

From Reading Aloud to Clutter-free Printing, Discover Edge's Top Features!

This article shows you how to:

- ✓ Read long web pages more comfortably
- ✓ Use your preferred search engine in place of Bing
- ✓ Have online forms filled in for you automatically

On the surface at least, one web browser is very much like another. They all do the same job, after all, and it's the details that make the difference.

Windows 10's built-in browser, Microsoft Edge, got off to a lacklustre start, but these days there's plenty to like about it. Read on to discover its most useful tricks and features.



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To Bing or Not to Bing? Pick a Different Search Engine

Edge searches using Bing

When you click in Microsoft Edge's address box (or press **Ctrl** + **L**), type a word or phrase to search for and press **Enter**, you'll find you're searching the Web with Microsoft's own search engine, Bing.

Prefer to use something different?

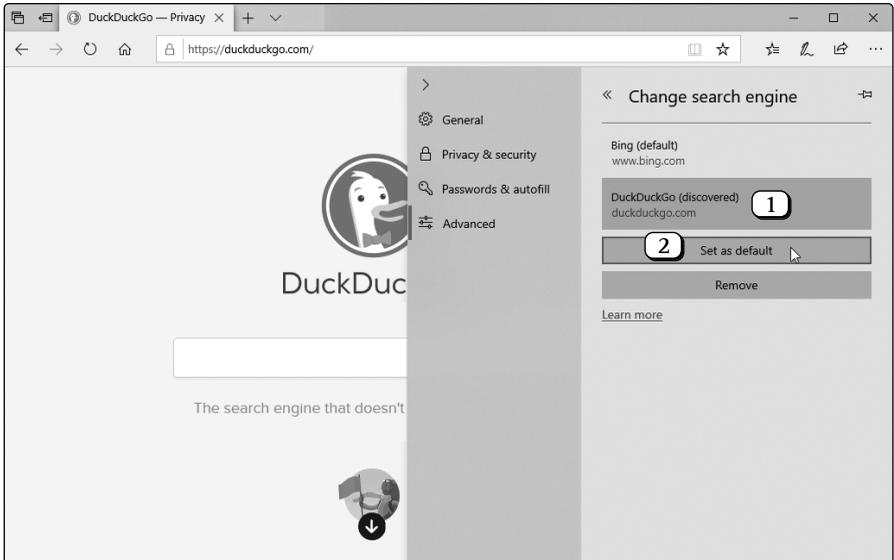
It's not a huge surprise, but it's not necessarily what you want. Perhaps you'd prefer the familiarity of Google, or a search engine that protects your privacy like the oddly-named DuckDuckGo.

If so, switching search engines is a quick job:



Set your new search engine as the default

1. Start by visiting the website of your preferred search engine, such as google.co.uk or duckduckgo.com. There's no need to actually search for anything when you arrive; just getting to its home page is good enough.
2. Click the 'Settings and more' button (three dots) at the far right of the toolbar (or press **Alt** + **X**) and choose **Settings**.
3. Click **Advanced** at the left of the Settings panel, scroll to the 'Address bar search' heading at the bottom and click **Change search provider**.
4. On the next page, you'll see that Bing is currently your default search engine, but the site you've just reached has been 'discovered'. Click this newly-discovered search site **1** and then click the **Set as default** button **2**.
5. The sites jiggle around at the top of the list and your new search engine is now shown as the default, which is just what you wanted. Press **Esc** or click somewhere outside this Settings panel to close it and you've finished.



From now onwards, searches from the address box will use your newly-chosen search engine. If you ever want to switch again, just repeat the same steps for a different search website. And if you ever change your mind and want to use Bing again, repeat steps 2 and 3, click on Bing and click **Set as default** to switch back.

Switch again, or go back to Bing

Have a Web Page Read Out Loud

Rather than reading a web page from the screen, do you ever wish you could sit back and relax as someone reads it to you? Well, with Edge, you can.

Open the 'Settings and more' menu and choose **Read aloud**, or just press **(Ctrl) + (Shift) + (G)**, and Edge will start reading the page from the top. As it progresses through the page, it scrolls automatically, selects each line to indicate where you are, and highlights the current word in yellow.

Let Edge recite the web page

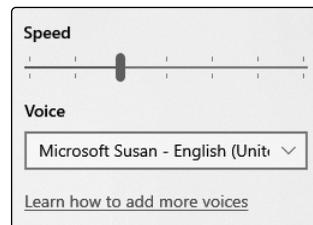
You'll see the simple reading toolbar at the top-right of the page, allowing you to pause and resume reading (1), jump back to the previous paragraph (2) or skip forward to the next one (3). You can also click any word on the page to continue reading from that point.



Choose different voices and reading speeds

Clicking the Voice settings button (4) displays the small panel pictured to the right. Here you can choose between three voices (George or the oddly-alike Hazel or Susan) and drag the slider left to slow down the reading speed or right to speed it up.

If you want to stop reading, click the x button at the right of the reading toolbar, or just switch to a different web page.



Autofill: Let Edge Fill in Online Forms

Tired of form-filling?

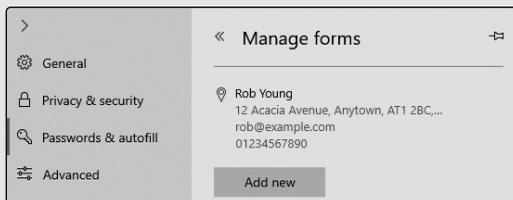
Everywhere you go online, you're asked to fill in a form of some sort. It may be just a short one (your email address and a password) or it may be one that wants your name, street address, town, postcode and country and more.

Filling all this in is tedious, and Edge has a feature to make it easier. Tell Edge all these details just once, and when you arrive at an online form, it can (often) insert the necessary details for you automatically.

Give Edge your details just once

Here's what to do:

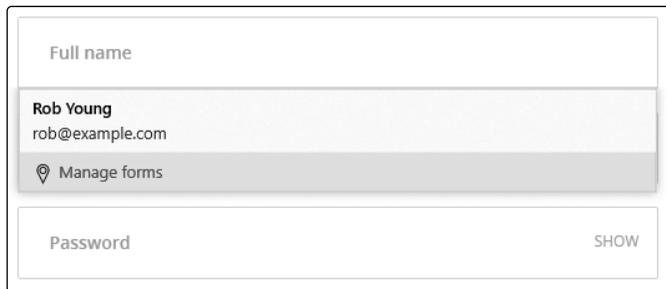
1. Click the 'Settings and more' button at the far right of the toolbar (or press **(Alt) + (Windows)**) and choose **Settings**.
2. At the left of the Settings panel, click on **Passwords & autofill**.
3. Below the 'Autofill' heading, click the **Manage forms** button, then click **Add new**.
4. This opens a form in which you type your name, email address and phone number, select your country from a drop-down list and enter your street address, town and postcode. At the bottom, click **Save**.
5. That takes you back to the previous page where you'll see these details neatly laid out. If you have a second address you sometimes use – perhaps a business name and address – you can click **Add new** again and enter those details in the same way. Finally, press the **(Esc)** key to close the Settings panel.



When you come across a form that has to be completed, click in a field that Edge should recognise, such as 'Name' or 'Email address'. If you're lucky, Edge will indeed recognise

Edge will auto-fill forms for you

the names of these form fields and you'll see a little drop-down panel below the field you clicked showing the form details you saved. Click those details and Edge will automatically complete any form fields it can. (If you saved two or more sets of details in step 5 above, you'll see each of those in this little drop-down and you can click the set of details you want inserted into the form.)



The image shows a screenshot of a web form. At the top, there is a text input field labeled "Full name". Below this field, a dropdown menu is open, displaying three items: "Rob Young" with the email address "rob@example.com" below it, and "Manage forms" with a location pin icon to its left. Below the dropdown, there is another text input field labeled "Password" with a "SHOW" button to its right.

Add Your Most-used Buttons to the Toolbar

Edge's toolbar is sparse

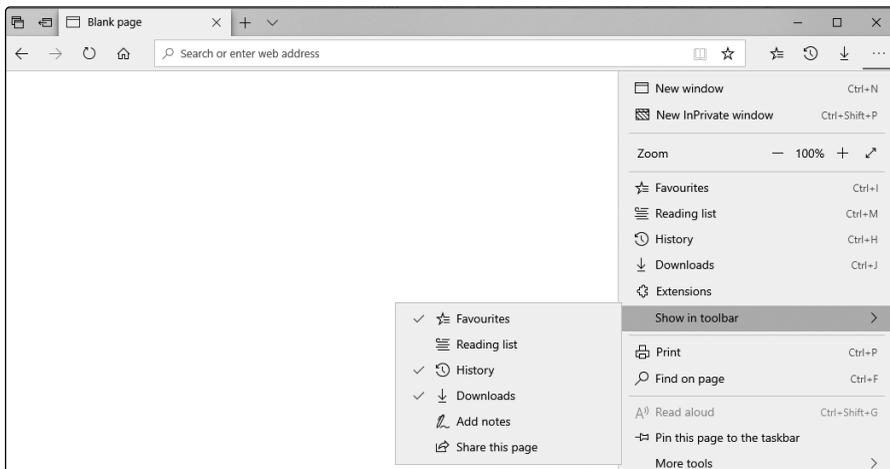
Like most modern web browsers, Edge has a deliberately sparse look, putting the minimum of buttons on its toolbar and leaving everything else to the 'Settings and more' menu.

That means, for example, if you want to see your Downloads list or History list, you have to click the **Favourites** button and then click the appropriate item. Curiously, though, it does devote space to an **Add notes** button and a **Share this page** button, and I'll bet you rarely – if ever – use those!

You can add and remove buttons

Fortunately, you can choose for yourself which buttons should be displayed, getting rid of those you don't use and adding others you'd find useful. To do that, open the 'Settings and more' menu and move the mouse to **Show in toolbar**. Items with ticks beside them are currently displayed, and you can click one to hide it; items without ticks are not

currently displayed, and you can click one of those to add it to the toolbar. In the example below, I've removed the little-used Notes and Share buttons and added Downloads and History. It takes a few clicks to do this, since the menu closes again each time you add or remove a button, but it only takes a minute to set things up as you want them.



The one item missing from this list is a Home button, taking you back to Edge's Start page. If you'd like to see this button (which appears to the left of the address box), open the 'Settings and more' menu and click **Settings**, then click the switch beside **Show the Home button**.

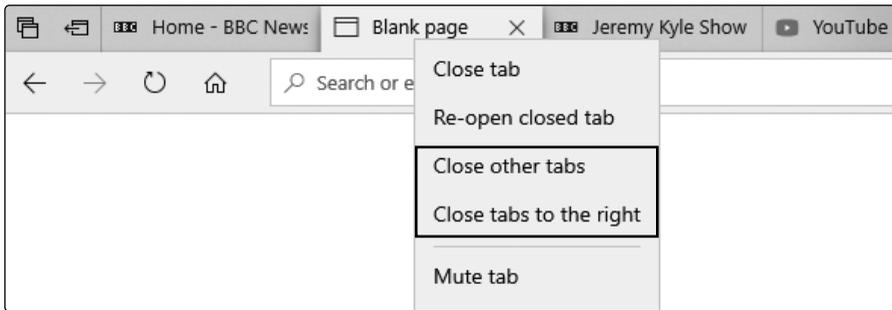
Give yourself a Home button

Close All Unwanted Tabs with Two Clicks

You've been busily surfing the Web for some time, opening new tabs along the way, and you realise you've gained a collection of tabs you no longer need. You could work your way through them clicking the x button in each to close it, but there's a much quicker way:

Too many tabs open?

- Close all but one**
- If there's one tab you want to keep, right-click that tab and choose **Close other tabs**: every tab apart from that one will disappear.
- Keeps tabs you've moved to the left**
- Perhaps you want to keep two or more tabs and discard the rest? If so, drag the tabs you want to keep along the row until they're all at the left. Having done that, right-click the rightmost of the tabs you're keeping and choose **Close tabs to the right**: all the unwanted tabs to the right of this one will disappear.



Temporarily close web pages with 'Set aside'

Quickly hide all your tabs

Alternatively, perhaps the number of open tabs is getting a bit much to deal with, but you don't really want to close any. In that case, click the **Set these tabs aside** button (1): all your open tabs will disappear, to be replaced by a single 'New tab' page, and you can continue surfing in an uncluttered window.

Reopen one or more when needed

When you want to see one or more of those tabs, click the **See all your tabs** button (2). This opens a panel showing thumbnail pictures of all those 'set aside' tabs in a time-ordered list. You can click a single thumbnail to reopen it,



or click the **Restore tabs** link beside a group of thumbnails to reopen them all.

A neat detail of this 'Set aside' feature is that those tabs are still available after you've closed your browser and then reopened it sometime later. That makes this feature particularly useful in two situations:

Tabs remain available after you restart Edge

- Perhaps you've been researching something across a number of tabs, but you have to move on to something else for a while. Set those tabs aside, and when you're ready to continue you can close all your current tabs and bring the previous tabs back again.
- If you're in the midst of some multi-tabbed research but you have to stop for the day, you can set all those tabs aside before closing Edge, making them all available when you pick things up again tomorrow.

Read Long Articles More Easily with Reading View

When you're trying to read an article or news story online, the pages are often cluttered with all sorts of distractions – advertisements, sidebars, logos, videos, a mish-mash of fonts and text sizes, and so on. But there's a solution: just switch to Reading View to get rid of all this clutter and give yourself a neat, easily-readable page.

Remove distractions from web pages

Whenever you reach a page containing an article you want to read, have a look at the **Reading View** (book-shaped) button

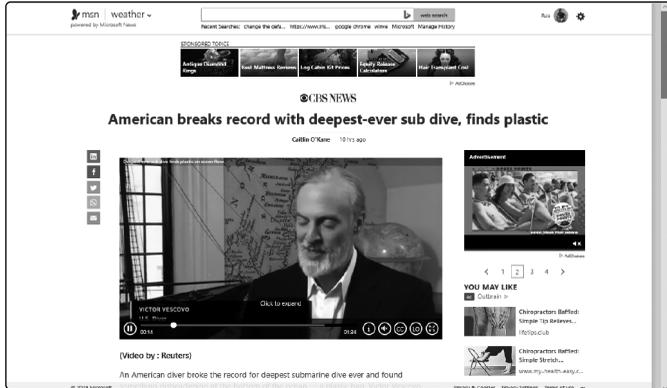


at the right-hand end of the address box. If it's shown in a solid black, rather than a pale grey, Reading View is available for this page, so click the button. Edge will switch

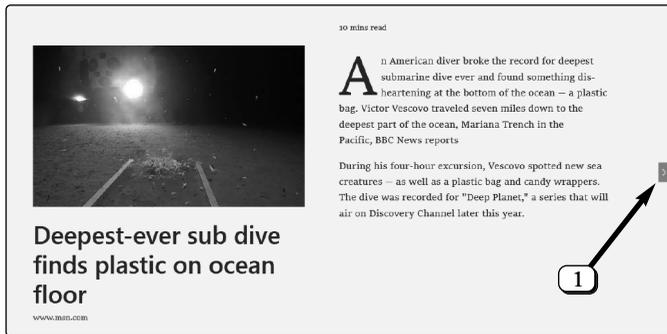
Switch to Reading View

from the usual view of the page (shown in the 'Before' picture below) to Reading View (shown in the 'After' picture).

Before



After



The text scrolls horizontally in Reading View: either click the little arrow-button at the middle-right (1) to advance through the pages or use the scroll-wheel on your mouse (or, on a tablet, swipe from right to left).

Adjust the text size and colours

A click on the page displays a toolbar that lets you change the text size and colour scheme of the page. When you've finished reading, you can return to normal view by clicking the same button in the address box again.

Pin Favourite Sites to Your Taskbar for Fast Access

If Microsoft Edge is your web browser of choice, you quite likely use it more often than any other single program on your PC. These days, an awful lot of what we do involves the Web, whether it's working with email, using social media, reading the news, managing finances or finding quick answers.

Because websites are increasingly taking the place of apps, Edge lets you treat a website like a program by pinning it to the taskbar. This way, just as you click a taskbar button to launch a program, you can click a taskbar button to open a favourite website.

It's simple to do. Just make your way to the web page you'd like to add to the taskbar, then open the 'Settings and more' menu (or press **(Alt) + (X)**) and choose **Pin this page to the taskbar**. With no further ado, an icon for this web page appears to the right of your existing taskbar buttons (although, as always, you can drag it to a different position).

To use this button, just click it. If Edge is already open when you do this, it will open your web page in a new tab; if not, Edge will start and take you to that page. If you change your mind and want to remove one of these buttons, right-click it and choose **Unpin from taskbar**.

Websites are as important as programs

Pin a web page to the taskbar

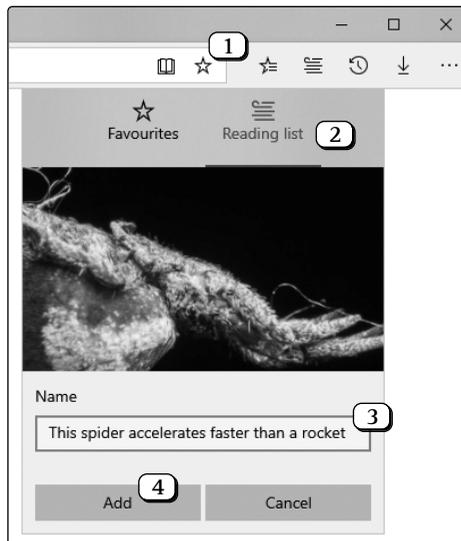
Reading List: Keep Pages to Read Later

Do you ever come across web pages that look interesting, but you don't have time to read them right now? If so, you'll like the Reading List feature. It keeps a list of those web pages for you to return to when you do have the time.

Save a web page to read later

Add the page to your Reading List

When you find a page you'd like to add to your Reading List, click the star-shaped button at the far-right of the address box (1) (or press **Ctrl** + **D**). The panel that appears offers the choice between adding this page to your Favourites or your Reading List: click on **Reading list** (2). If you choose, you can type a better name in the Name box (3) to help you recognise this article in the list. Finally, click **Add** (4) and you're done.



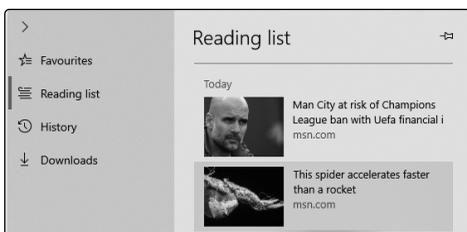
Open the Reading List

When you're ready to read one of these saved pages, start by opening the Reading List panel:

- If you've placed a Reading List button on your toolbar (explained on page 6), click it.
- If you haven't, click the Favourites button on the toolbar, then click **Reading list**.
- Perhaps even more simple than either of the above, just press **Ctrl** + **M**.

The panel lists all the pages you've added to the Reading List, most-recent first. Click a page to read it in the current tab, or right-click it and choose **Open in new tab**. When you've finished reading the article (and assuming you won't want to read it again), reopen the Reading List panel, right-click it and choose **Delete**.

Two options for a desktop PC



Another benefit of the Reading List is that it copies your list of articles to other Windows 10 devices (provided you sign into those devices using the same Microsoft account) and to Microsoft Edge on tablets and phones running Android or iOS (if you sign into Edge using the same Microsoft account). The result is that you can save articles on your main PC and find them in the Reading List on your portable device when you're on the move. To make sure your main PC is copying your Reading List to other devices, go to the 'Settings and more' menu, click Settings, scroll to the bottom and make sure the switch below **Sync your Microsoft Edge favourites...** is set to **On**.



Remove Unnecessary Clutter when Printing a Web Page

If you ever print a web page, it's because you want the text it contains, not the ads, sidebars, navigation buttons, reader comments at the bottom and so on.

Printing a web page?

And just as Edge can give you a clutter-free reading experience (as noted on page 9), it can do the same for your printed copy.

Remove unnecessary clutter from it

Press **Ctrl** + **P** to display the Print dialog and you'll see a preview of the page on the right and, above it, the number of printed pages it will cover. Now look through the settings at the left to find one headed **Clutter-free printing**: if you see it, change it to **On**. (If you don't see it, it's because Edge hasn't found any 'clutter' in the page to remove.)

Take another look at the preview and you'll see it's much-improved, and the number of pages has dropped by a third or even a half, saving you both ink and paper. Assuming you're happy with this decluttered view of the page, click **Print** to print it. If Edge seems to have removed something you wanted to include, you can switch this option back to **Off** before printing.

Quick Tips: Do More with Microsoft Edge

Useful timesaving tricks

In many cases it's the tiniest details that help to determine whether you like one web browser more than another, and Edge has numerous little features that help to make browsing quicker and easier. Here's a quick run through some of the most helpful.

Bring a new tab to the front immediately

Open a new tab and make it active: when you right-click a link and choose **Open in new tab** or hold **Ctrl** when clicking it, you do get a new tab, but you're still left looking at the current one. To open a new tab and switch to it immediately, hold the **Ctrl** + **Shift** keys when you click it.

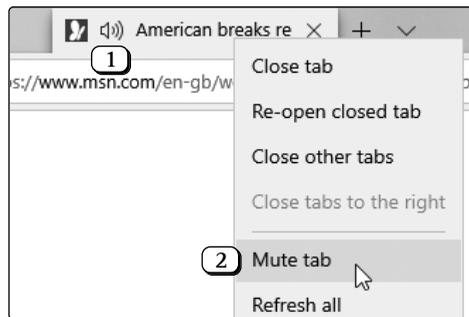
Avoid losing the page in the current tab

Open an address or search in a new tab: you've clicked in the address box and typed an address you want to visit – or perhaps a word or phrase you want to search for – and then

you realise you don't want to lose the web page in this tab. You could open a new tab, but then you'd have to start typing that address or search term again. Fortunately, you don't have to: rather than simply pressing **(Enter)**, press **(Alt) + (Enter)** and Edge will open the address (or search results) in a new tab, leaving the current page in place.

Reopen a tab you closed by accident: the quick way to open a new tab is to press **(Ctrl) + (T)**. And if you close a tab accidentally and want to get it back again, you can do it with a similar key combination: **(Ctrl) + (Shift) + (T)**. If you closed several tabs and you want them all back, press **(Ctrl) + (Shift) + (T)** repeatedly until all the tabs you wanted have reopened.

Silence a noisy tab: a common curse of the Web is a page that starts playing sounds as soon as you arrive, commonly from ads and videos. In Edge, no matter how many tabs you have open, you can quickly spot which one it is that contains the noisy web page by the little loudspeaker icon in the tab **(1)**. To shut it up, just right-click that tab and choose Mute tab **(2)**.



Switch tabs quickly from the keyboard: every tab you've opened in Edge is represented by a number. The leftmost tab is 1, the tab to its right is 2, and so on up to 8. To switch to a tab, press **(Ctrl) + number** (such as **(Ctrl) + (1)** to switch to the first tab). The last tab is number 9, regardless of how many tabs you have open, so you can always switch to that with **(Ctrl) + (9)**. Alternatively, press **(Ctrl) + (Tab)** repeatedly to move endlessly from tab to tab.

Recover a tab you've closed accidentally

Prevent tab from playing sound

A quick key-press to move between tabs

Double-click a word for a definition

Get quick definitions in Reading View: we all come across the occasional word we don't recognise. Provided you're in Reading View when it happens (explained on page 9), Edge can help. Just double-click a word to select it and a little definition pop-up will appear. After reading it, press **(Esc)** or click the page to close it.



The same option is also available for PDF documents you read in Edge, but you have to enable it. Open the 'Settings and more' menu and choose **Settings**, scroll down to **Show definitions inline** for and tick the box beside **PDF files**.

Make web pages fill your whole screen

Surf the Web full-screen: when you want to read an article, watch a video, or just see as much of a page as you can, switch to full-screen mode. Press F11 and the page will fill your entire screen, covering the Windows taskbar and hiding Edge's tab bar and toolbar. If you need to switch tabs or use the address box, just move your mouse towards the top of the screen and they'll reappear. Press F11 again to switch out of full-screen mode.

Give Edge a restful white-on-black look

Try Edge's dark theme: by default, you're using Microsoft Edge with its 'light theme', and there's an alternative – the 'dark theme'. To give it a try, open the 'Settings and more' menu, click on **Settings**, open the drop-down list headed **Choose a theme** and select **Dark**. The difference is comparatively minor (since web pages will still appear in the colours chosen by their designers), but Edge's own address box, tabs, toolbars and panels will become a less-glamorous white-on-black. Not keen? Repeat the same steps and choose **Light** again.