



How Can I Stop the Annoying Sounds Played by Videos on Websites?

Question: I find it very annoying when websites start automatically playing advertising videos without my consent. When I'm not expecting it, it comes as quite a shock. If I don't spot the video quickly, I have to scroll to the bottom of the page in order to switch off the sound. That soon gets rather annoying, particularly if I have multiple tabs open. Is there an easier way to stop the sound playback on websites?

Oliver Henderson

Answer: It annoys me too when a video suddenly starts blaring out of my speakers when I visit a web page. It usually happens when I'm on the telephone or trying to listen to music.

One possible solution would be to completely switch off the sound on Windows. To do so, right-click on the volume  in the taskbar in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen. Click on **Open Volume Mixer** and under **Volume**, click on the volume icon. When you see this  icon, the volume is switched off.

This simple solution does pose the problem that your PC makes no sound

at all. When you mute the volume, all sounds on your computer are blocked, meaning that you can't listen to music or receive warning beeps.

Some browsers allow you to block sound on specific tabs. How you do this depends on the browser that you use:

In order to mute the sound in the browser only, proceed as follows depending on the browser you use:

- On Google Chrome you will see the tab that is currently playing sound displays a volume icon:



Click on the volume icon and switch playback in this tab to **Mute**.

- On Firefox you will see a volume icon on each tab that currently has sound playing. Right-clicking on the tab and selecting **Mute tab** stops the playback. You can also press the **(Ctrl) + (M)** key combination to turn off sound in the current tab.
- In Microsoft Edge, you can see which tab is playing sound from

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the volume icon displayed, but you can't stop the sound from there. You will have to find the source of the playback and switch it off directly.

- In Internet Explorer there is no way of switching off sound. You can only mute sound for your whole system using the steps outlined above.





How Can I Optimise My Screen Display?

Question: *I'm not satisfied with the way images and text are displayed on my monitor. Despite the high resolution of the monitor, the colours look faded, the contrast is bad and the fonts are unfocussed. Installing a new graphic driver hasn't helped at all. How can I optimise my monitor?*

Steven Brennan

Answer: If the colours on screen are pale, the contrast or the text displayed on screen is blurred, you need to tune your Windows display settings. I recommend you use the DCCW (Display Color Calibration for Windows) program that is integrated with Windows.

Launch the DCCW tool by pressing  + , typing DCCW and then clicking OK.

The program takes you step-by-step through the configuration process.

Make sure you fully check the calibration images displayed on screen and read the instructions given to make sure your monitor is perfectly adjusted:

1. The first step allows you to tune the gamma settings of your monitor, and tweak the red, green and blue settings. Move the slider up and down until the centre points of the circles blend in to the outer circles. The gamma settings control the relationship between the input values being sent to the monitor from your graphics card and the light emitted by the screen.
2. Next you need to adjust the brightness settings. Use the buttons on the front of your

monitor to change the brightness so that the shirt and suit look like the sample image shown in the wizard's example.



Adjust your monitors brightness settings so that the image onscreen appears like the example above.

3. Follow the same principle to adjust the contrast. Use the

controls on the front of your monitor to adjust the contrast settings so that the image shown on screen looks like the example shown in the wizard.

4. To adjust the colour balance settings, move the sliders until all colour is removed from the grey bars. All of the different bars should be a different shade of grey and easily distinguished from each other.
5. Finally, you need to compare your new setting with your previous configuration and decide whether or not to accept the changes.



Where is the Option to Remove My USB Memory Stick?

Question: When I connect my camera's memory card or my USB flash drive to my PC, the option to safely remove it is not always shown in the System Tray in the right-hand side of the taskbar.

In order to avoid data loss problems with my drives, I'd like to make sure that this option is available. Do you have a solution to this problem?

Robert Carlson

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Answer: Safely removing your flash drive from your PC ensures that you avoid data loss, by writing any pending data to your removable drive.

The option is usually shown when you hover your mouse over the drive's icon in the System Tray in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen. Just click on it before you disconnect a drive from your system.

If this option isn't available you can create a desktop shortcut that will always allow you to remove a drive safely. Proceed as outlined below to create the shortcut:

1. Right-click on a blank area of your desktop and select **New > Shortcut** from the pop-up menu.
2. In the Location field, enter: `%windir%\system32\Run-Dll32.exe,shell32.dll,Control_RunDLL hotplug.dll`
3. Click on the **Next** button and enter a name for the shortcut, such as **Safely remove hardware**.
4. Click on **Finish**.

Tip: If you use more than one external storage drive, I recommend activating the **Display device components** option within the **Safely remove hardware** window, so that you can choose between your different devices.

To do so proceed as follows:

1. Press **⊞ + (R)**, then type **regedit.exe** into the Open field and click **OK**.
2. Navigate to the following registry key: `HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Applets\SysTray`
3. Double-click on the **HotPlugFlags** registry value. If the value doesn't exist then create it, by right-clicking on a blank area of the right window, then select **New > DWORD (32-bit) Value** and name the new value **HotPlugFlags**.
4. Finally change the Value data from **0** (disabled) to **2** (enabled). Then close the Registry Editor and your PC.



How Can I Recognise When Email Attachments are Dangerous?

Question: I frequently hear that email attachments can contain viruses or Trojans that are executed when the file is opened. I have already disabled the macro function in Office so that infected Word and Excel files cannot cause problems. What other file types can contain dangerous content, and how can I recognise them?

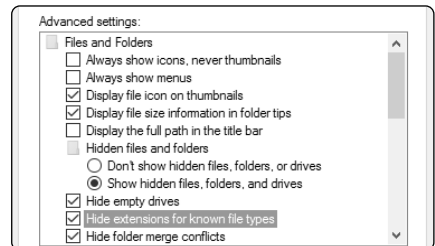
Charles Green

Answer: Email attachments are one of the most common ways to transport viruses, worms and Trojans, so it's good to be sceptical when you receive an email with an executable or Office document. To recognise problem attachments, I recommend changing the following setting in Explorer:

2. Click on **File Explorer Options** (Windows 10) or **Folder Options** (Windows 8.1/7)
3. Click on the **View** tab then untick the option **Hide extensions for known file types**.
4. Click **OK** to save the changes.

With this setting in place, Windows will show any extensions at the end of filenames, including .EXE, .COM, .BAT or .VBS. These types of files are dangerous and can contain malicious code. Do not click on file attachments with these file endings under any circumstances.

1. First, in Windows 10, press **⊞ + R**, type control and click **OK**. In Windows 8.1 press **⊞ + X** and click **Control Panel**. In Windows 7 click on **Start > Control Panel**.



Remove the tick and Windows will show all file types



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How Do I Activate the Administrator Account in Windows?

Question: *I have User Account Control activated on my PC, and log in with my normal user account. However, when I tried to install a new piece of software, the process failed, and the manufacturer's hotline told me that I needed to log on to my machine with an Administrator account. I can't even see this displayed on the login screen. How can I access the Administrator account on my system?*

Steven Turner

Answer: Following the installation of Windows, you will notice that the Administrator account is not shown as being available. If you installed Windows yourself, you will probably be even more surprised since during the installation procedure you are actually asked to provide a password for the Administrator account. However, for security reasons, Microsoft does not make the Administrator account easy to find.

Using the `net` command you can reactivate the Administrator account in all Windows versions, via the Command Prompt.

To do so, proceed as follows:

1. In Windows 10/8.1, press **⊞** + **X** and click **Command Prompt (Admin)** or **Windows PowerShell (Admin)**. In Windows 7 click **Start > All Programs > Accessories** then right-click **Command Prompt** and choose **Run as administrator**.
2. Confirm the security request with **Yes**.
3. At the Command Prompt, type in the following command followed by the **Enter** key: `net user Administrator /active:yes`.
4. Note the confirmation message telling you that the Administrator account has been activated. Following a restart you will be able to use the Administrator account to log in to your system.

