

MacTechnics Newsletter

October 21, 2023



I. Apple News

A. Apple's iPhone still a highpoint despite global smartphone market declines

The global smartphone market has dropped down to its lowest levels in a decade, but while Apple saw a year-on-year drop in iPhone volume, it didn't shrink as much as other major vendors.

B. 15-inch MacBook Air demand drops significantly, says Kuo

Ming-Chi Kuo says sales of the 15-inch MacBook Air will be 20% below expectations following a decline in demand after the Back to School season.

C. iPhone US market share sees small jump as Android still dominates

Although the iPhone is dominant in specific areas of the US smartphone market, it still trails behind Android in terms of overall usage.

D. Another leaker asserts an iPad update is coming Tuesday

E. New AirPods Pro 2 firmware has been released

Apple has released the second firmware update for its AirPods Pro 2 since the release of iOS 17, to improve the performance and stability of the wireless earbuds.

F. Apple focusing on foldable iPad for possible late 2024 launch

G. Updated 24-inch iMac expected in 2024, 32- inch iMac in 2025

Apple's next update to the 24-inch iMac will occur in 2024, a famed analyst forecasts, as well as offering the prospect of a 32-inch model one year later.

H. Apple continues its sweep to roll out USB-C to more devices

I. Apple's value plunged nearly \$1 trillion in 2022. Here's what that says about the economy.

The decline of a longstanding stalwart came amid unsettling economic trends.

II. Hardware

A.



Problem: Your cords and cables are out of control

It's not your fault. You just need a little cable management in your life. **Solution:** This sleek box hides a power strip and covers up all the cords for an instant, easy cleanup. If you look under your desk and see an octopus made of cords, do yourself a favor and get one.

UNDER \$20!

B.



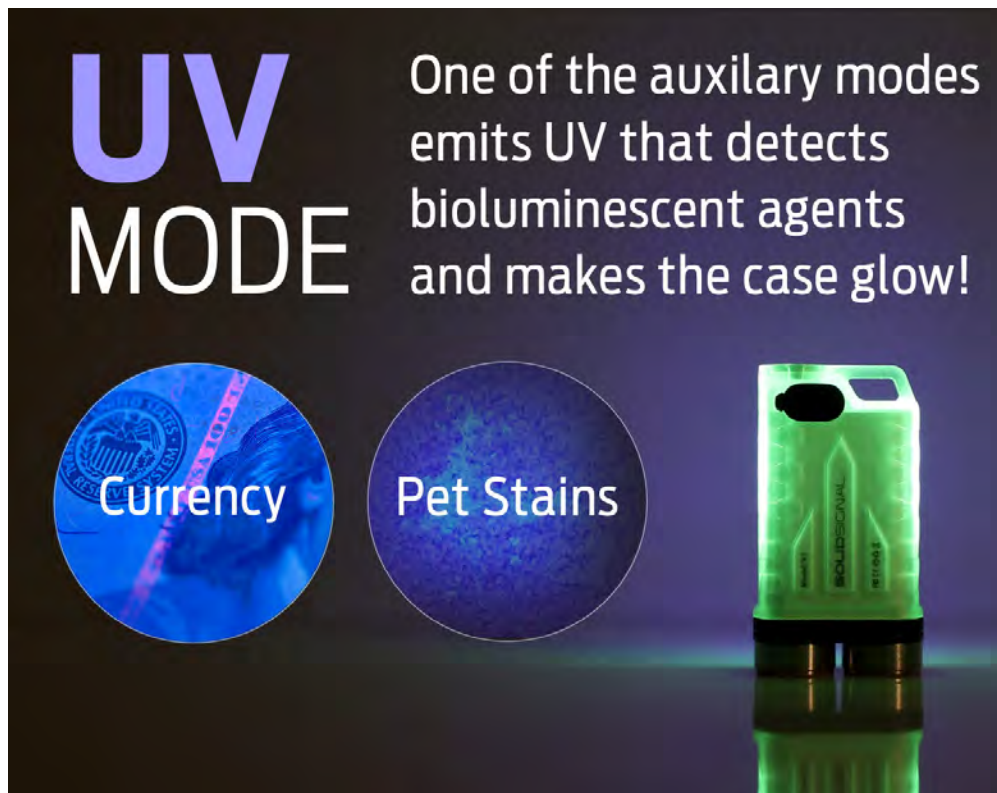
**900
LUMENS
ON A
KEYCHAIN**

Get the True Everyday Carry Light



MSRP \$39.99
45% OFF
\$21⁹⁹
+ FREE SHIPPING

VIEW DEAL



C. Save your work: Imagine you bought a fancy solid-state drive to store your most important files. Suddenly, the drive fails and everything is lost. Many of those who bought SSDs from Western Digital had that



exact experience. Their new lawsuit claims the company is selling devices *it knows are faulty* at a discount to clear its inventory. Talk about sleazy.

**D. Apple introduces
new Apple Pencil,
bringing more value
and choice to the
lineup**

**E. Apple's \$129
Thunderbolt cable detailed in**

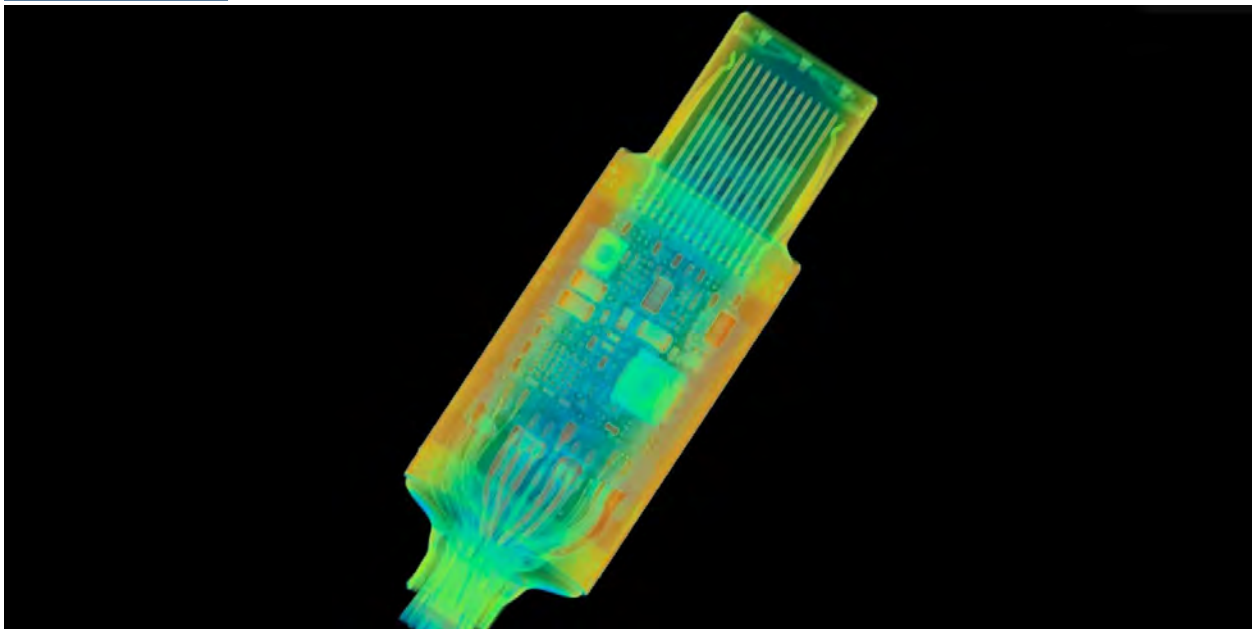
new CT images: ‘A stunning piece of precision engineering’



Chance Miller

12 hours ago

8 Comments



Apple’s “Thunderbolt 4 Pro” cable is regularly mocked for **its \$129 price point**, but there’s actually an impressive amount of technology packed inside. A **teardown last year offered** a closer look at what’s inside the cable, and new CT imagery from the **folks at Lumafield gives** us another look and some comparisons to **cheaper cables on the market**.

F.

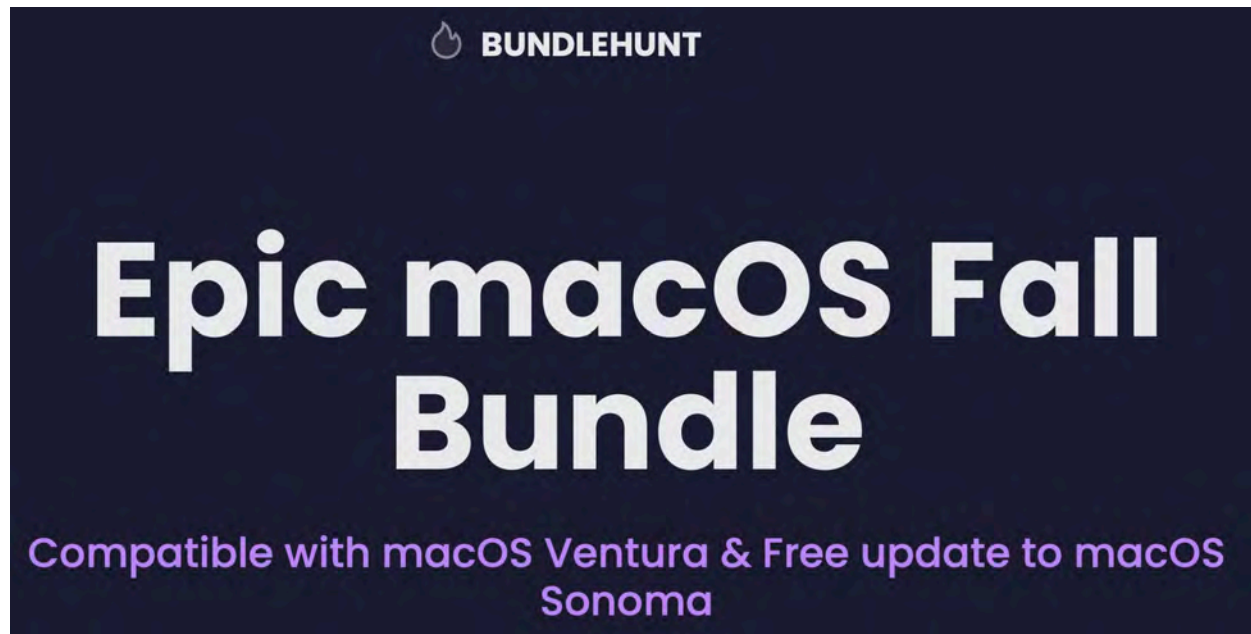
III. Software

A. Free PDF editing with Adobe

There are many options to edit PDFs without paying, and one is straight from Adobe. It's not as powerful as the paid version of Acrobat, but it works for signing, adding comments and inserting text. Select a file on your computer, create an account and edit away. At the end, download your file and you're on your merry way.

[Edit those PDFs](#) →

B.



BundleHunt's Fall 2023 Mac Bundle is still available!

Select from a list of 42 Mac apps (and add multiple license keys if you want) for as little as a \$1 each - unlock bundle now for only \$3

Fall into the newest Mac bundle from BundleHunt and savor big savings! For a limited time you can grab some great new apps and offerings at prices so low you can't afford to miss out.

There is no unlock fee, and you can get a \$3 discount if you add more than \$30 to your own unique bundle. There are 42 items to choose from, with apps priced as low as \$1. You can even add multiple licenses of an app to the bundle.

For example, you can create a bundle for a total of \$21.50 with 11 apps including TextSniper, VidJuice UniTube, Anamorphic Pro, MenuBar, LensFlare, GlueMotion, MacClean360, Integrity Pro, SpeakMe, Squeezer, and Sidetrax Royalty-free Music Bundle (normally, these apps would cost \$421.89 when bought individually!).

(If you've already grabbed some of these from earlier bundles, simply select other apps from the list of 42 to build out a bundle you don't already own; there are a lot of new apps in this bundle!)

- **INSTANT ACCESS:** Fully activated macOS software with instant downloads & license key access.

42 Premium macOS Software

- Mail Archiver X
- Commander One Pro
- Syncovery Professional Edition
- TextSniper
- Tidy Up 6
- DropShare
- Dictionaries - Lifetime License
- PDFMaster
- VidJuice UniTube
- PullTube
- Remote Buddy 2
- App Cleaner and Uninstaller
- Command-Tab Plus
- Network Radar

- MacX Video Converter Pro
- Anamorphic Pro
- WiFi Radar Pro
- MenuBar
- NXPowerLite Desktop
- Duplicate Finder
- Video Converter
- Duplicate File Finder Pro
- Quick Expose
- Scherlok- 1 year license
- Filmage Converter
- Clone Fighter
- Viper FTP- 1 Year License
- LensFlare
- MetaRename
- The Clock
- GlueMotion
- MacClean360
- MetaVideo
- Integrity Pro
- MacX MediaTrans
- Firetask Pro
- File Cabinet Pro
- PDF Image Xtractor
- SpeakMe
- Logo Pop

C. Listen up:

Today's top story is important for everyone who values privacy online. (I know, it's almost an oxymoron now.) **One of the best ways to keep your online activity private is by using a VPN.**

Check out [ExpressVPN](#) . A virtual private network, or VPN, is a great place to start. A VPN encrypts your data and hides your IP address, giving you an extra layer of protection from snoops, advertisers and Big Tech companies looking to profit off you.

Some VPNs slow your connection or, worse, track your internet activity and compromise your security. Not [ExpressVPN](#).

ExpressVPN's servers run on RAM, or volatile memory, that's cleared each time the server is reset — meaning they don't save your data. You can connect in just one click from a Windows PC, Mac, iPhone, Android, iPad, you name it. — *Kim*

Privacy? That'll cost ya

For years, rumors have swirled that Facebook will start charging users. Before, it was fiction. Now? Well, it's looking more like fact.

You can thank the latest European Union (EU) privacy regulations — and I *mean* that. These new regulations do a lot to protect the sensitive data of consumers like you and me.

But Meta (the company that owns Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp) wants privacy to come with some not-so-great fees. And it's not the only social media company trying to do it.

Facebook's \$14 threat

On one side, you've got the EU, which wants to protect people from targeted ads. As you know, social media companies (and others) track your online behavior. If you search for Victoria's Secret, you're gonna start seeing skimpy lingerie ads next to Grandma's cat memes.

On the other side, you have Meta, who uses that data to sell ad space to other brands or analyze users. Instead of agreeing to the new privacy requirements, they're putting up an ultimatum: Either EU users agree to personalized ads or pay \$14 per month to *not* be targeted by any ads.

The same goes for Instagram, of course. And you can bet Meta is considering similar ad-free price tiers for its other apps, especially if privacy laws continue to amp up.

And the survey says ... You'll pay for privacy

Why does Meta think it can get away with this? Why is X hiding two-factor authentication (where you get a code to confirm your identity) behind a paywall? Why does Facebook already charge influencers for verification? Because research says *privacy is a commodity*.

- 42% of U.S. consumers say they're OK with paying up to \$12 a month for total social media privacy.


- If you're older than 25, you're willing to pay the most for private social media, followed by the 35 to 44 age group.
- Our Android friends are more willing to pay more for social media privacy than our iPhone buddies.

The takeaway: There *is* a market for these subscriptions, and Meta is following what it thinks will make money. Fortunately, we've got options.

Don't Netflix my Facebook

This whole EU snafu shows just how close ad-based social media fees are. If that makes you grit your teeth, I've got some jaw-relaxing news: You can still cut down on tracking for free.

- **Change your ad settings:** Go to **Settings & privacy > Settings > Accounts Center > Ad Preferences**. Here, you get options to manage your recently seen ads, adjust your settings for advertisers Facebook shows you, manage ad topics and more.
- **Use a VPN:** One neat thing a VPN does is make it more difficult for providers and sites to track your activity online. The less they track, the less targeted your ads are, and there's nothing Meta can do about that. I use and recommend [ExpressVPN](#).*
- **Use a browser with ad blocking:** Brave, Firefox, Opera and others all have blocking options that can work if you browse Facebook on them.

 Don't worry! When Meta makes a move on this whole fees-for-freedom thing, I'll keep you updated and tell you what it's going to cost. In the meantime, it's a great time to learn [how to spot AI scam ads when browsing Facebook](#).

IV. Deals

A. Phone cases for the clumsiest among us

OtterBox is the go-to for cases that protect your phone from every drop, bump and crash. The downside: They're expensive. The

upside: **They're on sale for up to 46% off right now.** Hit the link below to check out options for iPhone and Android.

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT!

B. B&H Photo's \$1,900 off MacBook Pro is the deal of the week, plus other discounted computers

C. Daily deals Oct. 18: \$150 off Apple Watch Series 8, \$200 off 2023 M2 MacBook Pro, up to 40% off Samsung monitors, more

Today's hottest deals include 46% off a Volpam electric scooter, 43% off a Pelican Ranger Series iPhone 13 Pro Max Case, 10% off an AirTag 4-pack, \$1,000 off an 85" Sony Bravia TV, and more.

V. IOS Korner

A. Quick-wipe Google

searches: On Android, open Chrome, hit the three dots at the top, and choose History > Clear browsing data. Select Last 15 minutes. Sad news for iPhone Chrome users — you can only wipe your searches made in the last hour (or longer). In Chrome, hit the three dots on the bottom right, choose History > Clear Browsing Data > Time Range and select Last Hour.

B. One of iOS 17's best features:

Use StandBy Mode to turn your iPhone into an alarm clock. Go to Settings > StandBy. Put your iPhone on a charging stand (wireless or wired) and in landscape mode.

C. Wash your watch:

Ouch. A nurse posted a TikTok vid about a patient who got a staph infection from their dirty Apple Watch. She suggested people — especially those who exercise with a watch on — clean the band regularly with alcohol. Lazy option: If your watch is waterproof,

leave it on for your post-workout shower.

D. Apple made a massive change - Don't mess this up!



OK, honesty time: I bought the new iPhone 15 Pro Max. I opened up my fancy \$1,600 smartphone to realize ... it was the same as the iPhone 14 Pro Max I was already using.

The big (only?) change I can spot is the charging port on the bottom. After all these years, Apple is ditching its Lightning cable

for the one every other tech company uses for charging and data transfer: USB-C. Some new AirPods models are getting the same treatment.

The switch to a USB-C port spells a headache for the holidays. If you want to gift someone a new charger, how do you know their iPhone will work with it? What kind of AirPods are the “right” ones now? I’ll help make your list *and* check it twice.

👉 Psst, Android friends: I know, this tip is for the Apple folks, but I didn’t forget about you. [Check out these apps everyone with a Google account should be using.](#)

Don’t be a drain: Buy the right chargers!

While USB-C may be the sexy, new standard for the iPhone, everyone else has been using it for years, so your charging options abound.

With that said, I recommend sticking with Apple’s chargers or another very reliable brand when buying. This is also good to keep in mind if you plan to upgrade to an iPhone 15 soon. Yep, you’ll need a full charger refresh.

All iPhone 15 models (Plus, Pro, Pro Max, etc.)

- The new iPhone 15 [has a USB-C cable](#) but doesn’t come with a charger. If you’re buying additional iPhone 15 cables, they’ve got to be USB-C.
- It requires a USB-C charger with at least 20W for the best results. USB-C is smaller and rounder than USB-A, which is blockish.
- Qi-standard wireless chargers will work fine with the iPhone 15, no matter their connections.

- If you see a lightning-bolt icon, that represents Thunderbolt compatibility, a different kind of data standard that works with USB-C (and isn't super important in this case).

All iPhone 14 models and earlier

- All older iPhones require Lightning cables, which typically end in a USB connector [for a compatible USB-A or USB-C charger](#).
- Lightning cable connectors are smaller and thinner than USB-C, and they don't have any icons.
- Lightning cable connectors are easy to spot because they have clear pin markings on the outside of the connector.
- Only Apple makes legitimate Lightning cables and chargers — no other brands.
- Again, Qi-standard wireless chargers work fine for these phones as long as they support wireless charging.

The good news? USB-C has already come to iPad Pros, MacBooks and other devices, so it should be pretty familiar territory for your gift recipient.

Don't be that person ...

... who waits till Dec. 22 and ends up with lame gifts to put under the tree. I found a few sweet accessories for that Apple person in your life — even if that's you. Treat yourself!

- [This wireless 3-in-1 charging station](#) is sweet and works with iPhone 8 models all the way up to the new iPhone 15!
- Upgraded to the iPhone 15? [Fast chargers for the whole house](#).
- Have an iPhone 14 or older? [These braided cables](#) are a nice upgrade.

🍏 One more thing! [Hit the website](#) for details on AirPods and their new charging specs. Need more picks for your holiday gifting? [Drop me a note.](#)

E. Don't buy a new iPad now: If you've been thinking about buying an iPad, just wait a little longer. Rumor has it Apple's dropping new hardware in the basic iPad, the iPad Air and mini — and announcing it later this week. Not much else is expected to change, but you can bet the older models are going on sale.

F. iOS 17.1 contains fixes for iPhone 15 screen burn symptoms

G. Latest Apple Watch models may flicker in always-on mode — fix incoming

An internal service memo suggests Apple is aware of a display flickering issue on Apple Watch Series 9 and Apple Watch Ultra 2, which should be fixed via a future update.

H. How to make your Apple Watch fully charge in watchOS 10

In watchOS 10, your Apple Watch will pause charging at 80% to prolong the battery's lifespan. Here's how you can disable Optimized Charge Limit and charge your watch to full capacity when you need to.

I. Jeff Pu: iPhone 15 demand not looking promising; all iPhone 16 models to feature A18 chip

J.

VI. Tips & Tricks

A.  **Quick Wi-Fi tip:**

Where you put your router matters. It should be in a central location, close to where you need strong connections. Ideally, place it pretty high up, like on a shelf or mounted on the wall. If your router has antennas, point them in different directions. Enjoy your stronger signal!

B. Oh, no! Easy ways to save blurry pictures



Ever had one of those "oops" moments taking pictures? You know, when your hand wobbles and the photo is as elusive as a Bigfoot sighting. (Or, in my case, my dog, [Abby, doing something super cute.](#))

Before you rush to delete it, hang tight! I've got a few helpful tricks to fix blurry photos.

Step 1: Built-in tools

Here's the deal — most phones have a built-in "sharpness" feature. If you're looking for the quickest fix, this is probably it. You don't want to go overboard, but it works if your blurring is minimal.

For iPhone:

- Open the **Photos** app and select the blurry photo.
- Tap **Edit** in the top right corner.
- Scroll through the **Adjust** menu until you find **Sharpness**.

- Slide your finger left or right **on the bar** to make the photo sharper.
- When you're happy, tap **Done** in the bottom right corner.

For Android:

- Open the **Gallery** app and choose the blurry photo.
- Tap the **Edit** icon in the bottom row.
- Tap the **Brightness** icon and scroll until you find **Sharpness**.
- Slide your finger left or right **on the bar** to make the photo sharper.
- When you're happy, tap **Save** in the top right corner.

Note: These steps may vary based on your phone. Newer Android phones also may have an **Unblur** feature under **Gallery Tools**. Like the sharpness feature, simply adjust the slider to improve your image.

Step 2: Third-party apps

If your phone's built-in tools aren't quite cutting it, you can always give a third-party app a whirl. Here's how if you're using Picsart:

- Open the **Picsart** app and select the blurry photo.
- Tap **Retouch**, followed by **HD Portrait**.
- Use the **slider** to adjust the **Intensity** of your photo.
- When you're done, tap **Save**.
- When you're done, tap **Save**.



Quick heads-up: Most third-party photo apps come with a price tag. For Picsart, you're looking at \$4.99 monthly on [iPhone](#) and [Android](#). So, you've got to ask yourself how many blurry pictures you're snapping before that fee makes sense.

Free option: Upscale on the web

AI-powered upscalers are sprouting all over the internet. The challenge? Finding one that's both reliable and safe.

[DGB.LOL](#) is a site that caught my eye. Your uploads are for your eyes only, and they vanish from their server after 24 hours. It's also free. Here's how to use it:

- Send the blurry picture to your **computer**.
- Log into **DGB.LOL** and **create an account**.
- Click the **Menu** icon, then select **Image upscaler**.
- Drag and drop the blurry picture you want to fix.
- Choose the **upscale option**. (Tap **Detailed** for added sharpness.)
- Click **Upscale**.
- Go into the **My Files** tab to find your upscaled picture.

Note: There's usually a short queue when upscaling, so expect to wait a few minutes.

✓ Now you're armed and ready to fix your existing blurry pics. But what's the best solution for avoiding blurry photos in the first place? [Hit my site for five pro tips.](#)

C. Paint it black:

Instead of reformatting lots of cells in Excel, look for the paintbrush. It's the Format Painter tool and will copy the font, color, style and anything else you did to the next cell(s) you click. This works for formatting in Microsoft Word and Google Docs, too.

D. Is it malware?

There's a program on my desktop that I didn't install.

How do I remove it? — *A reader in Minnesota*

You're wise to be concerned if you see an unfamiliar icon on your desktop or the Start menu. It certainly could be malicious software.

Ask your family if you share the computer or if someone else uses it occasionally, just to be sure. If no one recognizes the program, [scan this list](#) for common signs you're dealing with malware or a hacker. This includes oddly slow performance, lots of pop-ups and extra data usage.

Even if it's not strictly malware, plenty of shady programs can clog up your computer and make it run poorly. You need to uninstall the software.

For Windows PCs:

- Click the **Start** button in your taskbar and scroll until you find the app you want to remove.
- **Right-click** on its icon, then choose **Uninstall**.
- Follow the on-screen instructions to finish up.

For Macs:

- Click the **Finder** icon in your dock — the blue icon that looks like a smiling face.
- Click **Applications** on the left-hand side of the window.

- Find the icon for the app you want to remove and drag it into your **Trash can**.
- Click on the **Trash can** in your dock, then **Empty**.

If you didn't install a program, or if you suspect something shady lurks behind the scenes, do an antivirus/anti-malware scan. My pick is [TotalAV](#).*

E. Phishing expedition:

Hackers are using LinkedIn Smart Links to steal Microsoft account credentials. Instead of someone getting past your email's defenses, they're taking the easy route and sending malicious links via DM. Only click links from people you know well.

F. Quick photo cleanup

Your **iPhone** has a “duplicate photos” folder where you can merge any doubles. It's so easy to use. Here's how:

- Open the **Photos app** and select **Albums**.
- Scroll down and select **Duplicates**. It's under **Utilities**.
- You can select all of them by hitting **Select > Select all > Merge**, or select individual photos and tap **Merge**.
- Confirm your choice and take back some storage space.

On Android, open the [Files by Google](#) app, then select **Clean**. If you don't have it, download it for free from the Google Play Store.

- Tap **Confirm and free up > See junk files** and select what you want to remove. When you're ready, tap **Clear > Clear**.

That's all it takes to remove screenshots, memes, duplicates and other junk hiding among the photos you care about.

G.

VII. Miscellaneous

A. An offer you can't refuse:

Prime Day, coupons and Lightning Deals are great, but [Amazon](#)

Warehouse can save you up to 70% year-round. Speaking of, coupons, they are only applied if you check the little box next to the offer. Miss that little box and it's your loss.

B. Free eBooks and audiobooks:

I love the **Libby app**. You can get a library card in the app and use it to borrow eBooks and audiobooks to your heart's content. Sure beats paying \$15 a pop online.

C. Look closely at your power strips and outlet extenders: If you spy any dark marks around one of the plugs, toss it. It's dangerous to use. [This heavy-duty option](#) with 12 outlets and three USB ports is perfect.

D. Is your car dangerous to drive?

There are tens of millions of recalled cars on the road. Last year alone, there were 932 recalls impacting over 30 million vehicles. Wild, right?

Sometimes, it's a part that's wearing out too quickly. In other instances, it's software that needs to be updated. And in some cases, it's a scary issue like a battery that can catch fire. If you own a car, keep reading.

What's yo' number?

The first step is to find your vehicle's 17-digit vehicle identification number. The VIN is found on most vehicles by standing outside the front windshield and peering down at the lower driver's side corner of the dashboard. Some cars also have it on an emblem on the driver-side door jamb.

If you can't find it, check your vehicle title or registration or look in your insurance documents. I keep a pic of mine on my phone, too.

Make sure they can reach you

That means keeping your registration up to date and ensuring your current address is on file. Yes, you may hear about a serious recall through a letter in the mail from the manufacturer.

There's a tool for that

Once you have your VIN, visit the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's recall lookup page](#). Enter your VIN to see the number and type of safety recalls that apply to your vehicle.

If your vehicle has a recall, call the nearest dealership. They're legally obligated to fix it for free. We love free.



A cowboy opens up a German car dealership. *Audi Partner!*
(Yeah, I know, I groaned, too.)

E. Pickleball sport helps improve health, say Apple researchers

An Apple Health study comparing tennis to the increasingly popular pickleball says that both sports are beneficial to the health of players of all ages.