# Get the Most Out of Google Chrome

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Love it or hate it, Google Chrome is now the top Internet browser of the big three: Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and the recently killed-off piece of evil known as Internet Explorer (now replaced by Microsoft Edge, Windows 10's new default browser). This browser seems like a simple program with a few buttons and a unified search and address box called the omnibox, but it has so many tricks that can help make your day that much better. Here, we take a look at what you need to know to get the most out of Google Chrome.
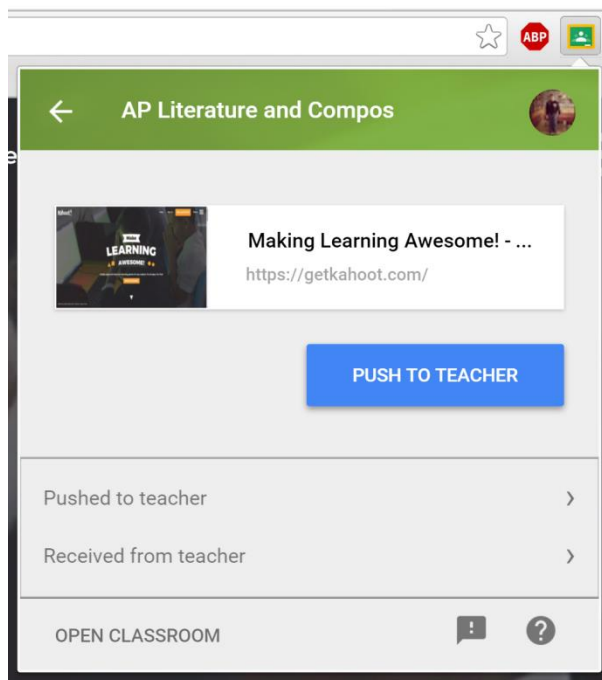
Extensions

Back in the days of Internet Explorer (also known as IE), these things called extensions or add-ons, which are extra little programs (like Flash or, just for a throwback Thursday, Shockwave) that allow for the Web to do extra things, were cursed for slowing the web browsing experience. Since then, measures have been taken to make web browser extensions slow down the experience less and enhance the web browsing experience more. For most extensions, Google Chrome adds a little icon next to the three-line menu button (called by many the "hamburger" button). Clicking the extension's icon often brings up a pop-up menu that allows you to use the extension right there. Wolfram|Alpha has a browser extension like this, which can be very helpful for checking math work on the fly. This extension also allows you to type an equation into the omnibox to check it just by typing an equal sign, then hitting the tab key. Plus, be sure to check Google's Bookmark Manager, which is an extension that helps you organize your bookmarks as well as easily find them through a special pop-up tab. (Rather than having a typical extension button, it creates a bookmark that takes you to a pretty page where you can organize your bookmarks.) Extensions also include things like Share to Classroom, which allows you to quickly share a website to Google Classroom, and StayFocusd, which lets you temporarily block a site so it won't distract you from work you need to get done. You can download a plethora of extensions from the Chrome Web Store.

Apps

Slightly different from extensions, apps are full-on "programs" that open through Chrome. Some of these apps are really just links to programs on the web, but others are actual programs that you can download and use. All apps can be found by clicking the "Apps" button on the bookmarks bar, or you can activate the Chrome App Launcher,
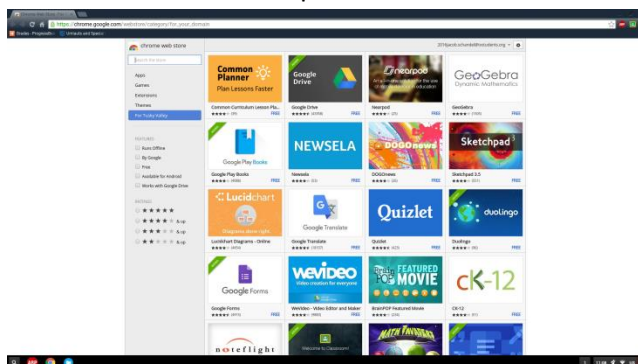
which adds an app menu to your taskbar (that feels similar to the app launcher that used to be in Chrome OS, which is what runs a Chromebook). Apps are also downloaded from the Chrome Web Store. Some of the best apps include photo editing tools like Pixlr and Polarr, reminder app Google Keep, apps that let you access your home computer on the go like TeamViewer and Chrome Remote Desktop, and almost every app you use online. These apps all can be downloaded from the Chrome Web Store.

Themes

If you don't have a Chrome theme, then you are seriously missing out on making for a nice Chrome experience. You can pick from the selection of themes on the Google Web Store. These themes allow for you to add color to the otherwise bland Chrome experience, from Game of Thrones themes to themes for video games (both modern and retro) to themes with kittens in pink knitted blankets, because kittens. (My only complaint: where's the love for the House of Cards fans, Google?) Themes let you design Chrome to reflect your likes.
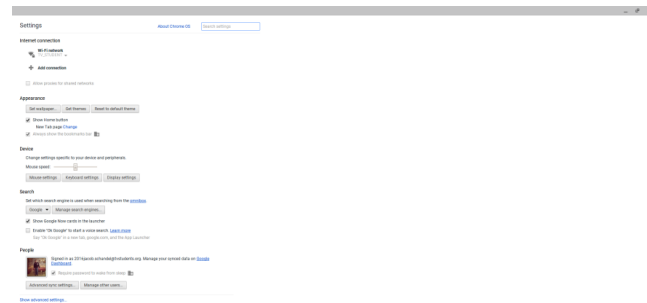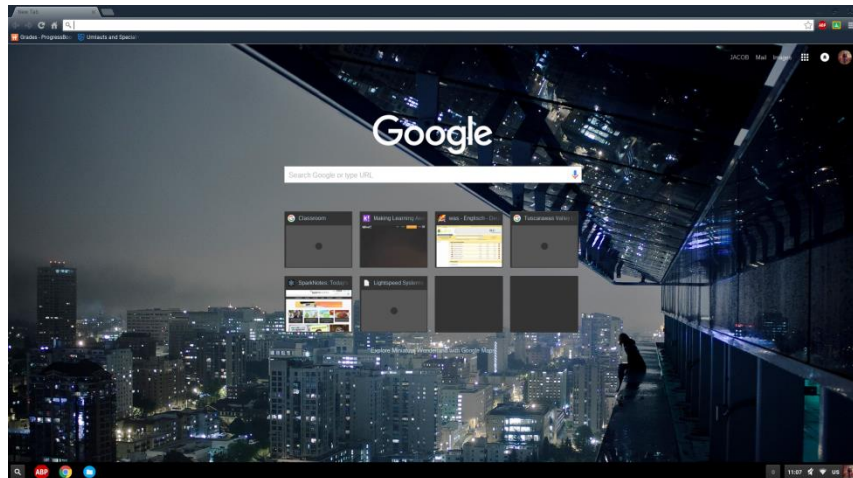
Settings to Tweak

Settings sound boring. There's nothing attractive about a plain white list of options. But options are bae. They let you unlock hidden features in Chrome. To get to Settings, click the three-line icon in the corner of Chrome, then select Settings. Here, you can set whether or not you have a home button and where it goes (per se, the Tusky Valley webpage or MSN). Tusky Valley has locked down the option to change what pages open at startup if you log into Chrome with your school Google account (and for good reason, since these settings preset Chrome for school to open up to the school website). However, if you are on a personal account, you can customize this setting here. You can also specify what information you want to sync here from computer to computer. Tusky Valley's default is to show the bookmarks bar (thank you), but if it is hidden from always showing, you can activate it here. The advanced settings can be reached at the bottom of the page by simply clicking the link to show them, and they allow you to change defaults such as zoom settings and form autofill. If you tweak these settings, you can maximize your Chrome experience.
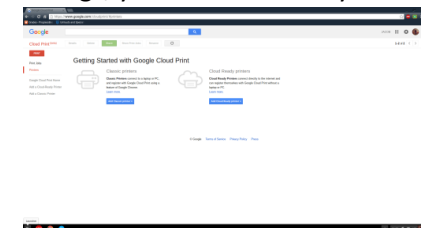
Google Cloud Print (for Our Friends on Android and Chrome OS)

If you have an Android device or Chromebook, you may find it difficult to print at home. Most printers' drivers (the software that makes your home computer work with your printer) are designed

for PC or Mac, not typically for other devices. With Google Cloud Print, you can set up your phone to send things to your computer so it will print them. To set it up, click the three-line icon, click "Settings," then click "Show Advanced Settings." From there, scroll down to where it says "Google Cloud Print" and click the "Manage" button directly beneath it. There, you can add printers to print from. As long as your other device is connected to your Google account and your other computer is on, the print option from basically any Google app or Android or Chrome OS device will let you print to the other computer (and its printers).

The Ever-Changing Browser and OS

Chrome the web browser and Chrome OS, both, are continually changing and evolving. Google is working to make their web browser faster and more data efficient (with methods like their new Brotli technology reported by The Next Web). As they do this, they are sure to add new and exciting features that will add to the list of ways you can use Chrome to work better every day!