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To help you get more out of your laptop and stay safe now in the go, we've selected 31 apps and services that are particularly laptop-friendly. These tools are useful for protecting your laptop, improving connectivity, managing files and media, and/or setting up a Windows laptop. And most are free. Let's start with the security boot. The TrueCrypt Volume Creation Wizard will help you create encrypted volumes on disk. TrueCrypt (free): This open source program allows you to create encrypted volumes on disk or encrypt the entire disk. This is a particularly important app for laptop users: If your laptop is ever lost or stolen, you can rest easier knowing that at least your sensitive data is protected. Prey (free): Speaking of theft, the open source Prey app can help you find and recover a stolen laptop (or smartphone). With prey, you can remotely turn on the features of the missing device that can help you find it. HTTPS Everywhere (free): This free extension for Firefox can help protect you from the Firesheep vulnerability - a significant threat to anyone who uses public Wi-Fi.Hotspot Shield (free of charge): An ad-supported app, Hotspot Shield claims to encrypt all your data when you use a publicly available access point. However, pay attention to installing the program to avoid installing unwanted toolbars at the same time. Shield Exchange (free for 100MB; \$12/year for 50GB; \$20/year for 100GB; \$50/year for 500GB): If you don't care about Hotspot Shield advertising or if you have service issues, try this service for food for OpenVPN. Exchange Shield encrypts your data when you use a Wi-Fi network, and it blocks harmful content. LogMeIn Hamachi2 (free): If you want to set up your own VPN, you can use hamachi's free desktop app and connect safely to it from your laptop wherever you have internet access. Comodo Firewall offers free protection against external security threats. Comodo Firewall (free): When you have on-there access to strange networks, it's a good idea to have a reliable firewall like Comodo-in-place. And if you don't already have an antivirus program, you can choose Comodo Internet Security, which combines firewall and antivirus protection. Comodo offers two versions of standalone firewalls and firewall/antivirus combos: Comodo Firewall 32-bit and Comodo Firewall 64-bit; and Comodo Internet Security 32-bit and Comodo Internet Security 64-bit. Gum (free): This app securely deletes your files. It's a handy utility to have at hand when you discard, recycle or donate your laptop, or when you just want to make sure your data on any PC is gone forever. PdaNet (free; \$24 for full version): PdaNet lets you use your Android smartphone another smartphone as a modem (snapping it) so you can access the internet on your laptop. Connectify turns your laptop into a Wi-Fi hotspot that other devices can use to access the Internet. Connectify (free): Transform transform to convert a laptop or Android phone to a Wi-Fi hotspot that allows other devices to use an ethernet connection only in a hotel (or other location). LogMeIn (free): The free version of LogMeIn allows you to remotely access a Windows home or office computer through a web browser. Dropbox (free up to 2GB): Store files in the cloud with Dropbox Basic and automatically sync them between all your devices. SugarSync (free up to 5GB): This service works the same way as Dropbox. You can use SugarSync in conjunction with Dropbox for extra free space. The Windows Live Grid ensures that folders are synced on all computers (both Windows and Mac). Windows Live Mesh (free; 5 GB offered on SkyDrive): Another Windows Live Mesh sync app can run directly between PCs and Macs, not in addition to Microsoft SkyDrive cloud storage. With Live Mesh, you can also remotely control your computer. Free Download Manager (free): Free Download Manager speeds up downloads and can resume paused downloads (useful when you have a limited amount of internet access time). Virtual CloneDrive (free): Virtual CloneDrive allows you to access CDs or DVDs as files on your hard drive - just as if you downloaded the disc to disk. This location eliminates the need to carry optical disks. Youtube Downloader HD stores YouTube videos at standard resolution and full resolution so you can watch them at any time, even without an Internet connection. Youtube HD uploader (free): Save YouTube videos, including high definition versions, to your laptop using YoutubeDownloader HD so you can watch them offline while traveling. Orb (free): Stream music, photos or video collections from home PC to laptop with Orb (or use your cell phone if you buy a \$10 version of the app). Xmarks stores your bookmarks on all your computers and allows you to create synced profiles for special sites. Xmarks (free): With Xmarks, you can sync your bookmarks and optionally have your passwords and open tabs on all your computers, repeating your browsing experience in stride. Read later (free): Use Read It Later to save web pages from your computer or phone to read later or offline (on your route or in flight, for example, or sometimes when you don't have an Internet connection). Splashing remote touchpad (iPhone/iPod Touch; free): Splashtop's remote turns the iPhone or iPod Touch into a wireless touchpad (with multitouch support) and a keyboard for your computer. Treat this as makeshift mouse or use it to control your laptop's media player, web apps, and other features from afar. Remote Droid (Android; free): The Remote Droid app turns your Android phone into a wireless keyboard and mouse for your laptop. The powerpoint remote turns your Android phone into a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi remote for PowerPoint presentations. The remote control for (Android; free): Use the PowerPoint remote control to remotely control PowerPoint presentations on your laptop (such as when connected to a projector) from your Android phone. MyPoint PowerPoint Remote (iPhone/iPod touch; free): Use an iOS device to manage PowerPoint presentations on your laptop using myPoint PowerPoint Remote Actual.Multiple Monitors to customize settings with multiple monitors, including configuring backgrounds for each monitor. Actual multiple monitors (\$30 after 30-day trial): Connecting your laptop to an external monitor can really improve performance. The actual multiple monitors help you control multiple screens. Multiplication (\$30 after 15-day trial): This app creates a setting equivalent to dual monitors. Multiplication allows you to control multiple PCs with one keyboard and mouse so you can easily move files from your laptop to another PC. BattCursor (free): BattCursor visibly displays your laptop's battery life under the cursor; it's customizable as well as being an easy download. Battery Care measures various key variables of the lithium-ion battery and tells you when to calibrate the battery. BatteryCare (free of charge): Help optimize your laptop's lithium-ion battery by relying on BatteryCare to let you know when to calibration the battery (instructions provided). The software also provides detailed statistics of the battery, covering parameters such as temperature, current capacity and wear. IObit Toolbox (free): IObit Toolbox provides more than 20 tools to diagnose and fix PC problems anytime/anywhere. If you're traveling with a laptop and don't have access to technical support and (or if you just want a handy diagnostic tool kit to take on road trips), this collection is perfect. Other important programs, such as antivirus and backup utilities, are suitable for both desktop and laptop users, but those on this list stand out to laptop users, in particular. For more utilities and the most popular downloads see the 112 best free downloads, sites and services. And if you have a favorite service, app or utility that I didn't mention, let me know about it in Comments.Follow Melanie Pinola (@melaniepinola) and Today@PCWorld on Twitter. Note: When you buy something after clicking a link in our articles, we can earn a small fee. Read our affiliate link policy for more details. The iPad comes with a few useful apps already installed on it, but to make your iPad really yours, you need to personalize it with apps you regularly use. The iPad App Store is filled with free and paid apps that can be downloaded to your iPad. Although the instructions in this article specifically for iPads running iOS 11, iOS 12, iPadOS 13 and later back, the App Store is available on every iPad model. To start the App Store on your iPad, go to the Home screen and tap the App Store icon. The App Store opens on the Today screen, which displays a curated selection of popular and popular apps. The content of the Today screen is changing Scroll down to see which apps Apple offers. Typically, this screen has an app of the day, a game of the day, and several collections of related apps. At the bottom of the Today screen (and other App Store screens) there are five icons: Today, Games, Apps, Updates and Search. Tap one of them to go to this section of the App Store. If you're interested in gaming on your iPad, select the Games icon at the bottom of the screen to go to the App Store Games section. Scroll through the Games screen to see the most popular games of the week, games recommended by curators, gaming categories, a list of the top 30 free games and top 30 paid games and other game collections. Each game has either the GET button next to it, indicating that it is a free app (free apps can contain additional in-app purchases) or a price for the app. If you see an app that interests you, tap the app to open the info screen. For example, to learn more about Marvel Strike Force, tap it. On the information page, read the developer's reviews and notes and look at the graph from the app. This can help you decide whether you want to download it. If you're not interested in the app, go to the upper-left corner and tap the game to return to the Games screen and find another app. To download an app, tap Get (or price in a paid game) to open the download screen. The screen describes the app and lists the name of your Apple account. Tap Set or price to start downloading, and, in the case of paid apps, bill your Apple account. In most cases, the download time is only seconds, but the larger the file, the longer it will take. The app installs on the iPad. Find its icon on the home screen. To open an app, tap it. The App Store has more games. To find more apps in all categories, go to the bottom of the screen and tap Apps. The process of selecting and downloading an app from any category is the same as downloading a game app. As with the Games screen, you'll see the most popular apps for the week, the most popular apps for sale, the most popular free and most popular paid apps, editor selection and other categories. If you know the name of the app you're looking for, perhaps because a friend recommended it or you've read a review online, don't scroll through apps to find it. Instead, scroll to the bottom of the screen, tap Search, and then type an app name in the search box. Tap Search again, and you'll see an info screen for that app. It doesn't take long to fill the screen with apps. The iPad adds more screens when you download more apps than can fit on the original home screen. To switch between app screens, swipe left or right on the iPad screen. You can also move apps one screen to the next and create custom folders to hold apps. Learn more about moving apps and organizing your iPad. If you want to learn how to navigate your iPad, find the best apps, and uninstall apps you no longer want, check out the iPad 101 lesson guide. Guide. Guide.