps

### Minecraft - Pocket Edition

**Price** £4.99/$6.99 **Developer** Mojang

The desktop epic has made a brilliant mobile port and has resulted in Minecraft's following growing even more. This is still very much a full version of the game, just scaled down for mobile devices, so you still need to build up your world and of course watch out for zombies when night falls. There's also multiplayer options so you can take on friends and other players from around the world. A great way to pass a few hours – or more!

### Temple Run 2

**Price** Free **Developer** Imangi Studios

The successful follow-up to the original Temple Run has been a massive hit and showcases what Android gaming is really capable of. This time around you're still trying to escape with the treasure but need to navigate new treacherous maps. There's also a great unlock system that lets you buy new characters and power ups that you can use on your mission.

### The Simpsons: Tapped Out

**Price** Free **Developer** EA Swiss Sarl

The Simpsons is the latest franchise to release a tie-in game to its popular TV series. The game tells the story of Homer accidentally setting off a nuclear explosion in Springfield and it becomes your job to rebuild it how you see fit. It can take a while to get going, but you'll soon meet all your favourite characters from The Simpson's brand and even some of the original voice actors too. This game is both addictive and brilliant at the same time!

### Grand Theft Auto III

**Price** £3.72/$4.99 **Developer** Rockstar Games

The PS2 title that completely changed the face of open-world gaming with its sprawling criminal epic has been optimised for Android. The graphics are stunning and in HD, the missions follow a detailed storyline, but the freedom to roam also offers unlimited hours of gameplay. The button controls, however, take some getting used to.

### Angry Birds Star Wars

**Price** Free **Developer** Rovio

The Angry Birds journey to a galaxy far, far away. Recast as the Rebels taking on the Imperial Pigs, you can use the Force to move objects and lightsabers in environments resembling the planet Tatooine and the Death Star. However, beyond these mostly aesthetic changes, the game retains the same physics-based puzzles that made this franchise a phenomenon.

# Health & Fitness

Keep track of your diet using Calorie Counter

Galaxy devices are packed with clever technologies that can aid in exercise and improve your health. The GPS can be used to track your route and distance in real-time, the web connection can compare food nutrition, the media player can support instructional videos and the camera flash can even monitor your heartbeat.

"Get into shape in next to no time"

Making the most of these features to improve your health is easy thanks to the myriad apps available on the Google Play Store. Nearly all are free, so there's no excuse not to download an app, put on your sports shoes and get running (or whatever other activity takes your interest).

We've scoured the Play Store and rounded up the five essential apps that can improve your health and fitness. You'll find reviews of a distance tracker, heartbeat monitor, all-in-one exercise guide and a calorie counter here. With these apps, you should be able to get into shape in next to no time.

Flee the undead in jogging game Zombies, Run!

Let Runtastic Pro monitor your progress

## 5 essential apps

### Calorie Counter

**Price** Free **Developer** FatSecret

A simple tool to find all the nutritional facts for the foods you eat. Use the barcode scanner to tell you the calorie content of food before you buy; the search function to look up your favourite foods, brands and restaurants, as well as health-conscious recipes. You can also log your eating habits, exercise routine and current weight into various diaries, the end result giving you a diet calendar to see your calories consumed and burned.

### Zombies, Run!

**Price** £5.49/$7.99 **Developer** Six to Start

Have fun while getting fit with this running game. The premise of the app is that while you are out jogging, you will hear the guttural groans of the undead through your headphones creeping up behind you and you must outrun them to escape. With over 40 runs worth of content and a detailed story, if you don't find stats monitoring your workout motivational, Zombies, Run! is highly recommended.

### Endomondo Sports Tracker PRO

**Price** £3.99/$4.99 **Developer** Endomondo

This tracking app allows you to monitor your duration, distance, speed and calories in a distance-based sport, such as running, cycling or walking. However, the feature that most sets Endomondo apart is its massive sports social network. Here you can interact with other users, compete against their fast times, share routes and workout routines, and even send friends pep talks for the next time they work out.

### Fitness Buddy: 300+ Exercises

**Price** Free **Developer** Azumio

This app includes a comprehensive guide to ways to work out at the gym. Filter by exercise name or the muscle group you want to improve to find the right workout. Each entry comes with step-by-step photos and a detailed description. Plan your exercise regime using the calendar on the opening screen.

### Runtastic Pro

**Price** £4.29/$5.99 **Developer** Runtastic

One of the very best fitness apps out there, Runtastic can monitor your progress in so many ways. You can see your pace as well as how you're performing against your goals. The app also contains voice feedback during exercise, and plenty of social content too.

# 5 essential apps

## AroundMe

**Price** Free **Developer** Attorno A Me

In a new area and trying to find somewhere to eat? AroundMe quickly identifies your position and then allows you to search for the nearest bank, bar, petrol station, hospital or other local service. The app will then give you a complete list of all the businesses in the category you have tapped on, along with the distance from where you are and a link to Google Maps. You are not restricted to looking in your immediate area, you can also search by zip code, city or neighbourhood.

## Jamie's 20 Minute Meals

**Price** £1.93/$2.99 **Developer** HiveBrain Software

There is no better feeling that pulling off a masterstroke in the kitchen, and this app is the perfect way to help you achieve that. Based on the TV series and book of the same name, 20 Minute Meals is a selection of easy to do recipes, complete with full instructions, as well as plenty of stunning high-res images. The app also contains a range of tutorial videos to help you learn useful skills for the kitchen, all lead by Jamie Oliver.

## QuidCo

**Price** Free **Developer** QuidCo

If you're looking to find great deals at low prices then you'll want to download the Quidco app. As well as being a deal directory, its main features allows its users to get paid for visiting certain stores on their travels. It's easy to set-up, it can make you some money and save you some too. There's plenty of features to keep the app new and interesting and, best of all, you'll be able to discover the best money saving deals in your local area.

## Wikitude

**Price** Free **Developer** Wikitude

Explore your world through augmented reality with Wikitude. Get information on places, read geotagged tweets and even play games. Create multiple 'Worlds,' each with different filters for easy use, and share them with your friends. The downside to this immersive app is that it drains your battery very quickly.

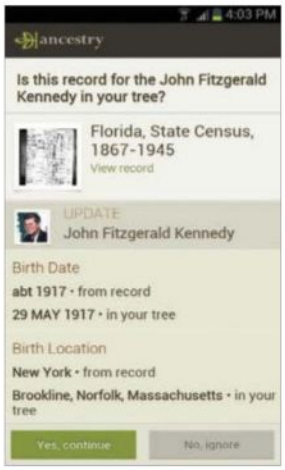
## Ancestry

**Price** Free **Developer** Ancestry.com

Build, update and show off your family tree with this companion app for the popular genealogy website. Edit your family tree on the go and insert photos. However, keep in mind that all of the historic records you will need for serious research are behind a paywall.

Create culinary masterpieces with 20 Minute Meals

Save money with the QuidCo app



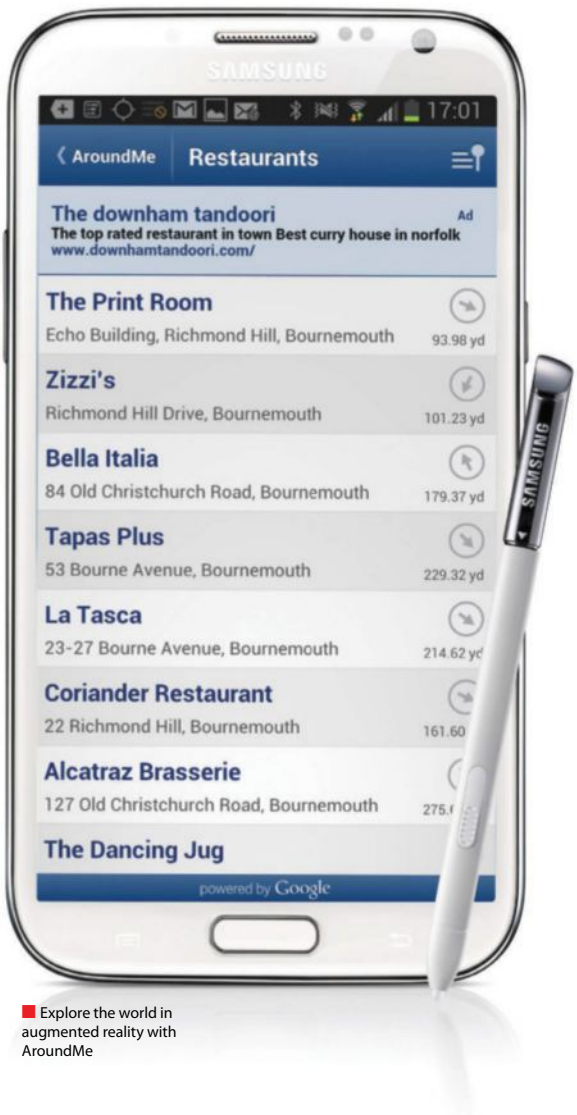

Research your family tree on the go with Ancestry

# Lifestyle

Lifestyle apps are often the most interesting and fun, and can also enhance and improve your day-to-day life. Lifestyle is a varied category on the Play Store, with horoscopes next to cocktail-recipe apps. Some of the apps that you come across in this category seem as if they should really be in Shopping, Travel or Social Networking. The only common thread that seems to run through them is that they give the user an opportunity to dedicate free time to some of their favourite hobbies while remaining on the go.

This means lifestyle apps can range from the highly practical, such as offering cooking tips or shopping vouchers, to the more novelty value; for instance, humorous daily quotes or augmented reality games. Here is a list of five great lifestyle apps that offer truly personal services that you can use throughout the day, and offer some entertainment when convenient.

"Lifestyle is a varied category, with horoscopes next to cocktail-recipe apps"



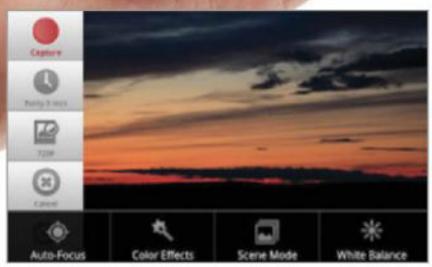

Explore the world in augmented reality with AroundMe

# Media & Video

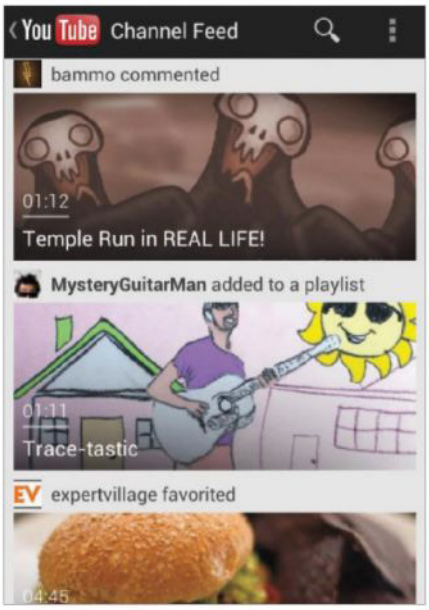
With a dizzying array of multimedia-based apps to be found on the Google Play Store, it's possible to have a never-ending stream of video entertainment on your Galaxy device.

As 3G and 4G networks support increasingly high-quality video streaming, services such as LOVEFiLM and Crackle allow you to watch the latest TV shows and movies on the go. Conventional broadcasters are also trying to get in on the action, with the BBC, Channel 4 and Sky all releasing apps to watch on-demand episodes and even live sports.

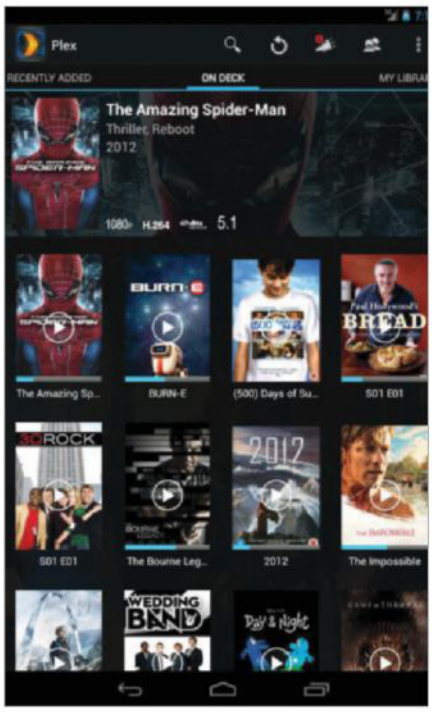
But the era of watching movies at home may not be over just yet. While there are many pretenders to the crown of video-sharing, YouTube remains the king. However, YouTube doesn't rest on its laurels and continues to innovate, as the recent overhaul of its app and introduction of 'preloading' technology shows. Creatives are also harnessing apps such as Kodak Cinema Tools and Photo Tools to make sophisticated videos of their own.




Create stop-motion movies on your device with Lapse It




As with the web version of YouTube, select from the top videos or search for something specific




Plex allows you to sort and organise your video files

## 5 essential apps

### Google Play Movies & TV

**Price** Free **Developer** Google Inc

Choose to download or stream one of the thousands of movies and TV shows stored in this app. The choice is fantastic and no matter what your tastes are, you'll find something to watch. Prices are pretty competitive when compared to the likes of Netflix and LOVEFiLM and you'll be surprised just how quick Google are on getting the latest blockbusters available through the app. After watching a movie, you can also leave an independent review to let other users know your thoughts about it.

### YouTube

**Price** Free **Developer** Google

For those of you with Android OS 4.0 and up, the app for the world's most popular video-sharing site was recently updated. As well as the features you would expect from YouTube, such as watching videos and adding comments, you can now 'preload' videos, so the latest videos from your favourite channels will be queued for when you next have Wi-Fi access. Your phone now also works as a remote control, sending videos to be watched on your desktop.

### Lapse It

**Price** Free **Developer** Interactive Universe

Shoot your own stop-motion videos and edit them with this arty app. Lapse It is a free download that takes a snapshot every couple of seconds and then strings them all together into one complete time-lapse video. From here, you are offered a full editing suite, such as adjustable focus and white balance, apply filters, as well as the ability to trim videos. The Pro version is available by an in-app purchase and allows you to render videos up to 1080p.

### uTorrent

**Price** Free **Developer** BitTorrent, Inc.

If you're looking for a way to get torrent files on your device then you'll want to download the uTorrent download client. From here you can manage every torrent download and see an estimated time for when it'll be ready to use on your phone or tablet, whenever you might need it.

### Plex for Android

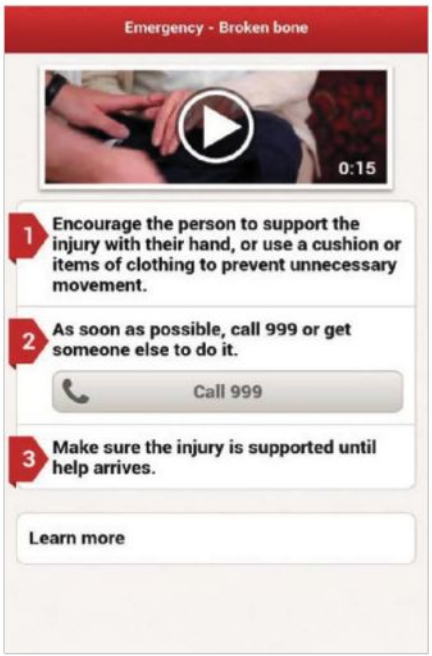
**Price** £3.21/$4.99 **Developer** Plex

A great organiser for all your content, Plex allows users to sort all their video files so that they can be used in any of the Plex apps. In addition, the app is hooked up to a host of cool content providers like YouTube and Vimeo so you can always find new videos to stream too. This is a very handy addition to your app collection.

# Medical

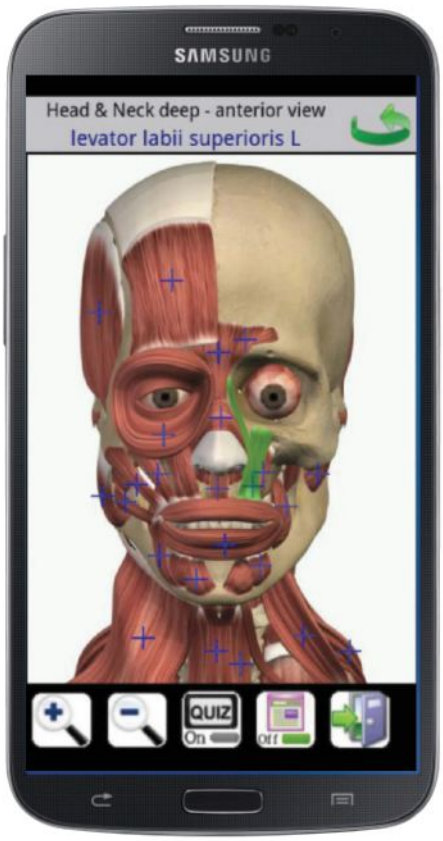
Mobile medicine is a growing sector in the app market. Not so long ago, the mere suggestion that your phone could provide any sort of medical assistance was a joke or, at least, science fiction. However, the ever-growing processing power and memory of smartphones means your device can deliver large amounts of information quickly – ideal during a medical emergency. Some apps let you cut away images of muscle layers to see what lies beneath, while others offer an e-health record system or even a smartphone-based blood pressure monitor. Many of these medical programs can be downloaded and used for a bit of fun, or can be used for educational purposes, while others empower everyday people to make a real difference in the lives of others.

"Empower everyday people to make a real difference to the lives of others"




Prepare for any medical emergency with First Aid

Get help and stop smoking with Easy Stop Smoking




Discover the inner workings of the body with Visual Anatomy

## 5 essential apps

### First Aid by British Red Cross

**Price** Free **Developer** British Red Cross

Designed to be used in an emergency situation, this app is full of step-by-step videos on how to deal with everything from choking to hypothermia. Whereas these guides are quite short to see you through a crisis, the Learn and Prepare sections provide much greater detail to educate the user for future crises. The information is all hosted on the app itself, meaning no internet connection is needed, making it fast and easy to access and without the risk of the signal being lost when it is needed most.

### Visual Anatomy

**Price** £1.60/$2.49 **Developer** Education Mobile

Visual Anatomy contains 87 hi-res images of muscle/ligaments and the skeleton that can be pinch-zoomed and rotated to explore in detail, plus more than 750 features which can be interactively selected. Each feature has its own label and short description and there are several quizzes to test your knowledge. For more expert use, over 1,000 images from *Gray's Anatomy* can be downloaded and accessed offline.

### Easy Stop Smoking

**Price** Free **Developer** Hypnotherapist Direct LTD

Stopping smoking is tough, but with the Easy Stop Smoking app you have a comprehensive program that guarantees you'll stop by the end of it. The app is split in to different parts that offer different methods to help stop smoking, all of which are done through hypnotherapy. You can alter the course to fit your needs and whether you've been smoking for just a few months or for a few decades, the help on offer is invaluable.

### Pregnancy+

**Price** £1.99/$2.99

**Developer** Health & Parenting Ltd

This app has already been hugely successful on iOS, and for good reason. Pregnancy+ is one of the most comprehensive help tools around, with a wealth of serious and detailed information about each stage of pregnancy, as well as some clever little touches.

### ICE

**Price** £2.99/$4.99 **Developer** Appventive

This invaluable app stores all your vital information in case something unfortunate happens to you and you need treatment. Users can input as much data as they like and even put in an emergency contact number as well.

# Music and Streaming

The death of the music industry has been greatly exaggerated in recent years. While critics bemoan the demise of the physical record, business is booming in the Google Play Store.

Due to limited storage space on your smartphone and a desire to enjoy music across multiple platforms, music streaming, rather than downloading, has emerged as the dominant way to listen to music in recent years. Android is at the forefront with support for Amazon's Cloud Drive and Google Music.

Tied up in licensing laws, the majority of music streaming costs money if you want unlimited access. Apps such as Spotify and Rdio are free to download and offer temporary access, before requiring you to sign up to a premium subscription. Other music apps such as Shazam or SoundHound make use of your device's microphone to identify unknown music.

## 5 essential apps

### Spotify

**Price** Free **Developer** Spotify

Spotify offers instant access to millions of songs, which you can either arrange as playlists or stream as a never-ending radio. The app is easy to use with various sliders to navigate the vast library of music and lightning-fast performance. As a bonus, each artist comes with a detailed biography and has built-in social networking with Facebook and Last.fm. Although Spotify is a free download, after 48 hours you have to subscribe to the premium service for all access.

### Shazam Encore

**Price** £3.59/$5.59

**Developer** Shazam Entertainment

Ever heard a song but didn't know its name? Shazam solves this problem. Press the large button on the app's home screen when you hear a song you like. It will tell you the song's name, the band/artist, and a sample so you can verify the track. The app also provides lyrics, artist discography and tour information. The user interface is clunky, but the large buttons make it easier to use when you're at a gig/nightclub.

### TuneIn Radio Pro

**Price** £3.31/$4.99 **Developer** TuneIn

Should you want to leave the song selection up to someone else, TuneIn gives users access to more than 70,000 radio stations on your device. So now you can listen to all your favourite shows whenever you like, and there is also a huge library of podcasts on offer as well, with more than two million currently in the app. TuneIn even contains live shows and concerts so pretty much all your listening needs are covered.

### SoundHound

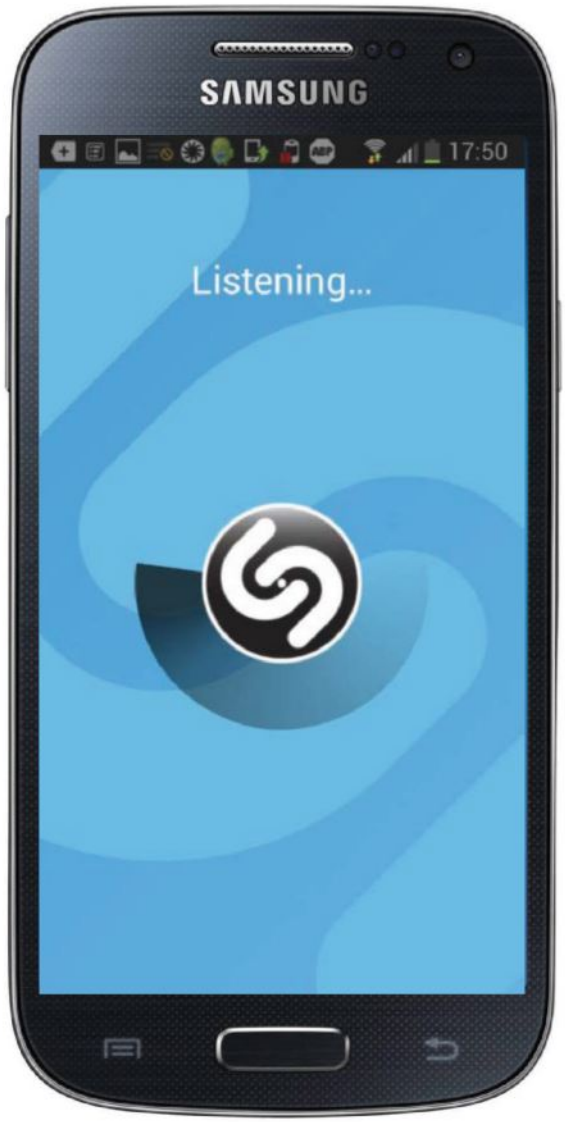
**Price** Free **Developer** SoundHound

Another song identification app in SoundHound, but one that offers a great choice of features. After identifying a song, the app offers several streaming options enabling you to listen to the song whenever you want, for a small fee of course. SoundHound has a ridiculously detailed encyclopaedic knowledge of music, so give it a shot!

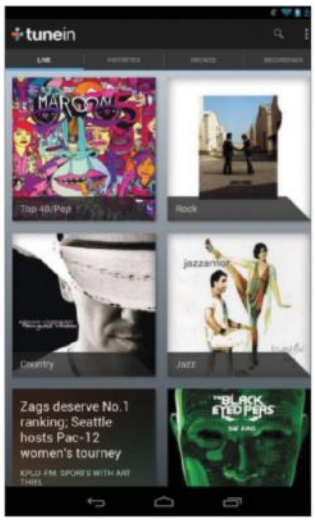
### Play Music All Access

**Price** Free **Developer** Google Inc

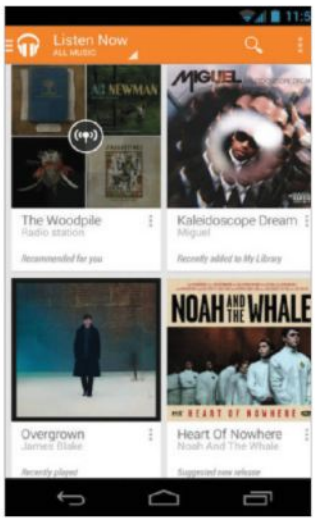
The announcement by Google of their new All Access service has made this app more relevant than ever. The streaming service rivals Spotify and is filled with playlists and unlimited streaming possibilities for users. For £7.99/$9.99, you can listen to unlimited music via Google Play Music and the first month is free.




Identify unknown songs with Shazam Encore

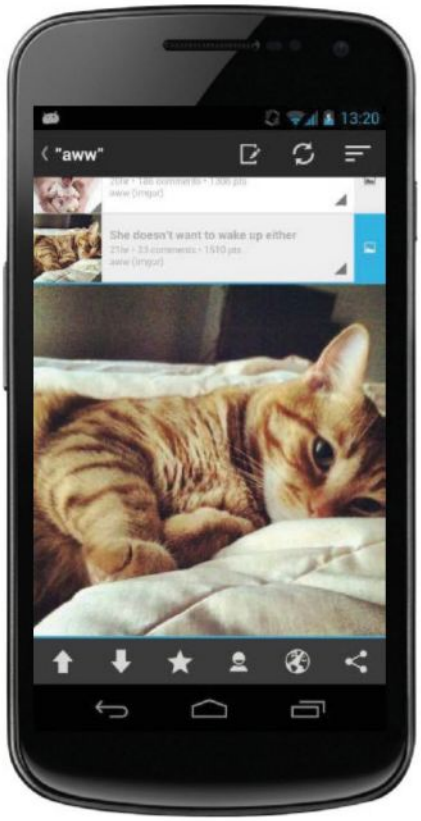



Access thousands of stations with TuneIn Radio Pro




Google's Play Music All Access lets you listen to unlimited music for a small fee

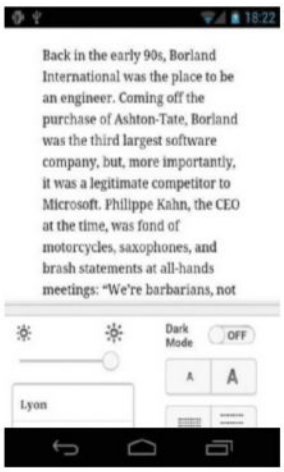
Find new podcasts with Pocket Casts




View favourite news sites in one reader with Reddit

# News & Magazines

Arguably, the combination of news text and the mobile platform is a match made in heaven. In fact, the concept of the 24-hour news world has largely been forged around the mobile phone. The smartphone has turned news access on mobile platforms into an accepted and increasingly specialist medium which has encouraged mobile magazines to take firm root in many genres. It is little wonder then that you will see newsstand publications offering free content as an app to partly encourage you to also buy the paper version, or perhaps to try to tempt you with further data coverage upon the payment of a fee. Because this is a data medium, news on a mobile platform can be manipulated in a variety of different ways, which means feeding you information via RSS or aggregating it to combine a variety of sources. Ultimately, news and magazine apps allow you to modify and tailor reports to how you want to receive them.




Save articles to read later with Instapaper

Get all the technology articles you could dream of in Appy Geek

Explore the world of Android with Android magazine

## 5 essential apps

### Pocket Casts

**Price** £2.70/$3.99 **Developer** shiftyjelly

Pocket Casts is simply a beautiful podcast manager app, that lets you subscribe, listen and enjoy a wide range of podcasts no matter where you are. One of the cleverest features it includes is the wireless backup that creates a digital version of your podcasts just in case you lose or misplace your phone. Although there are plenty of podcast-based apps currently on the Google Play Store, not many can match the level of detail and ease of use that the Pocket Casts app can offer all its users.

### Instapaper

**Price** £1.93/$2.99 **Developer** Mobelux

There are plenty of occasions when you want to sit back and read through a host of articles but simply don't have the time to both find and read them. Instapaper allows you to save any article you find and come back to it later when you have the time. As the name suggests it allows you to create a curated, digital newspaper for yourself. Instapaper also converts your saves into simple white screens to reduce the visual noise that you can get on some sites.

### Reddit Sync Pro

**Price** £1.25/$1.99 **Developer** Sync Apps

This unofficial app for Reddit, the news aggregator website, provides an impressive ICS Holo interface in which to read posts. Some of the social aspects that make Reddit so popular have been lost: there's no way to Friend people and you can't view your own comments easily. However, as a standalone reader, Reddit Sync Pro is very impressive, with day and night-time themes that adjust for lighting, and the option to sync image posts for offline use.

### Android Magazine

**Price** £2.99/$4.99 **Developer** Imagine Publishing

Devoted entirely to the Android market, Android magazine is perfect for both beginners and more experienced Android users. From setting up and getting started to getting more out of your device with essential tips and tricks, this app is a must-have.

### Appy Geek

**Price** Free **Developer** Mobiles Republic

Appy Geek is the ultimate news source for those looking for the latest headlines in the world of technology. Each story is cleverly laid out to make reading it as easy as possible, images are nicely rendered and each story can be downloaded to read whenever you want to, at your convenience.

# Personalisation

"Customise your Android device as you see fit"

One of Android's overall strengths is its personalisation features, enabling users to tweak notification settings, add widgets and more without any restrictions. It's what sets Android devices apart from the more locked-down operating systems such as iOS, Windows Phone and RIM.

Browse the Google Play Store and you'll discover apps that apply statistic widgets on your home screen, add notification bubbles that can be interacted with and display amazing graphics in the background of your home screen, as well as programs that can give you access to literally millions of ringtones and wallpapers for you to use.

All of these features can be downloaded as apps – most for free – and you don't need to hack or root your device to use them. You're largely free to customise your Android device as you see fit. To help you get started we've rounded up our five favourite personalisation apps. Read on to discover how you can customise your device with amazing graphics, audio and communication notifications.

All of the widgets on HD Widgets are very colourful and highly customisable

Add cool effects to your home screen with Nova Launcher Prime

Add extra functions to your lock screen with WidgetLocker

Go Launcher Ex offers a diverse range of themes

## 5 essential apps

### Nova Launcher Prime

**Price** £2.60/$3.29 **Developer** TeslaCoil

In terms of customisation, you won't find a more detailed alternate launcher than Nova Launcher Prime. You can tinker with every aspect of your phone's display, and design it exactly how you want it to look like without it being too complicated of an app to understand. To expand the app further, the development team behind the app have released a choice of downloadable themes that you can use alongside the main launcher to help personalise your device.

### WidgetLocker Lockscreen

**Price** £1.99/$2.99 **Developer** TeslaCoil Software

Open up the lock screen to having widgets and shortcuts of your choice with this app, and give yourself the ability to make any slider a shortcut to any app or process. Slider Actions can be customised, for example Slide-to-launch-Camera or Slide-to-call-your-Girlfriend. The slider menu is full of different themes, ranging from the stock Android slider to iOS's MIUI to MotoBlur.

### Everything Home (Beta)

**Price** Free **Developer** Everything.me

Could perhaps be regarded as the ultimate personalisation app. Everything Home places a search bar at the top of your device and takes what you search for and completely moulds your phone to that search term, complete with background image and even suggested apps. The app completely changes the way you can use your phone, not just adding a touch of personalisation, but also improved productivity with your device in hand.

### Go Launcher EX

**Price** Free **Developer** Go Launcher Dev Team

Offering a wide range of themes, icons and resizable widgets, Go Launcher EX also boasts some innovative utility functions. Among these are an efficient and strong app manager – with sorting, hiding app, searching, cleaning memory and refresh – and custom gestures that offer you more convenience and fun.

### HD Widgets

**Price** £1.49/$1.99 **Developer** cloud.tv

A rival to the throne of Beautiful Widgets, HD Widgets offers gorgeous widgets that are easy to install. Including a mixture of customisable clocks and weather forecast widgets, the graphics are all in stunning high definition and also optimised for tablets, so once you download it, you can use it on all of your devices.

# Photography

The cameras on smartphones today have evolved into sophisticated kits and it looks like we're reached an era where a digital camera or DSLR is quickly being struck off the list of 'must-have' items in your home. The norm today is 13MP and the success of Instagram has seen a recent trend for vintage-style filters that give your photos a dated, pre-digital look with distorted colours and lens flare. These retro images are a lot of fun and the adding of captions and borders lend themselves well to the social sharing aspect that is built up around these types of photos. With apps like Photoshop Express, you can now access a photo-editing suite on your phone and crop, rotate and adjust the colour of your images to create something truly spectacular. Other apps are also opening up new avenues for so-called 'phone-tography,' with panoramic landscapes and time-lapse videos becoming increasingly popular.

Mimic DSLR-quality photos with Pro HDR Camera

"Access a photo-editing suite on your phone"

## 5 essential apps

### Paper Camera

**Price** £1.19/$1.99 **Developer** JFDP Labs

Add real time cartoon and painting effects to your photos with the Paper Camera. Use the different filters to create fun photos and then be amazed when the app applies a bunch of colourful additions to them. The choice is amazing and you'll be able to find new combinations of filters and effects to keep your images looking different and fun every time you start using the app. All your photos created through the app can then be directly sent to your Facebook account.

### Camera Zoom FX

**Price** £1.79/$2.99 **Developer** androidslide

Seen by many as one, if not the best camera app on Android. Camera Zoom FX allows you to take up to 10 shots a second, some serious speed in terms of a smartphone camera app. It also supports an impressive level of zoom as well as the ability to adjust the button layout as you see fit. Camera Zoom FX is refreshing simply to use and has the features to go with it to make it a very useful app to always have close at hand.

### Flickr

**Price** Free **Developer** Yahoo

Share your photos across social networks with Flickr. Take photos in-app, enhance them with filters, then share across Facebook and Twitter. You also get access to Flickr's community of budding photographers and the ability to view their work and your own in full-screen browsing and slideshows. Here you can also share the stories behind your pictures. To help keep track of your photos, the app also uses geotagging so you don't forget where they were taken.

### Pro HDR Camera

**Price** £1.25/$1.99 **Developer** EyeApps

Mimic DSLR-quality photography with this app. It takes two exposures and then combines them together; you can then make adjustments to the image. The results are extremely high quality and the sliders to adjust brightness, contrast, saturation are very responsive.

### Adobe Photoshop Express

**Price** Free **Developer** Adobe Systems

This app is derived from the much-respected suite of editing programs. It only enables users to carry out basic edits, such as cropping, rotating, adjusting colour and adding artistic effects, but this far exceeds anything other Android photo-editing apps offer.

## 5 essential apps

### Adobe Reader
**Price** Free **Developer** Adobe Systems

The quintessential PDF reader, Adobe Reader, allows you to quickly view PDF documents from emails, the web, or any app that will support it. You can search text to find specific words, view pages individually or scroll through them. Use bookmarks to jump directly to pages, provide feedback with a highlight tool and the ability to add post-it notes anywhere on a document. You can also share files between your smartphone and your desktop.

### Google Goggles
**Price** Free **Developer** Google

Search by taking a picture with Google Goggles. Point your smartphone camera at a painting, a famous landmark, a barcode or QR code, a product, a storefront, or a popular image. If Goggles finds it in its database, it will provide you with useful information. The app will even translate images of text into different languages and solve Sudoku puzzles. This is a very impressive piece of tech, yet it really is as simple to use as pointing and clicking your camera.

### Dropbox
**Price** Free **Developer** Dropbox Inc

When it comes to staying productive, Dropbox is an essential tool to have close to you. The cloud service gives you a healthy amount of space for free, and means you can access any of your uploaded files on your device, no matter where you are. So if you want to make a quick amendment to that report, you can do so on the commute home, even though you've left the office. Dropbox works across all devices and supports most file types meaning that pretty much anything from your desktop is suddenly within reach on your device.

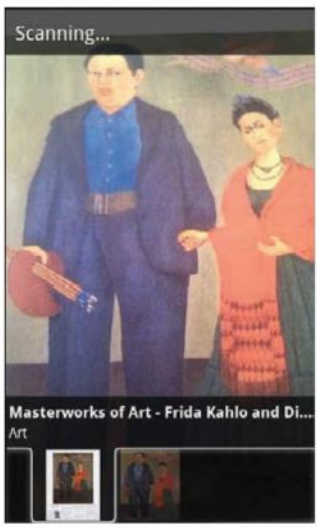
### Google Drive
**Price** Free **Developer** Google Inc

Google Drive serves as an extension of your desktop and even mobile device storage space. The app allows you to upload files from anywhere, so all your images can be kept together, regardless of where you captured them, and they're all easy to get to. Much like Dropbox, it's a fantastic productivity tool.

### QR Droid
**Price** Free **Developer** DroidLa

QR codes are starting to appear more and more in our daily lives and, with the QR Droid app, you can start using them effectively. By using the app you scan any QR code you encounter and be taken directly to the content it represents. It's surprisingly easy to use.

Add annotations to PDFs using Adobe Reader




Identify art with the clever Google Goggles

Scan QR codes with your own scanner using QR Droid

"Become far more efficient and productive"

# Productivity

Take control of your life with apps. The Play Store is filled with apps that enable you to be more efficient and productive, either through working while on the go or by discovering more about the world around you.

There are apps that let you take notes and sync them with any device in the world; store photos, videos and documents in the cloud; share them with friends; and browse the web with the same bookmarks and passwords that you saved on your desktop computer. Unbelievably, your Android device can also take a photo of any landmark, product or piece of art and then instantly tell you more about it. It's staggering technology wrapped in a number of easy-to-use interfaces.

But productivity doesn't have to be limited to self-improvement. There are plenty of productivity apps in the Google Play Store that also boost your phone – and therefore, of course, boost you.

Here we have assembled five apps that help you improve your productivity through their sheer innovative functionality.

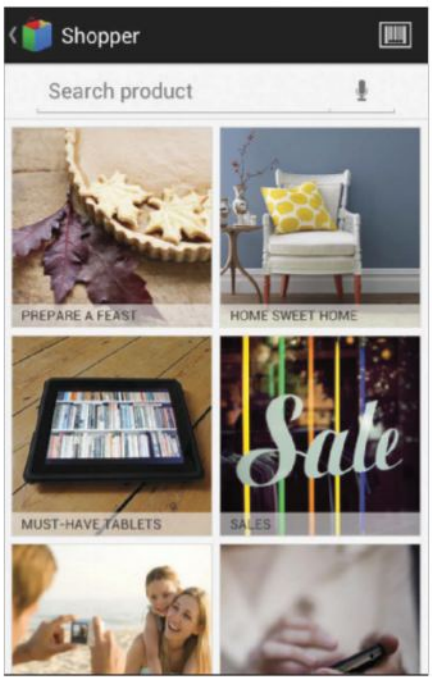
# Shopping

First we fell in love with shopping online, now it's all about doing it on the move. Shopping apps allow you to search for products you want, wherever you are.

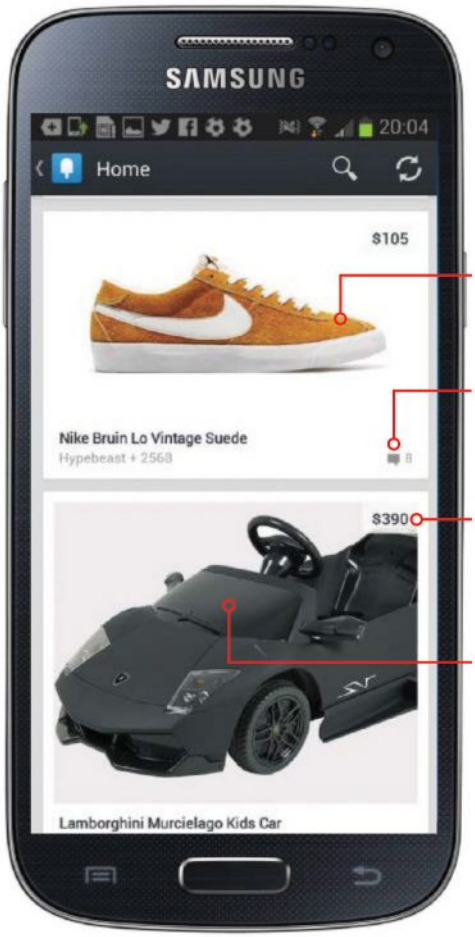
Some complain that shopping apps are driving purchasers away from local shops and sending them to online vendors, pointing to the eBay and Android mobile apps as examples. While this is certainly true to some extent, this is only in the interest of finding the best deal for the consumer.

There are also many apps designed explicitly to accommodate and promote local businesses. For example, voucher apps such as Groupon, LivingSocial and Vouchercloud exist to tempt shoppers into visiting nearby businesses with special offers.

In short, shopping with Android apps is efficient, direct and enables you to find the best price for what you want.




Scan barcodes to find the best price with Shopper



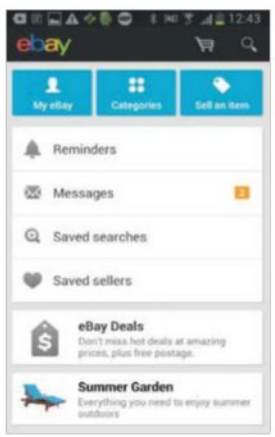

View photos of products at various angles with Fancy

Reader ratings are included for each product

Be warned, products are often well above high-street prices

If you see something you like on Fancy, click here and it will direct you to a website where you can buy it

Navigate shops with FastMall




Manage your account on the go with the eBay app

## 5 essential apps

### Shopper

**Price** Free **Developer** Google

Google Shopper provides a search engine to find products and compare prices online and in your area. The Shopper app recognises products by cover art, barcodes, voice and text. You can also select items by category from the main menu. All products come with descriptions, user reviews and videos, where available. When Shopper can't recognise a barcode, it offers to search in the Google browser. This app also lists online retailers before local ones – perfect if you're looking for the best price, but not ideal if you're trying to support your local high street.

### FastMall

**Price** Free **Developer** Mindsmack

Navigate your way round the biggest and best malls in the UK, USA, Canada and France with FastMall. With detailed layouts of major shopping centres, this app makes it easy to get in, make your purchase, and get out again. The ability to download maps offers the bonus of not needing Wi-Fi. Other handy features include the ability to record where you parked your car. If you need the toilet urgently, shake your phone frantically to find the nearest restroom.

### eBay

**Price** Free **Developer** eBay Mobile

The official app for the shopping service that we have all become familar with needs little introduction. This app allows you to fully manage your buying and selling activity no matter where you might find yourself, something very useful. Just ask any eBay addict. You can carry out transactions in-app, and thanks to an interface re-design in the not too distant past, it's extremely easy to use.

### Fancy

**Price** Free **Developer** thingd

Similar to Pinterest, Fancy is all about finding and sharing cool things online, with the significant difference that on Fancy you can actually buy them. This is secondary however to the endless social aspect, with the app focused on rating photos of stylish products and commenting on them.

### Vouchercloud

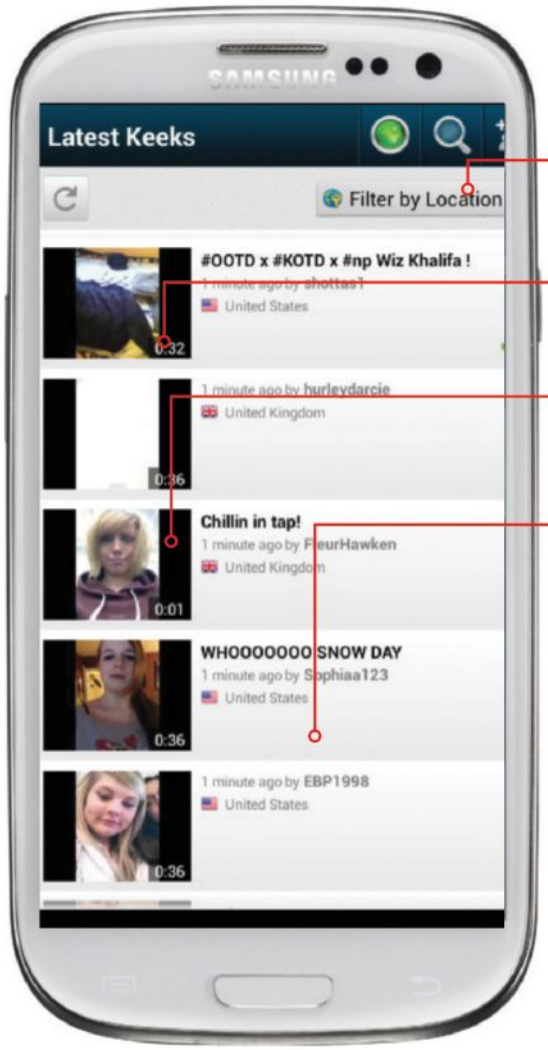
**Price** Free **Developer** Invitation Digital

Free to download and use, Vouchercloud has the biggest selection of mobile discount vouchers – with a mix of big brand names and local shops. Deals include retail, fine dining, cinema tickets and much more, but you can filter between types of categories using colour-coded headings at the top of the screen.

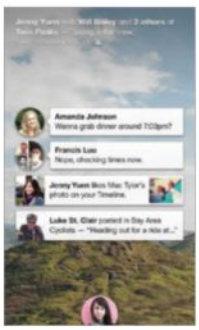
# Social

Perhaps the greatest aspects of owning a smartphone is the sheer number of opportunities to stay in touch with friends, family and the wider world. Thanks to the amazing number of social networking apps available for Android devices, there's a wealth of content out there waiting to be discovered. Some of the very best apps enable you to chat with friends in real-time, share and view photos, send free messages, read tweets from friends and the famous alike, 'check-in' at locations to share your current whereabouts, plus plenty more. Incredibly, all of these apps are free to download and use.

Read on to discover five essential social networking apps that enable you to stay in touch and tell the world what you're thinking. You'll wonder how everyone managed to communicate with only landline telephones just two decades ago.



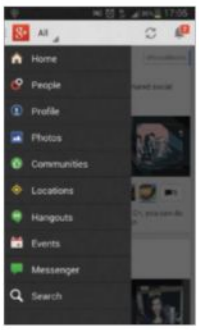

Get your Facebook news on your home screen with Facebook Home



Filter videos by locations near you

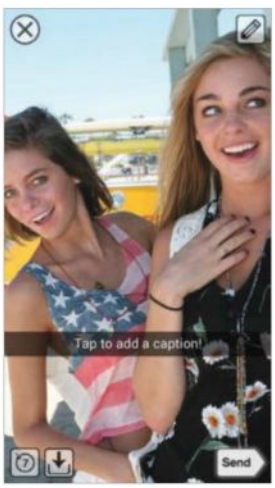
Keek videos need to be less than two minutes in length

Add your own video to earn Keek points



You can follow an uploader by opening their Keek profile

Google+ is the best social app around




Send text and picture messages with an expiry date in Snapchat

"Tell the world what you're thinking"

## 5 essential apps

### Snapchat

**Price** Free **Developer** Snapchat, Inc

Snapchat is the new wave of texting that's recently become very popular owing to its constant usage by teenagers. Users can send a creatively-enhanced picture or text message to a friend or group of friends and set a time-limit as to how long they can view it for (up to 10 seconds). After that the message is deleted - both at the receiver's end and from the Snapchat servers. If a screenshot was taken, the sender will be notified. Cool, innovative and fun, Snapchat has taken messaging to a whole new level.

### Facebook Home

**Price** Free **Developer** Facebook

If you're a user who keeps checking their Facebook profile a minimum of ten times in a day, then Facebook Home is for you. It's basically a launcher that puts all your Facebook friend's posts and photos on your home screen for you to get instant updates of what's going in your social network. Download Facebook Messenger to discover Chat Heads, where you can chat with friends from other apps. At present, Home is only available on select Samsung devices.

### Keek Social Video

**Price** Free **Developer** Keek Inc

Capture and share short videos with a big community of fellow video bloggers on Keek. The app includes all the social functions you'd expect and it's remarkably easy to meet new people. You'll also find an integrated video recorder that lets you post all your videos directly to the site for everyone else to see. There are plenty of additional features to discover the more videos you upload and after a few goes at using it, you'll find it to be on par with YouTube.

### Google+

**Price** Free **Developer** Google

Google+ is one of the best-looking social apps around, with status updates emphasising big, beautiful images. But the app is as much about substance as it is style, supporting video chat with up to nine friends at once, and you can automatically share photos with everyone else at an event using Party Mode.

### Instagram

**Price** Free **Developer** Instagram

While the likes of Snapchat have come along and done something different with photo-sharing, Instagram remains the heavyweight of photo apps thanks to its huge community and of course the cool range of filters you can place on your image uploads. This is an app you must have on your smartphone.

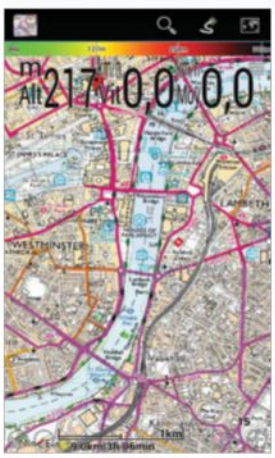
# Sports

**Around 20 years ago, following your favourite sports team was a challenge, as you had to buy newspapers, watch televisions and listen to the radio in order to get the right results at the right time.** How things have changed! The sonic boom, that was the internet, left our computer screens and fell into our laps, and now wherever you go, whatever your sport, the Google Play Store has an app that means you're never more than a few seconds away from up-to-the-second information about your team or your own athletic pursuits.

You used to have to count the hours until your favourite sports team took the field or court, and there was precious little to do between games. Fortunately, now there are apps that help you while away the hours until kick-off. There are tools for tracking scores in football, cricket, golf, tennis and even fencing; playing fantasy sports games; and much more.

Follow the race and track your favourite drivers with F1 2013

Annotate and analyse athletes' performances with Coach's Eye



Scope out the terrain for your hike in MyTrails

Get the latest results from Sky Sports News

## 5 essential apps

### Coach's Eye

**Price** £3.13/$4.99 **Developer** TechSmith Corp

Analyse everything from your golf swing to your weightlifting form with Coach's Eye. It is straightforward enough to use: film athletes practising, then review the footage in-app in slow motion, using the flywheel to fluidly and precisely scroll through video to identify and review techniques. You can also draw onto the video using lines, arrows, circles, squares and freehand tools, as well as record audio over the top of footage. This app is very simple to use, but could give athletes a winning edge.

### MyTrails

**Price** Free **Developer** FrogSparks

The MyTrails app is the perfect accompaniment to any avid hikers and walkers amongst you. You can access online and offline maps of areas you're visiting to scout the terrain and climate you'll face on your travels. All the maps can be downloaded from the app so you have access to them even if you've got no phone signal. Ultimately, MyTrails might not have enough about it to compete with Google Maps, but what it does include is invaluable.

### F1 2013 Timing App

**Price** £19.99/$28.99 **Developer** Soft Pauer

The sort of information and technology you gain access to by using this app are the sort of things you would expect to see used by the pit teams in F1. The app allows users to follow the race via a live infographic that tracks each driver, as well as focus on individuals. You can fill your screen with times, or if you want to get to know the drivers a little more there are full and in-depth profiles on each of them.

### ESPN Goals

**Price** £3.99/$6.42

**Developer** ESPN Digital

If you're an avid football fan, then the ESPN Goals app is perfect for you. Track your favourite team and see the latest squad news, results and headlines involving them. After every match weekend a highlights reel of key moments is uploaded to the app for you to watch.

### Sky Sports News

**Price** Free **Developer** BSkyB

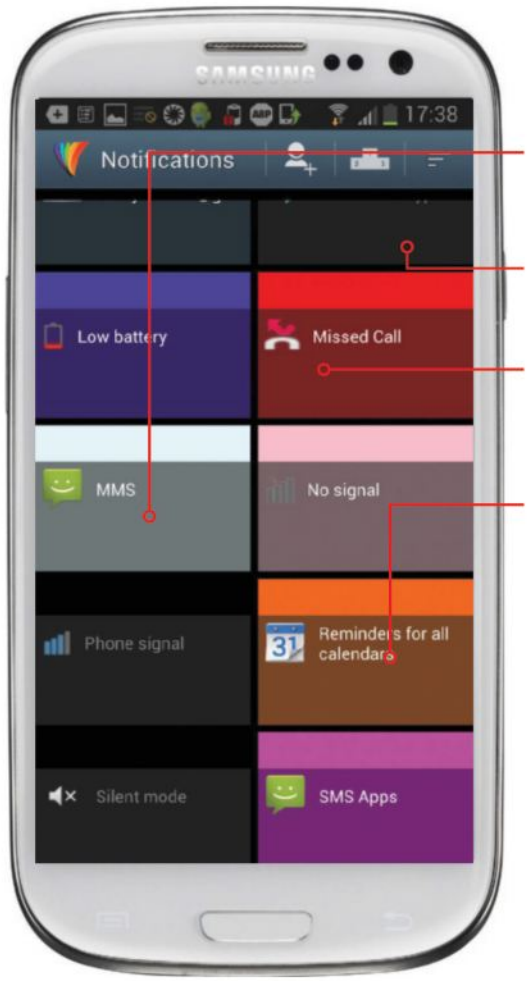
Get the latest sporting news from the app for the dedicated channel. For the most part, the app is a rather pedestrian news ticker consisting of lists of stories, varied between news bulletins and video. Other features include the ability to stream Sky Sports News Radio and, for Sky Sports subscribers, to watch live TV.

# Tools

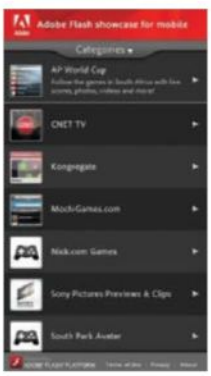
Smartphones are essentially digital Swiss Army knives, except instead of a spork and a corkscrew, it comes with a QR scanner or a language translator. With a few simple taps in the Google Play Store, you can add or remove as many tools as you like and customise your device for different tasks.

The apps in the Tools category have two subtle distinctions. Firstly, there are those designed to improve your life. When you're lost in the dark, there is a flashlight. Need to measure the length of a doorway, or even the height of a house? Your camera plus an app packed with clever equations can do the maths for you. Want to change the TV channel but can't find the remote? There is a universal remote app that will do it from your smartphone.

Then there are those apps that are designed to improve your smartphone. They boost your battery life, provide added security protections, or just allow you to run Flash animations in your web browser. These kind of apps may seem less important but if your device is supercharged, so are you.




Keep track of all your web apps in one place with Adobe Air



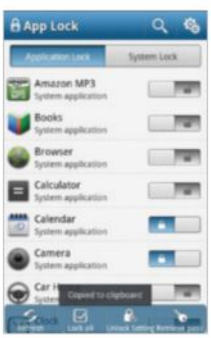
Choose from a variety of colours

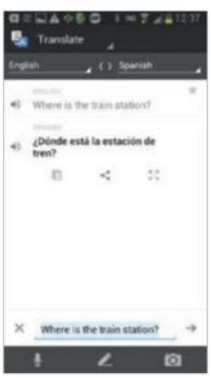
Add custom animations to different areas of your phone

Notice the LED change colour throughout

Use the home menu to track all your changes

Lock up any of your apps away from prying eyes with APP Lock




Translate from almost any language quickly with Google Translate

"Customise your device for different tasks"

## 5 essential apps

### Adobe Air

**Price** Free **Developer** Adobe

Adobe AIR is the ultimate hub for any web apps you often use on your device. It monitors your history of any web apps you've interacted with, providing you with quick access to them whenever you need them. At any point you can perform a remote wipe on anything stored to help quicken up the app a little, if necessary. If you've other Adobe apps installed on your device, you can use Adobe Air to sync them all together.

### Tiny Flashlight & LED

**Price** Free **Developer** Nikolay Ananiev

Next time you're caught in a blackout, turn your device into a torch with this app. The camera flash can be switched on for an extended time from the home screen, but under the menu screen you can also turn your screen into a bright white light. Other in-app features mostly exist for novelty value, such as a strobe light, orange warning lights and red and blue police lights. One standout extra, though, also allows you to type in text and then flashes it as Morse code.

### APP Lock

**Price** Free **Developer** DoMobile Lab

Protect your installed apps using a password or pattern, perhaps to keep prying eyes out your photos or deny thieves the satisfaction of playing all your games. All your apps (including advanced ones such as answering incoming calls and the Google Play Store) are listed in-app and you can either set them all to locked or unlocked, or use sliders to individually customise your apps' encryption.

### Google Translate

**Price** Free **Developer** Google

A perilous situation for any of us is having to try and communicate with someone without a common language. Yes, we have tried your handy phrasebook but you're still struggling, this is where Google Translate comes in. Speak or type anything into the app and it can be translated into almost any language. Hear it said out loud or printed so your communication is clear.

### LightFlow LED

**Price** £1.49/$2.49 **Developer** Rage Consulting

One of the coolest ways of personalising your device is to use LightFlow, an ingenious app that lets you tinker and implement a wide variety of designs throughout your phone. As well as adding colours to your notifications, you can also alter the sounds and vibration settings to really personalise your device.

# 5 essential apps

## SpeedView Pro

**Price** £1.80/$2.95 **Developer** Code Sector

SpeedView Pro is an advanced speedometer that connects to your phone's GPS system to show you your current speed and other essential driving data. The interactive HUD can be customised to show other data that can then be sent to your desktop computer for you to take a look at, and you can then attach your phone to a windshield mount to see live stats as you start driving. There's a free version available from the Google Play Store but it doesn't include half the amount of features that the Pro version does.

## Hailo

**Price** Free **Developer** Hailo

Use Hailo to scan for a taxi in your area, then – with two quick taps – get their attention and tell them your location. Track your cab in real-time, so there is no reason to hang outside waiting for them. After you get to your destination, payment is taken from your card automatically and a receipt is emailed to you. Currently Hailo is only available in London, Dublin, Toronto, Chicago and Boston, but it plans to be available in 100 cities worldwide by 2015.

## WhatGas Petrol Prices

**Price** Free **Developer** whatgas.com

WhatGas flags up petrol stations in your area on a map. Tapping on a flag will reveal the petrol station's unleaded and diesel prices as submitted by other local users, and tapping on the top bar will reveal the best overall price in the area. When you go to fill up, if you spot their prices have changed, you can submit new prices yourself and update the app. Similarly, if you also spot there is a petrol station near you that has been missed, you can add it to the map yourself.

## Tube Map

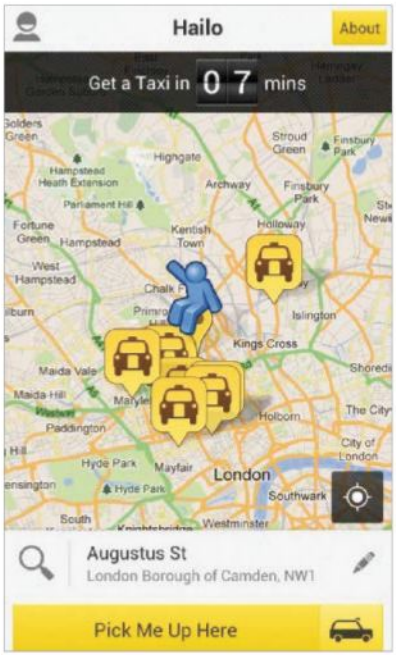
Price Free **Developer** mXData

Whether you're a regular London commuter or just a day visitor, the usefulness of having this app close on hand is unspeakable. Get live updates as well as plan your route and use maps offline.

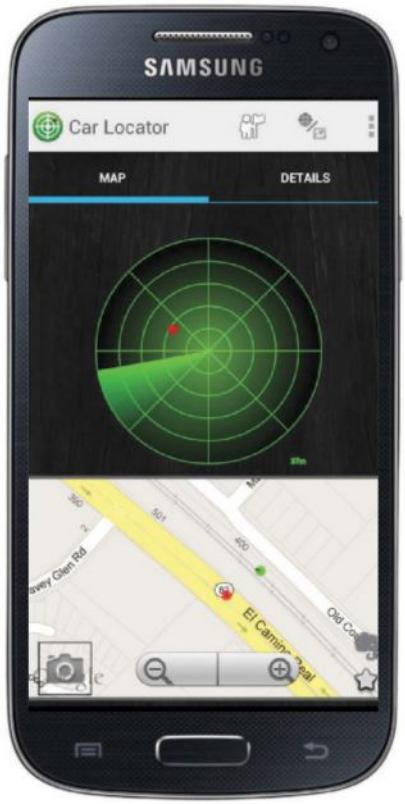
## Car Locator

Price £2.99/$3.99 **Developer** Edward Kim

Never forget where you parked the car again with this excellent app. Car Locator uses GPS to log your location. For convenience this tracker can be set up as a home-screen widget. To aid your search, you can attach photos and add notes to an entry, or email the location to a third party.




Catch a cab with ease using Hailo




# Transport

What better method of accessing information relating to transport than via a mobile phone, and what better time to do it than while you are on the move? The two mediums are truly synergistic and both change their content regularly. Transport-related apps have the ability to access timetables, for example, in real-time. As such, they can pick up late changes in those timetables due to adverse weather conditions or problems on the route. Some apps enable you to plan your route and will offer advice as you do so, while others give you a real-time movement monitor. By utilising your phone's GPS system, they can see where you are relative to the rest of the country or find out how close you are to the next station – endlessly useful if you find yourself in an unfamiliar location. Information like this also enables you to ring ahead to friends, family and business colleagues with up-to-date information regarding any unexpected delays.

Get the best price when filling your car using WhatGas Petrol Prices

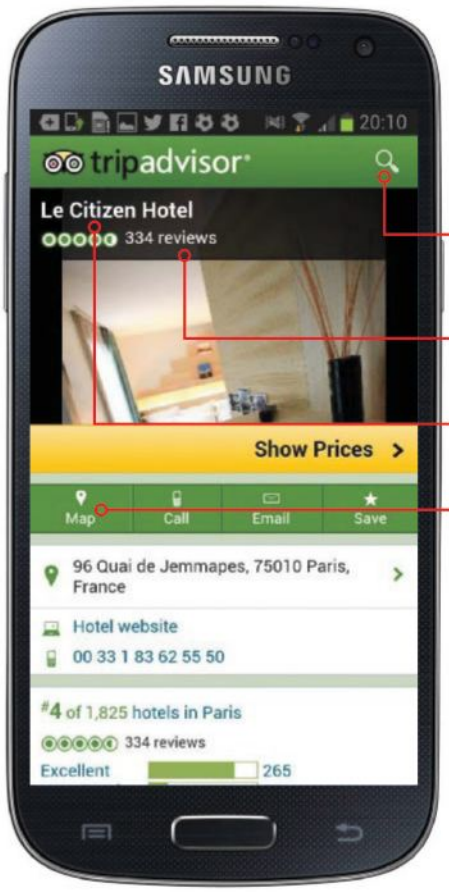
Get live Tube updates straight to your phone

Track your speed and other car information in SpeedView

# Travel & Local

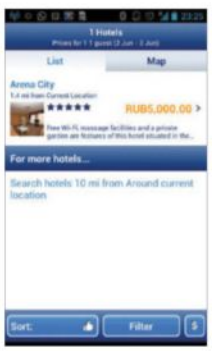
Perhaps the biggest advantage to owning an Android device is that it's impossible to get lost. At an instant you can pull up an entire map of the world, manipulate it with your fingers, see yourself pinpointed and get directions to any destination. Pulling up to the side of the road to ask a stranger directions is now a thing of the past. As is carrying (and folding) a paper map.

Of course, there's a wealth of further benefits to owning a smartphone. Thanks to the plethora of apps in the Play Store, you can see live flight details for any commercial plane in the world, see your seat on a plane map, view departures and arrivals for any airport, navigate the world's streets in first-person and then see the entire surface of the planet in 3D. There's a mind-boggling array – all accessed through the device in your pocket.

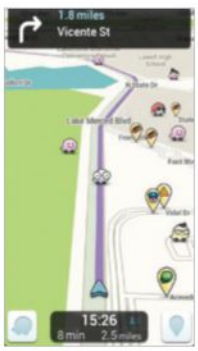



- TripAdvisor's search bar makes it easy to look up any location in the world
- Browse millions of user-generated reviews and upload your own
- Filter entries by hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions
- Use Near Me Now to scan for local attractions and access maps

"You can pull up an entire map of the world and see yourself pinpointed"



Find the perfect hotel with Booking.com




Crowdsource your traffic news with Waze Social GPS

Take a 3D look at air traffic in the skies above you and track individual flights

## 5 essential apps

### Booking.com

**Price** Free **Developer** Booking.com

No matter where you're looking to travel to in the world, Booking.com contains over 265,000 hotels and hostels to help you find the perfect place to stay. You can filter your results to find the perfect place and the app also includes essential travel tips for many destinations. Every month the app looks to add new destinations and hotels that you can check out, so you're always spoilt for choice. Prices are fairly competitive, but make sure you shop around to see all of the available options first.

### Waze Social GPS Traffic & Gas

**Price** Free **Developer** Waze

This community-based GPS app allows you to join forces with other drivers nearby to outsmart traffic while driving. Crowdsourcing information from its 30 million users, Waze gives you real-time traffic reports on everything from accidents and speed cameras to petrol prices and weather conditions. The social function also extends to Facebook and the option to have Map Chats with other users. The app also supports voice control to enable hands-free use.

### Plane Finder 3D

**Price** £1.99/$2.99 **Developer** Pinkfoot Limited

While there are plenty of apps that allow you to track the planes in the skies above us, few are as cool or striking as Plane Finder 3D. This app involves a 3D look at air traffic above us, and allows users to get details and track individual flights at will. The Fly Me feature allows users to focus on a certain flight and take in the surrounding air traffic and the ground terrain from the perspective of a selected plane.

### TripAdvisor Hotels Flights

**Price** Free **Developer** TripAdvisor

The renowned travel website, where users rate their experience at tourist attractions, is now in app form. A simplified version of the site, you can access all of its web listings and write reviews on the go. Better still, you can scan for hotels, restaurants and attractions in your area.

### CoPilot GPS

**Price** Free **Developer** ALK Technologies

CoPilot has several apps on the Google Play Store, but their GPS app is the best of them all. This app works an offline route planner, enabling you to get directions from one place to another without being connected to a Wi-Fi network. All your routes can be saved for later use, if necessary.

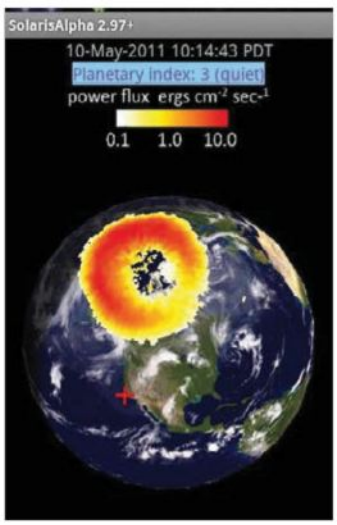
# Weather

We've come to expect weather forecasts to maybe not be absolutely accurate, but at least to give us a general idea of what's in store for the next day or so. When we're looking forward to an outdoor event, we always check the forecasted conditions. Luckily there are plenty of apps that will let you check the weather at any time from anywhere. Many of us also have lines of work which benefit from regular weather updates. As such, it is crucial to know the weather forecast at the drop of a hat. The weather app built in to Galaxy phones is a simple, no-fluff, no-nonsense weather app. It does its job well, but any weather app can give you the highs and lows for the day. Often you might want more information such as the humidity, wind speeds or sunrise and sunset times and other data.

"Check the weather at any time from anywhere"

Get a 15-day forecast with Accuweather

Weather Network provides global forecasts




Learn about the sun in Solaris Alpha

Explore the BBC's weather app – a new addition to the Store

## 5 essential apps

### Accuweather

**Price** Free **Developer** Accuweather.com

Packaged in a sleek, clean user interface, Accuweather is packed with information. Daily forecasts are displayed on the main screen, with a graphic and temperature for your current location in the top half, which can be used as a slider for an hour-by-hour forecast; and details such as humidity, visibility, sunrise, sunset and wind direction listed in the lower half. The app also offers a broader 15-day prediction, radar images of cloud cover superimposed on Google Maps, and daily video forecasts from **Accuweather.com**.

### Met Office Weather Application

**Price** Free **Developer** Met Office

Save up to ten locations for local weather forecasts or view the UK weather map in its entirety with this official Met Office app. The slider at the bottom of the map allows you to skim through hour-by-hour breakdowns of the weather, while tapping icons on the right allows you to vary how the weather is displayed, such as using rainfall radar images or pressure symbols. It'll also alert you to severe weather warnings.

### BBC Weather

**Price** Free **Developer** BBC

A fairly new app on Google Play, BBC Weather is smart and simple, giving you all you need in a weather app. Using location it quickly gives you the current information where you are, as well as a five day forecast. If thats not enough you can swipe left to see an hour-by-hour breakdown of conditions and temperature. You can also search for any location around the world and access the same features.

### Solaris Alpha

**Price** £1.23/$1.99 **Developer** Tomasso

There's a lot of depth in this app and there's no doubt you can learn something about the biggest star in our Solar System. You can find 3D ultraviolet sun maps that give you a tour of the sun, as well as realtime image of the sun's current location and other important solar information.

### The Weather Network

**Price** Free

**Developer** The Weather Network/Meteomedia

This simple app displays a running list for weather in your area, shown as icons with temperatures. Scroll down for a 14-day forecast, or sideways to show similar lists for other set locations. From the main menu, you can access maps, charts, weather-related news and more.

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# Samsung Galaxy

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