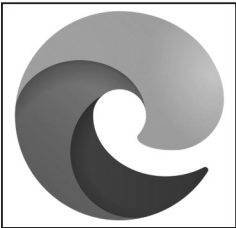


Power-up Your Web Browsing with the Latest Changes to Microsoft Edge

This article shows you how to:

- Reach your favourite websites more quickly and easily
- Take a screenshot of a web page to keep for reference
- See if your private passwords have been compromised

Microsoft released a brand new version of Edge, based on Google Chrome, a couple of years ago. Since then they’ve gradually been adding new features to the web browser. Read on to learn about the most recent changes to Microsoft Edge and pick up some useful tips you may not have discovered on your travels.



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This article covers the very latest version of Microsoft Edge – the version included in Windows 11. However, many of the same features are incorporated into Windows 10's version of Edge, and those that aren't will probably arrive over time – perhaps by the time you read this article.

Instant Access to the Web with the Edge Bar

A panel containing news stories

I must confess that I don't really understand the point of the Edge bar. It seems to me that it duplicates the Widgets panel in Windows 11 (or the News & Interests panel in Windows 10) as well as the news-laden page you see when you start Edge or open a new tab.

That said, it is a major new feature, Microsoft seems rather proud of it, and they must have done some research and testing that indicated it's what people want. So perhaps I'm unusual and you're going to love it!

How to open the Edge bar

With Microsoft Edge running, click the ... ('Settings and more') button at the far-right of the toolbar, move the mouse to **More tools** and click on **Launch Edge bar**. This 'bar' (although it's really a panel) appears at the right of your screen, as pictured opposite.

Choose which topics it covers

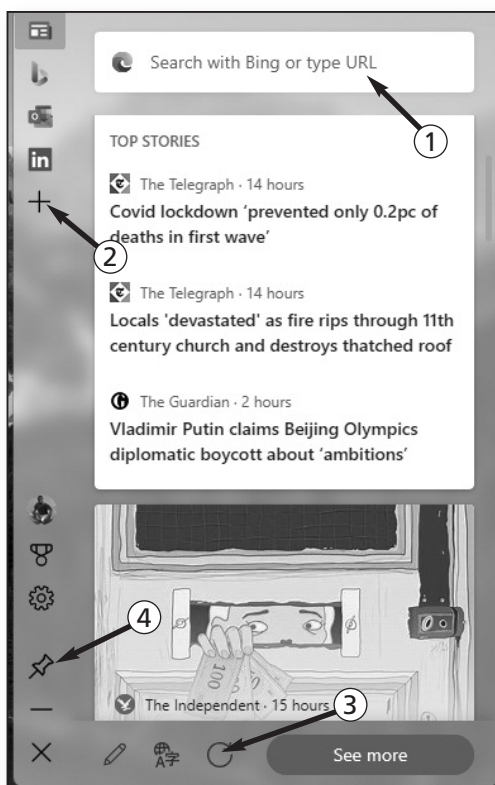
As I hinted above, it initially shows news stories, weather, traffic, sports results and so on – all things you can see in other places too. Clicking any of these items will open it for reading in the main Edge browser. If you click the pencil icon at the bottom of the panel, a web page will open in which you can choose the topics you'd like to see covered in this panel by clicking the + signs beside them.

Now close Edge

So far, so familiar. But here's the trick: close the main Edge window and this panel remains open. The

intention is that you'll keep this Edge bar open constantly on your screen to give yourself quick access to the Web (and a quick update on the news) whenever you need it.

One drawback is that the Edge bar doesn't place an icon on the taskbar, so if another window is covering it, you'll have to move that window out of the way to see it. However, it does place an icon on the 'Show hidden icons' panel near the clock, so you might like to click the chevron and drag that little 'Edge bar' icon down to join the other icons beside the clock where it's easy to click.



*Run a quick search
with Bing*

Now let's take a quick run through what else you can do with the Edge bar – the things that might make you decide it's useful. The search box ① gives you a quick way to run a web search using Microsoft's search engine, Bing. Just type a word or phrase to search for and press **Enter** and the panel will show you the search results. You can even click one and read the web page in this panel, although the narrowness of the panel might make that a bit uncomfortable: if it does, you can click an **Open in browser** button at the bottom to open it in the main Edge window.

*Add other sites
you like to visit*

The little column of icons at the top-left lead to the news feed (which you've already seen), the Bing homepage, Outlook.com (useful if you have an Outlook email account) and LinkedIn. But if you'd like to give yourself quick access to other sites, you can add those by clicking the + button ②: for instance, after clicking that button, type **bbc.co.uk/news** in the 'URL' box and **BBC News** in the 'Name' box and click **Add**, and you'll have one-click access to the BBC News page. Whatever page you have open in this panel, you can reload it at any time (to see the latest version) by clicking the **Refresh** button ③.

*Add other sites
you like to visit*

If you click the **Pin** button ④, the Edge bar fixes itself to the entire right-hand side of the screen and keeps itself on top of other windows. That might be helpful if you have a very wide screen and/or you make a lot of use of this panel; if you don't like it, you can click the equivalent **Unpin** button.

*Minimise the
Edge bar...*

The **Minimise** button immediately below the pin hides the Edge bar and replaces it with a circular icon at the right of your screen: click that icon to make the Edge bar reappear.

... or close it

And if you've had enough of the Edge bar (for now at least), click the **Close** ('x') button in the extreme bottom-left corner.

Websites as Apps: Put Them One Click Away

We all have particular websites we visit regularly. There may be a site you visit to check and send email, or a site at which you read the news every morning. Perhaps you use Spotify or something similar to play music, use a certain website to manage your investments, or subscribe to a genealogy site that holds your family tree.

Quick access to your most-used sites

You want to visit these websites with the minimum of fuss and bother – ideally with a single click, the way you start an app. Edge now gives you a choice of two ways to do this.

Method 1: Pin a website to the taskbar

An obvious way to give yourself quick access to a website is to pin it to the taskbar, where a single click on its icon will launch Microsoft Edge and take you straight there.

To do that, begin by starting Edge and visiting that favourite website. When you arrive, click the ... ('Settings and more') button at the far-right of the toolbar, move to **More tools** and choose **Pin to taskbar**. Straight away, an icon for this website appears on your taskbar, and it will stay there until you decide to remove it by right-clicking it and choosing **Unpin from taskbar**.

Pin a site to your taskbar

Method 2: Install a website as an app

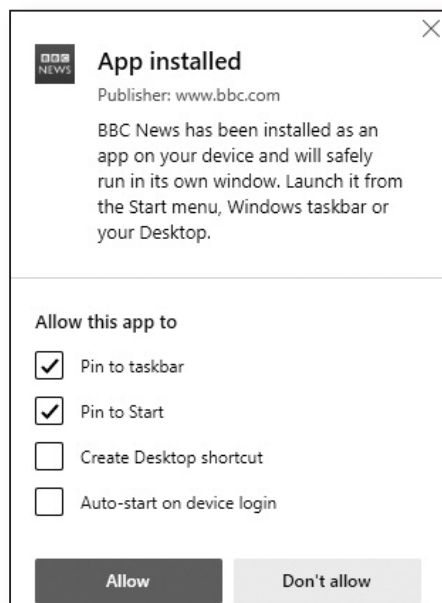
This is a rather niftier option than the one above. When you use this method, the website can appear on your Start menu and your taskbar, just like an app, and when you start it, it opens in its own window which (despite actually being an Edge window) doesn't look anything like a web browser: it's a completely plain window devoted entirely to your website apart from a Back button and a Refresh button in the extreme top-left corner.

Make the site behave like an app

To use this method, start Edge and visit this favourite website. When you arrive, click the ... ('Settings and more') button at the far-right of the toolbar, move the mouse to **Apps** and choose **Install this site as an app**.

Choose a short name for it In the little dialog that appears, you'll see the title of the current web page, which might be rather long. In its place, type the snappier one- or two-word name by which you'd like this 'app' to be known, then click **Install**.

Choose where you want icons A moment later you'll see the window for this new 'app'. You'll also see a panel that offers a few options: you can add this app to the Start menu (which I recommend), pin it to the taskbar (which is also a good idea for quick access), and put a shortcut to it on the desktop if you choose. (You can also opt to have this app start automatically every time you sign into Windows, but you probably won't choose to do that.) When you've ticked the options you want, click **Allow**.



Although nothing new was really ‘installed’ on your PC as such, the website you’ve just added really does function just like an app. You can find it on your Start menu, or open your Start menu and begin typing its name to find it, or you can click its icon on your taskbar to open it if you chose to create one of those. Even better, the window for this ‘app’ remembers its former size and position, so you can resize the window just as you want it and know that it will be exactly the same size next time you use it. For all intents and purposes, it really is a separate entity from Edge itself.

Using this new ‘app’

If you ever decide you want to ‘uninstall’ one of these website apps, start Edge and click the ... button on the taskbar, move to **Apps** and choose **Manage apps**. A web page will appear listing the apps you’ve installed, and you simply click the **x** at the right of an app and then click **Remove** to get rid of it and all its icons.

Remove an unwanted site

Always Start Edge from Where You Left Off

In the normal run of things, when you close Edge at the end of a browsing session, all your tabs are closed. Next time you start the browser, those tabs are gone and you arrive at Edge’s usual starting page.

Close Edge and your tabs are gone

You shouldn’t have lost all those tabs for good, of course. If you press **Ctrl+H**, you’ll see Edge’s history list and you can find and click any previous page you want to revisit.

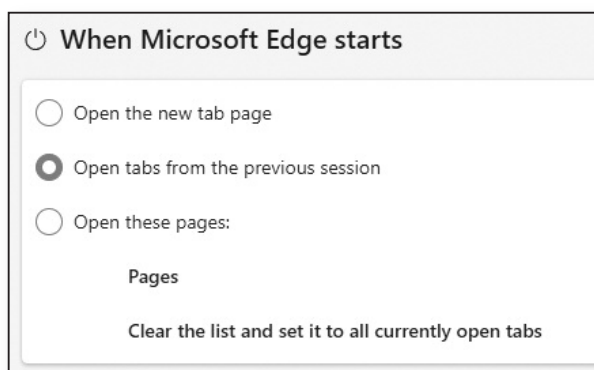
But perhaps you’d prefer that every time you start Microsoft Edge it reopened all the pages that were open last time you closed it? If so, here’s what to do:

You can set Edge to reopen them

1. Click the ... (‘Settings and more’) button at the far-right of the toolbar and choose **Settings**.



2. At the left of the Settings page that opens, choose **Start, Home, and new tabs**.
3. Below the heading 'When Microsoft Edge starts', select the option **Open tabs from the previous session**.



4. Finished! You can close this Settings tab, or use it to continue browsing. In future, the tabs you leave open when you close Microsoft Edge will be reopened automatically next time you start it.

Have Web Pages Read Out Loud to You

*Difficulty reading
web pages?*

Perhaps your eyesight isn't what it once was, or perhaps you find it tiring to read text from a screen. Whatever the reason, Microsoft Edge can help by reading a web page aloud to you.

Whenever you arrive at a page you'd like read out loud, either press **Ctrl+Shift+U** or click the ... button at the far-right of the toolbar and choose **Read aloud**.

*Let Edge read
them aloud!*

Straight away, Edge will begin reading the page from the top. As it does so, it highlights the current line of text in blue and the current word in yellow to help you see where you are. At any time, you can click a word

somewhere on the page, and Edge will jump to that point and continue reading from there.

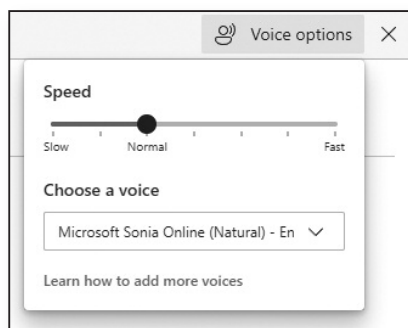
Just above the web page you'll see a 'Read aloud' toolbar. This offers three simple buttons in its centre: you can click the arrows to jump back to the previous paragraph or skip forward to the next. Click the button between them to pause and resume the reading (or press **Ctrl+Shift+U** again to pause or resume).

Pause, resume and skip paragraphs



Just one little word of warning. The first time I used this feature, it struck me that the voice doing the reading sounded oddly foreign. A moment later, it arrived at some numbers in the article and read them out in German: for some reason, Edge had decided to give me a German reading voice! The fix for this is to click the **Voice options** button at the right and choose one of the 'United Kingdom' voices from the drop-down list. You should find George, Hazel and Susan at the top of the list, but my suggestion is to scroll down and find Sonia, which is a much more natural speaking voice. (While you have this 'Voice options' panel open, you'll also see a slider you can drag to increase or decrease the reading speed.)

Make sure you choose the right voice!



Stop reading When you want to stop reading aloud, just click the **x** at the far-right of the 'Read aloud' toolbar. Edge also stops reading if you click a link (or do anything else) that causes the current page to close.

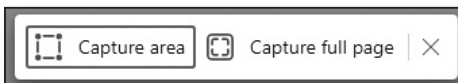
Quickly Take a Screenshot of a Web Page

Keep a screenshot for reference When you're using the Web for research and you want to keep track of what you find, a good choice is to take a screenshot (a picture) of the web page, or part of it.

Windows offers a couple of ways to take screenshots, and you may have other software that can do the job, but when you want a picture of a web page, the best method by far is to use the 'Web Capture' feature built into Microsoft Edge.

Use Web capture Having arrived at the web page you want to capture (and, if necessary, scrolled the appropriate part of the page into view), either press **Ctrl+Shift+S** or click the ... button at the far-right of the toolbar and choose **Web capture**.

A little toolbar appears giving you a choice of two options:



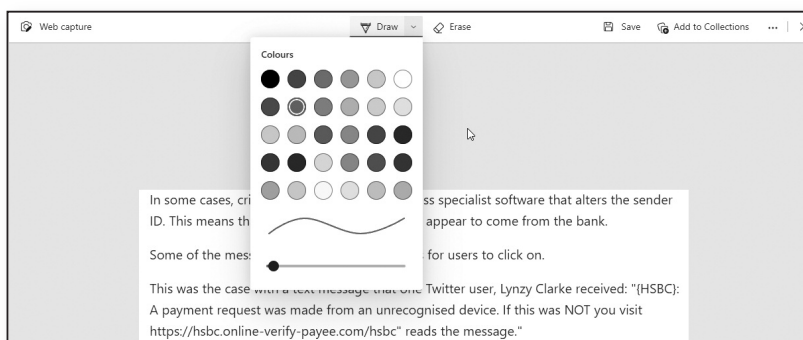
Mark out a rectangular area...

- **Capture area:** this option is already selected for you, and if you move the mouse over the web page you'll see that the mouse pointer is a + shape. If you want to capture a particular area of the page, press the left mouse button at the top-left corner of the area you want and drag downwards until you've marked out the whole of the required area. (If you drag close to the bottom of the window, the page will scroll

and you'll be able to select content further down the page.) When you've marked out the required area, release the mouse button and another little toolbar appears: choose **Copy** if you want to copy the picture to the clipboard and paste it into another program; otherwise click **Mark up capture**. (If you didn't select the right area, press **Esc** and then start again.)

- **Capture full page:** if you'd like to grab a screenshot of the whole page, from top to bottom, click this item. ... or capture the whole page

Now, if you captured an area and chose **Mark up capture** or you captured the full page, you'll see a 'Web capture' window showing your screenshot:



A **Draw** menu allows you to pick a pen colour and use a slider to adjust the line thickness and then draw freehand on your screenshot if you wish to. If you click **Erase** you can then click on any lines and shapes you've drawn on the screenshot to remove them.

You can draw on your screenshot

To keep the screenshot, click the **Save** button. The picture will be saved in JPEG format in your Downloads folder with the name 'Web capture' followed the date and time and website address. To copy the screenshot to the clipboard, click the ... button and choose **Copy**. To discard the screenshot, click the **x** at the right of the toolbar.

Save, copy or discard the result

Choose Which Buttons to Show on the Toolbar

Edge's toolbar is fairly empty











Microsoft Edge keeps its toolbar deliberately clutter-free. The thinking is that everything you need can be found on the ... ('Settings and more') menu – your favourites, history list, downloads list, Read aloud, Web capture and so on.

But perhaps you'd like a quicker way to reach some of these items if you use them regularly? To that end, Edge lets you add quite a number of extra buttons to its toolbar.

You can add extra buttons

Click the ... button and choose **Settings** from the menu. At the left of the Settings page, click on **Appearance**, then scroll down to the heading 'Select which buttons to show on the toolbar'. Here you'll see the list of available buttons, and you can display or hide any of them by clicking the switches to their right.

Select which buttons to show on the toolbar:

 Home button	Set button URL <input type="checkbox"/>
 Extensions button <small>The extensions button auto appears in the toolbar when one or more extensions are turned on.</small>	Show automatically <input type="checkbox"/>
 Favourites button	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 Collections button	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 History button	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Alerts and tips button	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Downloads button	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 Performance button	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Maths Solver button	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Citations button	<input type="checkbox"/>

Immersive Reader: Read Articles More Comfortably

Here's a very handy but easily-overlooked feature of Microsoft Edge. It's called the 'Immersive Reader' and it aims to make web pages easier on the eye.

When you come across a web page containing an article you want to read, have a look at the address box at the top of the window. If you see a book-and-loudspeaker icon near the right-hand end of the address box, it means Edge has determined it can display this page in 'Immersive Reader' view.



Look for the 'Immersive Reader' icon

Click this icon and Edge will strip out ads, sidebars, background images and unnecessary pictures. It also adjusts the font, text size and layout to be more eye-friendly and places all this on a clear black-on-beige page. You can now read the page easily, without all the usual web page paraphernalia getting in your way.

Read the page without all the clutter

If you click on **Text preferences** at the top of the page, you can change the text size, font, column width and page colour. Edge will remember your choices and use them next time you switch to the Immersive Reader.

While you're looking at the Immersive Reader view of a page, if you want to go back to the original web page just click the same button again in the address box.

Check Whether Your Passwords Have Been Compromised

You've probably noticed when you sign into a new website that Microsoft Edge offers to save your username and password. This is designed to be helpful

Edge offers to save your passwords

of course: in future when you want to sign into the same site again, Edge will automatically insert those details for you.

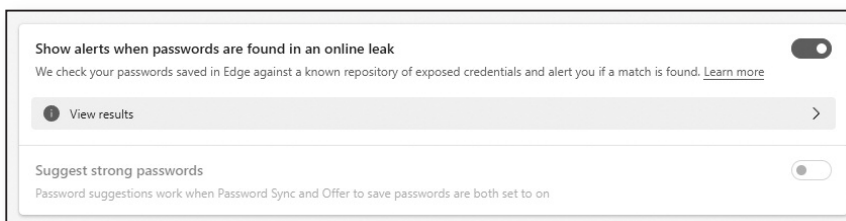
It can also check whether they've become public

There's one extra benefit to letting Edge save your passwords, if you choose to take advantage of it: your username+password combinations can be checked against an online database of compromised passwords. In other words, Edge can tell you whether those sign-in details have somehow been leaked (usually as a result of a website hack) and become public.

If you'd like to switch on this feature, here's what to do:



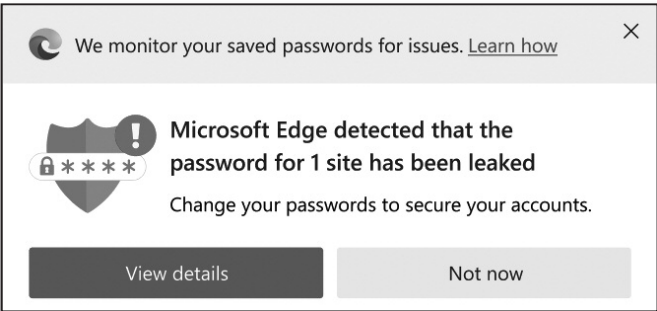
1. Click the ... button at the far-right of the toolbar and choose **Settings**.
2. This takes you to the page of Settings headed 'Your profile'. A little way down this page, click on **Passwords**.
3. Switch on the option **Show alerts when passwords are found in an online leak**, then click the arrow at the right of the **View results** bar that appears below it.



Have your passwords scanned

4. In the 'Leaked Passwords' box, click on **Scan now** and Edge will begin checking the passwords you've asked the browser to save so far. Hopefully you'll find that none of your passwords has been leaked online. If one of them has, be sure to visit the corresponding website and change your password to ensure no-one else can access your account at that site.

With this feature switched on, Microsoft Edge will keep an eye on your saved passwords – and any new ones you ask it to save – and let you know if any of those passwords are leaked in future.



Handy Keyboard Shortcuts for Microsoft Edge

When you’re browsing the Web, you’ll tend to have one hand somewhere near the mouse: the need to click and scroll is inescapable. But you can give your mouse hand a bit of a rest (and save yourself some time) by learning a few keyboard shortcuts. Here’s a list of the most useful things you can do from the keyboard in Edge:

Browse faster from the keyboard

To do this:	Press this hotkey:
Open a new tab	Ctrl+T
Open a link in a new tab	Ctrl+click
Open a link in a new tab and switch to it	Ctrl+Shift+click
Close the current tab	Ctrl+W
Reopen the last tab that was closed	Ctrl+Shift+T
Open a new Edge window	Ctrl+N

Reload the current web page	Ctrl+R or F5
Print the current web page	Ctrl+P
Add the current page to Favourites	Ctrl+D
View the current page in Immersive Reader	F9
Zoom in on the current page	Ctrl+=
Zoom out on the current page	Ctrl+-
Zoom to 100% (normal)	Ctrl+0
Jump to the top of the page	Home
Jump to the bottom of the page	End
Scroll down a little way	Down arrow
Scroll up a little way	Up arrow
Scroll down further	Space
Scroll up further	Shift+Space
Go back to the previous page	Alt+Left arrow
Go forward to the next page	Alt+Right arrow
Open the Favourites list	Ctrl+Shift+O
Open the History list	Ctrl+H
Open the Downloads list	Ctrl+J
Read the current page aloud	Ctrl+Shift+U
Take a screenshot of the current page	Ctrl+Shift+S
Show or hide the Favourites Bar	Ctrl+Shift+B