



**ASUS Chromebook**

In this chapter, you will learn what you need to do to start using your new Chromebook.

- Unboxing Your Chromebook
- Turning On Your Chromebook—For the Very First Time
- Creating a New Google Account

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## Unboxing and Setting Up Your New Chromebook

Setting up a new Windows or Mac computer can be a daunting process. There are all sorts of questions to answer and configurations to make. It's typically a process that takes a half hour or more, and no one likes doing it.

Setting up a new Chromebook is different. The unboxing and setup process typically takes less than 15 minutes, and there's really not much to it. Read on to learn what you need to do.

## Unboxing Your Chromebook

A typical Chromebook is a simple affair. Even the box itself is simple, small, and lightweight and, believe it or not, easy to open.

What do you find when you open the box? Here's what most manufacturers pack inside:

- The Chromebook itself, wrapped for protection
- AC adapter and power cable
- Instruction manual and quick start guide

That's it. Obviously, there are no software or operating system disks because all of that is handled over the Internet. (And, as an added bonus, a Chromebook does not come with trial software versions or "crapware" preinstalled; you get a very clean desktop on first boot up.)

## Turning On Your Chromebook—For the Very First Time

Google claims that it takes less than a minute to set up a new Chromebook. The actual setup time is a bit longer than that, but only because the Chromebook goes online to download the latest version of the Chrome OS. That pushes the setup time to 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the speed of your Internet connection. Still, it's a relatively fast and painless process, as you'll see.

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### Charging the Battery

Out of the box, it's likely that your Chromebook's battery is not fully charged. For that reason, you need to plug it in to an external power source during initial setup, and then leave your Chromebook plugged in for several hours to charge the battery.

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## Set Up a Chromebook

Before you use your new Chromebook, you need to unbox it, plug it in, and set it up.

### Google Account

Setup is easiest if you have a working Google Account before you first set up your new Chromebook. Although you can create a new Google Account during the setup process, it goes a lot faster if you can just enter your Google Account username and password. You can create a (free) Google Account from any web browser on any computer; just go to [accounts.google.com](https://accounts.google.com) and follow the onscreen instructions.

1. Remove the Chromebook from its box.
2. Connect the AC adapter to the power cable.
3. Connect the AC adapter to the power connector on the back or side of the Chromebook.
4. Plug the power cable into a working power outlet.



5. Open the Chromebook.
6. Press the Power button.
7. When the Welcome window appears, select your language from the list.
8. Select your keyboard from the list (typically US Keyboard).
9. Select your (wireless) network from the list.

## Wireless Connections

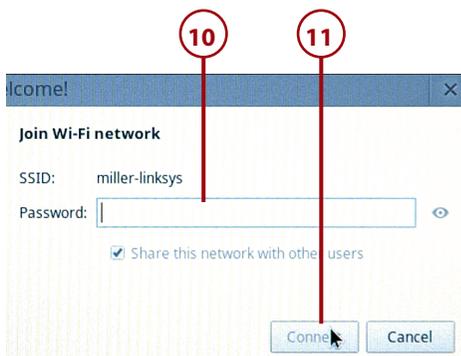
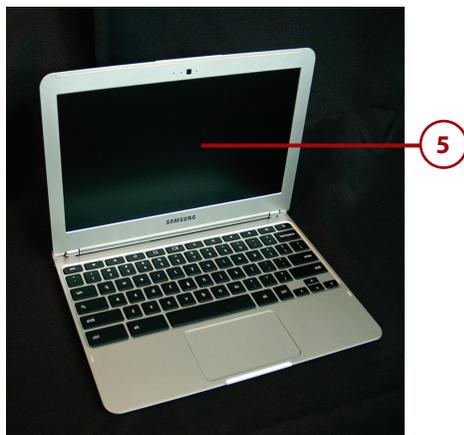
Learn more about managing Wi-Fi connections in Chapter 5, "Working Wirelessly."

10. When the Join Wi-Fi Network window appears, enter your network password.

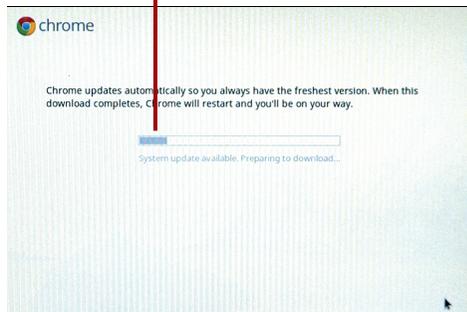
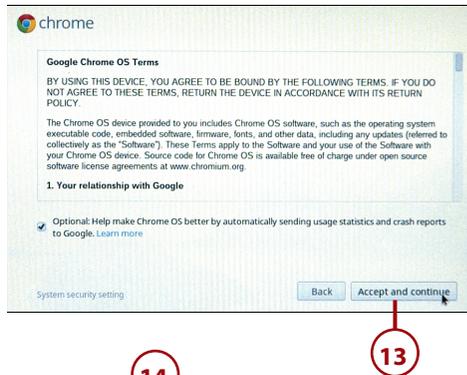
## Secure Networks

Most home wireless networks are secure networks, which means you need to supply the appropriate password to access them. In contrast, many public wireless networks are open networks, which means no password is necessary to gain access.

11. Click the Connect button to return to the Welcome window.



12. Click the Continue button.
13. Read the Chrome OS Terms and then click the Accept and Continue button.
14. Chrome now checks for operating system updates. This may take several minutes. When the update is complete, your Chromebook will restart. After restarting, your Chromebook displays the Sign In window.



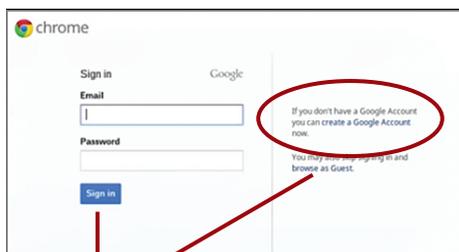
15. If you already have a Google Account, enter your email address and password; then click the Sign In button. If you do not yet have a Google Account, go to the next section in this chapter, “Creating a New Google Account.” To use your computer as a guest without signing in, click the Browse as Guest link.
16. When prompted, choose a picture to display for your account on the sign-in screen and then click OK.

## Change Your Picture

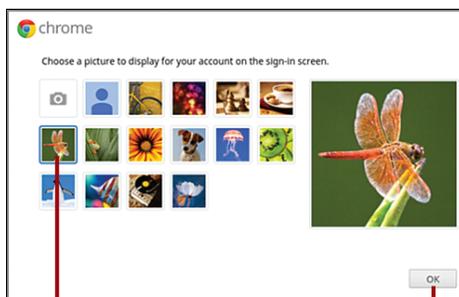
You can change your account picture at any later date. Learn how in Chapter 4, “Managing Multiple Users.”

17. Google Chrome launches and displays the Howdy screen. Click the Take a Tour button to view a short walkthrough of your new Chromebook’s most important features.
18. Click the X at the top-right corner to close this window.

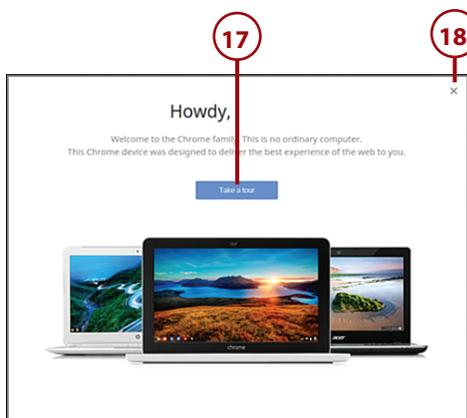
You only need to set up your Chromebook once. After you’ve completed this initial setup, you go directly to the login screen each time you start it up.



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>>> *Go Further*

## CONNECTING A CHROMEBOX

In addition to Chromebooks, there are also Chromeboxes—desktop computers running the Chrome OS. If you're the proud owner of a Chromebox, you not only have to deal with the initial setup (the same as with a Chromebook), but also with connecting the Chromebox to your living room TV or home theater system. Fortunately, it's not that difficult.

The ASUS Chromebox comes with two different types of video connectors on the back of the unit—HDMI and DisplayPort. Which connector you use depends on what type of connector you have on the back of your TV.



To connect the Chromebox to a normal computer monitor, connect an adapter cable from the DisplayPort port to your monitor's DVI input. To connect the Chromebox to your living room TV, use an HDMI cable and the Chromebox's HDMI port.

Naturally, you'll also need to connect your Chromebox to your home network to connect to the Internet. The Chromebox has built-in Wi-Fi if you want to connect wirelessly, or you can connect via Ethernet using the Chromebox's back-panel Ethernet connector.

You'll also need to connect a keyboard and mouse to use the Chromebox. You can connect any wired keyboard and mouse via USB, or go with wireless units if you like. If you're connecting wirelessly, connect the input device's mini-receiver to one of the Chromebox's USB connectors and you're ready to go.

# Creating a New Google Account

You must have a Google Account to use your Chromebook. Your Google Account serves as your user account in Chrome OS.

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## Guest Account

Although you can use a Chromebook with a guest account, this type of access has limited functionality. Learn more about guest accounts in Chapter 4.

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## Create a Google Account

A Google Account is completely free, and is necessary not just for using your Chromebook, but also for accessing any Google application, such as Gmail or Google Docs. It's easiest to create your Google Account before you first set up your Chromebook, although you can also create a new account during the Chromebook setup process.

1. Turn on your Chromebook, proceed to the sign-in screen, and click the Create a Google Account link.



- The Chrome browser now connects to the Web and displays the Create Your Google Account page. Enter your first and last name into the Name boxes.
- Enter the name you'd like to use as a login into the Choose Your Username box.

## Availability

If someone else is already using your chosen username, Google prompts you to try another name.

- Enter your desired password (minimum of eight characters) into the Create a Password box; then reenter it into the Confirm Your Password box.
- Use the Birthday controls to enter the month, day, and year you were born.
- Pull down the Gender list and select Female, Male, or Other.
- Enter your mobile phone number into the Mobile Phone box. (This is optional.)
- Enter an existing email address into the Your Current Email Address box. (This is optional.)
- In the Prove You're Not a Robot section, enter the verification text into the Type the Text box.
- Pull down the Location list and select your current country.
- Check to agree to Google's Terms of Service and Privacy Policy.
- Click the Next Step button.

**Name**

First  Last

**Choose your username**

@gmail.com

**Create a password**

**Confirm your password**

**Birthday**

Month  Day  Year

**Gender**

I am...

**Mobile phone**

**Your current email address**

**Prove you're not a robot**

Skip this verification (phone verification may be required)

Type the text:

**Location**

United States

I agree to the [Google Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Next step

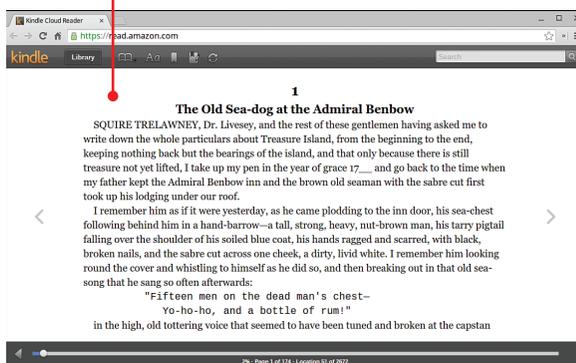
13. Add a profile photo if you want. (This is optional.) To add your photo, click the Add a Photo link and select the photo to use.
14. You also have the opportunity to create a Google+ account. (Google+ is Google's Facebook-like social network.) If you want to do this, click Create Your Profile and follow the onscreen instructions. If not, click the No Thanks button.
15. You've now created your account, and Google displays your new Gmail address. Click the Continue to Gmail button to set up your Gmail account, or close the window to continue using your Chromebook.

You will need to log out of the guest account to log back on with your new Google Account.





## Reading an eBook with the Kindle Cloud Reader



In this chapter, you learn how to read your favorite electronic books on your Chromebook.

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- Purchasing and Reading eBooks with Amazon's Kindle Cloud Reader
- Purchasing and Reading eBooks with Google Play Books
- Reading ePub eBooks with Radium
- Reading PDF Files in Chrome

# 21

## Reading eBooks

If you're an avid book reader, you're probably aware that most of your favorite books are available in electronic format, or what we call eBooks. You can read eBooks on dedicated eBook reader devices, such as Amazon's Kindle, or on your smartphone or tablet.

You can also read eBooks on your Chromebook—which is a great way to pass the time when you're out and about.

## Purchasing and Reading eBooks with Amazon's Kindle Cloud Reader

First, a bit of background about eBooks. eBooks are digital versions of print books, optimized for reading on portable devices. Two major eBook formats are in use today: Amazon's Kindle format and the nonproprietary ePub format. These formats are incompatible, so you'll need different apps to read books in both formats.

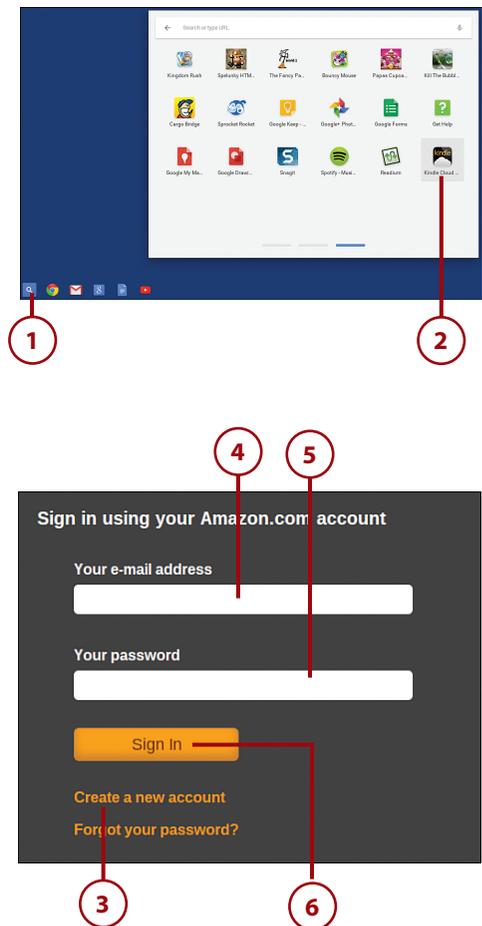
Currently, the most popular seller of eBooks is Amazon, the online bookseller. Amazon sells both traditional printed books and electronic books in their own proprietary format. You can read Amazon's eBooks on Amazon's Kindle eBook reader devices or on any web-connected device (including your Chromebook) with Amazon's Kindle Cloud Reader service.

## Sign In to Kindle Cloud Reader

The easiest way to use Kindle Cloud Reader on your Chromebook is by first installing the (free) Kindle Cloud Reader app. Then it's a simple matter of launching the app to open Kindle Cloud Reader in the Chrome browser.

The first time you use Kindle Cloud Reader, you need to sign in to your Amazon.com account or create an account if you don't already have one.

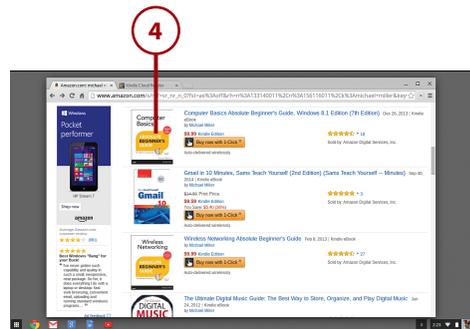
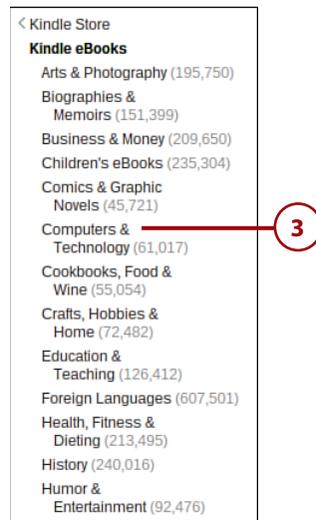
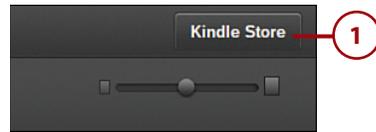
1. Open the Apps panel.
2. Click the Kindle Cloud Reader icon.
3. The Chrome browser opens, with the Kindle Cloud Reader sign-in page displayed. If you don't yet have an Amazon account, click Create a New Account and follow the onscreen instructions.
4. If you already have an Amazon account, enter your email address into the Your E-Mail Address box.
5. Enter your Amazon.com account password into the Your Password box.
6. Click Sign In.



## Purchase eBooks from the Kindle Store

The main page of the Kindle Cloud Reader displays eBooks you've previously purchased and downloaded from Amazon. You can also purchase new books for reading on your Chromebook and other devices.

1. From the Kindle Cloud Reader main page, click Kindle Store. This takes you to Amazon's Kindle Store website.
2. To search for a specific book, enter that book's title or author into the top-of-screen search box and then press Enter.
3. To browse books by category, scroll down the page and click a category in the left-hand navigation column.
4. Click the title of the book you want to purchase; this displays the book's Amazon page.



## Free Samples

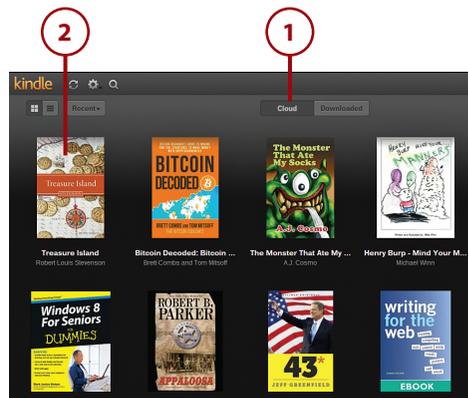
Amazon offers free samples for many of the eBooks it sells. Look for the Try It Free box and then click the Send Sample Now button.

5. Pull down the Deliver To list and select *Your Kindle Cloud Reader*.
6. Click Buy Now with 1-Click. The book is now purchased and delivered electronically to your account.

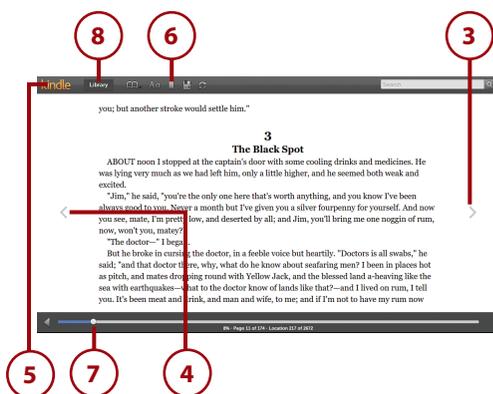
## Read an eBook with Kindle Cloud Reader

All the eBooks you purchase from Amazon are automatically stored online, in what Amazon calls the *cloud*. You use the Kindle Cloud Reader to open any book you've purchased and read over the Internet.

1. From the Kindle Cloud Reader, make sure that Cloud is selected.
2. Click a book cover to begin reading that book.



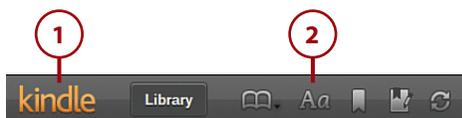
3. To turn the page, press the right-arrow key on your keyboard or click the right side of the screen with your mouse.
4. To return to the previous page, press the left-arrow key on your keyboard or click the left side of the screen with your mouse.
5. To display options bars at the top and bottom of the screen, mouse over any part of the current page.
6. To bookmark the current page for future reference, click the Book-mark icon in the top options bar.
7. To jump to another location in the book, click and drag the slider in the bottom options bar.
8. To return to your eBook library, click the Library button in the top options bar.



## Change How a Book Is Displayed Onscreen in Kindle Cloud Reader

One of the nice things about eBooks is that you can easily change how the text is displayed onscreen. With Kindle Cloud Reader, you can make the text larger or smaller, change the page margins, and even change the color of the text and the page background.

1. From within the book, mouse over the page to display the options bars.
2. Click View Settings in the top options bar to display the View Settings pane.



3. To make the text larger or smaller for easier reading, click a different option in the Font Size section.
4. To change the white space on the sides of the screen, click a different option in the Margins section.
5. To change the way the text appears onscreen, make a different selection in the Color Mode section. You can select from White (black text on a white background), Sepia (dark brown text on a sepia background), or Black (white text on a black background).
6. To force the book to display only a single column at a time, go to the One Column Only section and click On.
7. Click Apply Settings when done.



## Purchasing and Reading eBooks with Google Play Books

Amazon's Kindle format is one of the two major eBook formats, and it's proprietary. That is, you can only read Kindle books on a Kindle eBook reader device or via the Kindle app.

The other major eBook format is called ePub, and it's more universal. Although you can't read ePub books in the Kindle app, you can read them in other eBook apps, and on other eBook reader devices.

You can also purchase ePub-format eBooks from a number of online sources, one of which is the Google Play store. The books you purchase from Google Play are readable with Google's Play Books app.

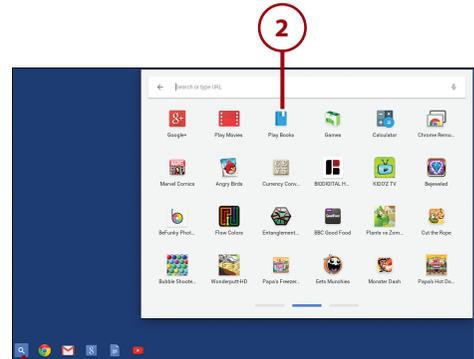
## Play Books

The Play Books app should be installed as part of Chrome OS. If it isn't, you can download it for free from Google's Web Store.

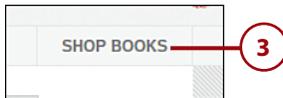
## Purchase eBooks from the Google Play Store

The main screen of the Play Books app displays eBooks you've previously purchased and downloaded from the Google Play Store. You can also purchase new books for reading on your Chromebook and other devices.

1. Open the Apps panel.
2. Click the Play Books icon to open the Play Books app in the Chrome browser.
3. All the books you've previously purchased are listed on the My Books Bookshelf page. To shop for new books, click the Shop Books button.
4. To search for a specific book or author, enter the book's title or author name into the search box and then press Enter.
5. To browse books by genre, click the Genres button and then click a specific genre.

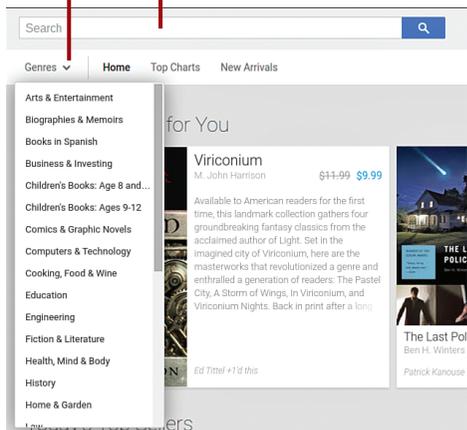


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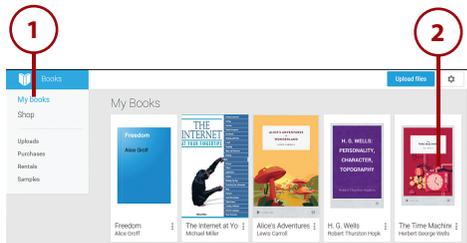
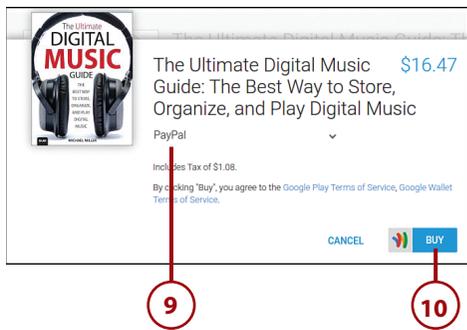
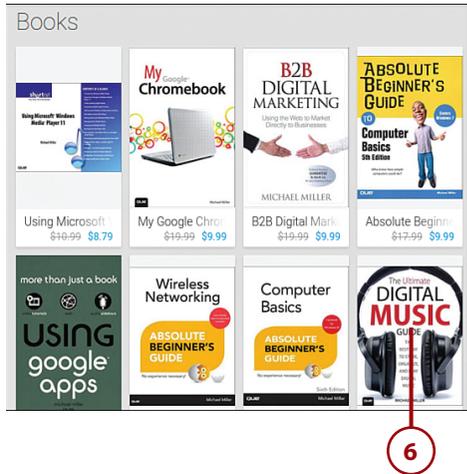


6. Click the cover of the book you want to purchase.
7. Many books offer free samples. To download a sample, click the Free Sample button.
8. To purchase a book, click the Buy button.
9. When the confirmation box appears, select your method of payment.
10. Click the Buy button. The book is now added to your Play Books library.

## Read an eBook with Google Play Books

The books you purchase from the Google Play store can be read from the Play Books app in the Chrome browser.

1. Launch the Play Books app and make sure that My Books is selected.
2. Click the book you want to read.

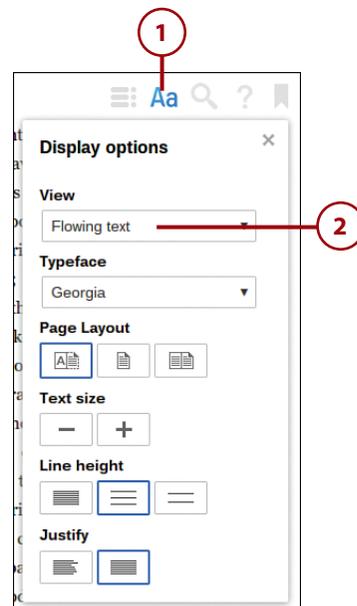
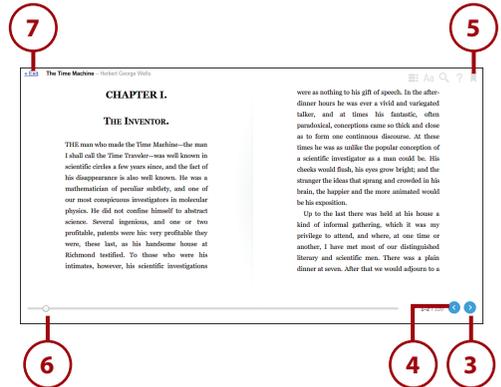


- To turn to the next page, press the right-arrow key on your keyboard or click the right-arrow icon at the bottom-right corner of the screen.
- To return to the previous page, press the left-arrow key on your keyboard or click the left-arrow icon at the bottom.
- To bookmark the current page for future reference, click the Bookmark icon at the top of the screen.
- To jump to another location in the book, click and drag the slider at the bottom of the screen.
- To return to your Play Books library, click the Exit link in the top-left corner of the screen.

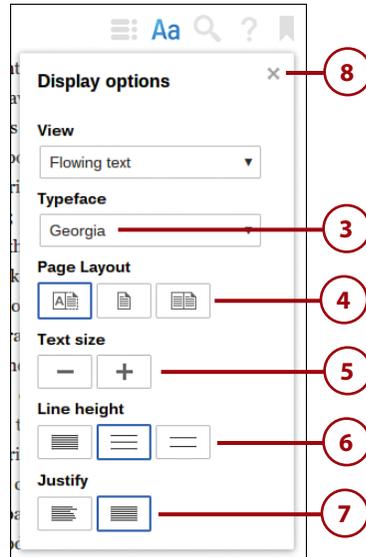
## Change How a Book Is Displayed Onscreen in Google Play Books

As with the Kindle Cloud Reader, you can easily personalize your reading experience in the Play Books app.

- From within the book, click the Display Options icon at the top of the screen. This displays the Display Options panel.
- Some books are available with the choice of flowing text or scanned pages. To change the display, click the View control and make a selection.



3. To change the typeface used to display the book text, click the Typeface control and make a selection.
4. To change the number of pages displayed onscreen at a time, go to the Page Layout section and make a selection.
5. To make the text larger or smaller for easier reading, go to the Text Size section and click either the – or + button.
6. To change the line spacing, go to the Line Height section and make a selection.
7. To change the text justification (left aligned or justified), go to the Justify section and make a selection.
8. Click the X to close the panel.



## Reading ePub eBooks with Radium

You can download ePub-format eBooks from a number of online stores and libraries. To read these books, you need an e-reader app that's compatible with the ePub format.

One of the most popular ePub apps for Chrome is Radium. It installs as a Chrome browser extension; you can then use it to open and read ePub files stored on your Chromebook, on an attached storage device, or stored online in Google Drive.

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### Finding ePub Books

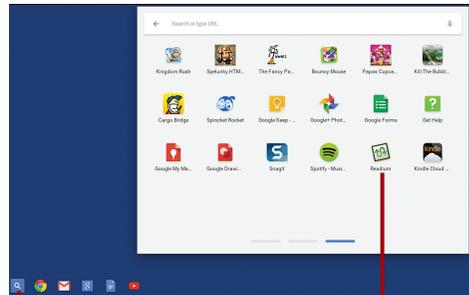
eBooks in ePub format are available from numerous sources. The eBooks sold by Barnes and Noble online are in ePub format, as are most eBooks sold by other non-Amazon retailers. (And, remember, the Google Play store sells books in ePub format.) It's likely that your local library offers eBooks in ePub format, as well.

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## Add Books to the Radium Library

To use Radium, you first have to install the Radium extension. Just go to the Chrome Web Store, click Extensions, and search for Radium; it's free. You can then add any ePub-format eBooks you have to the Radium library.

1. Open the Apps panel.
2. Click the Radium icon to open the Radium Library page in the Chrome browser.
3. Click Add to Library (+) in the top toolbar.
4. When the Add to Library panel appears, click the Choose File button in the From Local File section.
5. This opens Chrome's Files app. Navigate to and select the ePub file you want.
6. Click the Open button. This book is now added to the Radium library.

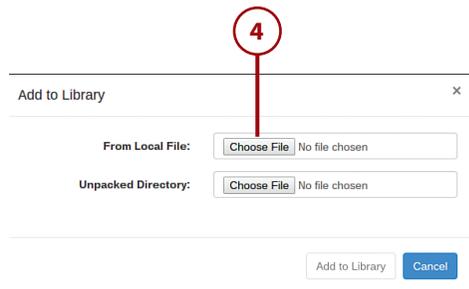


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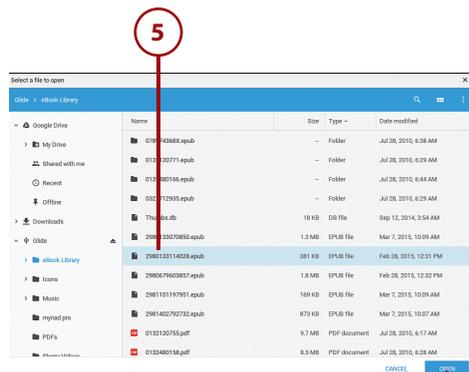
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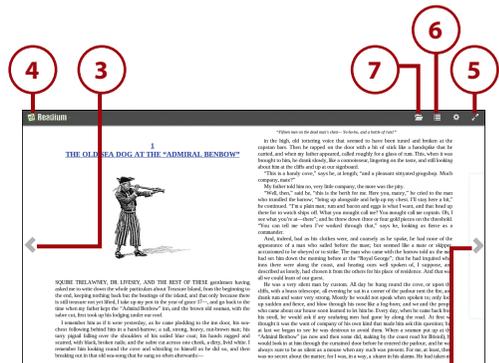
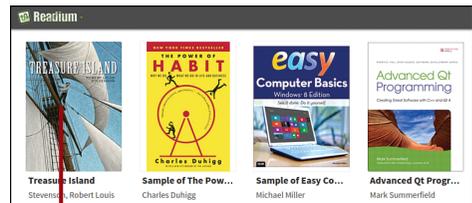
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# Read an eBook with Radium

The Radium app displays in a tab in the Chrome browser. The home page displays the Radium library, with all the books you've added.

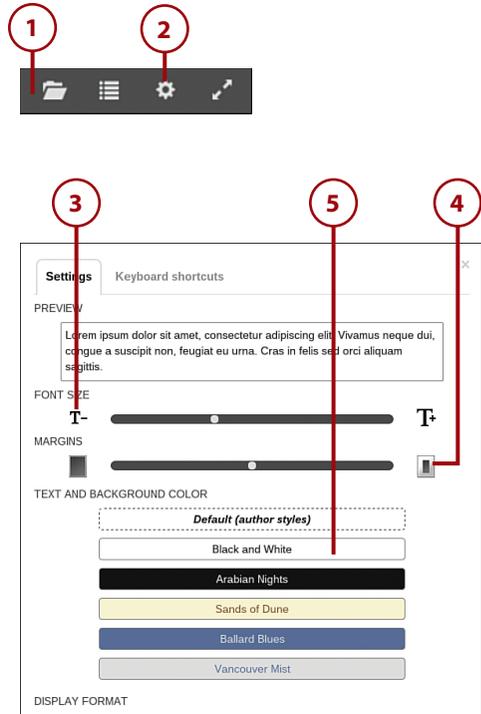
1. From the Radium library page, click the book you want to read. That book is now displayed in the browser window.
2. To turn the page, press the right-arrow key on your keyboard or click the right side of the screen with your mouse.
3. To return to the previous page, press the left-arrow key on your keyboard or click the left side of the screen with your mouse.
4. To display the options bar at the top of the screen, mouse over any part of the current page.
5. To display the book full screen, click the Enter Fullscreen button. (Press Esc to return to normal browser mode.)
6. To display the book's table of contents, click the Table of Contents button.
7. To return to your eBook library, click the Library button.



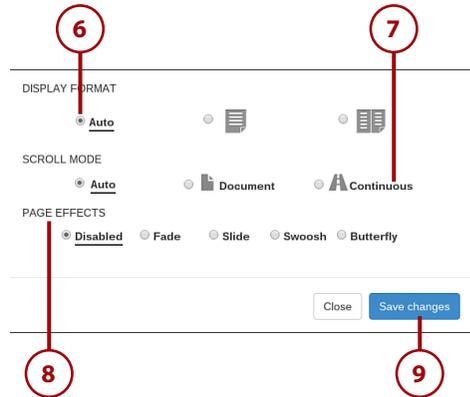
## Change How a Book Is Displayed Onscreen in Radium

Radium lets you fully personalize the book-reading experience. You can change the text size, text and background color, and the effect you see when turning the page.

1. From within the book, mouse over the page to display the options bar.
2. Click the Settings button to display the Settings pane with the Settings tab selected.
3. To make the text larger or smaller for easier reading, click and drag the Font Size slider.
4. To change the white space on the sides of the screen, click and drag the Margins slider.
5. To change the way the text appears onscreen, make a different selection in the Text and Background Color section. You can select from the book's Default setting, Black and White (black text on white background), Arabian Nights (white text on black background), Sands of Dune (dark brown text on sepia background), Ballard Blues (white text on dark blue background), or Vancouver Mist (dark blue text on gray background).



6. To force the book to display only a single column at a time, go to the Display Format section and select the Auto option. Select the third option to display the text in two-column format. Select the Auto option to display the text as intended by the publisher.
7. To change the way the book pages scroll, go to the Scroll Mode section and select Auto, Document, or Continuous.
8. To apply a special effect when the page is turned, go to the Page Effects section and select from Fade, Slide, Swoosh, or Butterfly. (Page effects are disabled by default.)
9. Click Save Changes when done.



## Reading PDF Files in Chrome

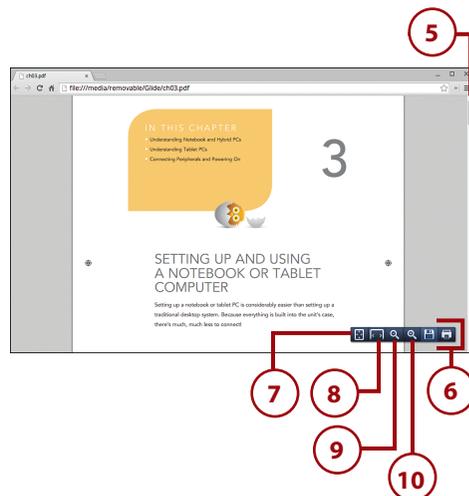
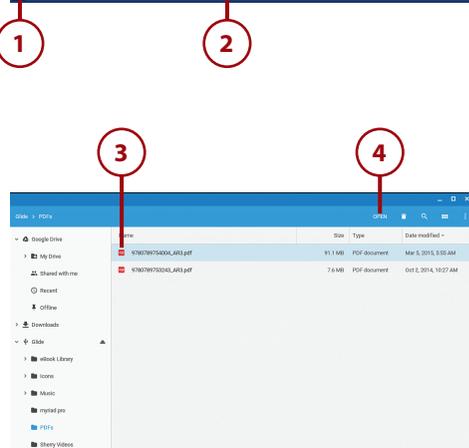
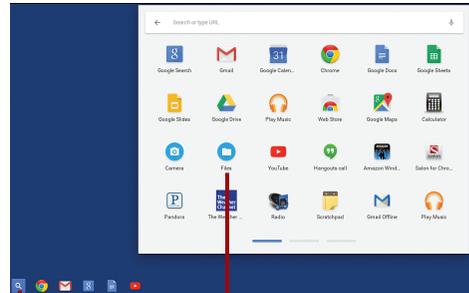
Many eBooks you find online are also available in Adobe's PDF format. The advantage of PDF files is that they appear exactly as designed by the publisher; a PDF file is an exact representation of the original printed book. (Kindle- and ePub-format books, on the other hand, can be formatted by the reader for easier reading on any given device.)

As such, many readers prefer the PDF format for visually oriented books, such as children's books or four-color "coffee table" titles. For this reason, many publishers make their books available in PDF format, as well as Kindle and ePub formats.

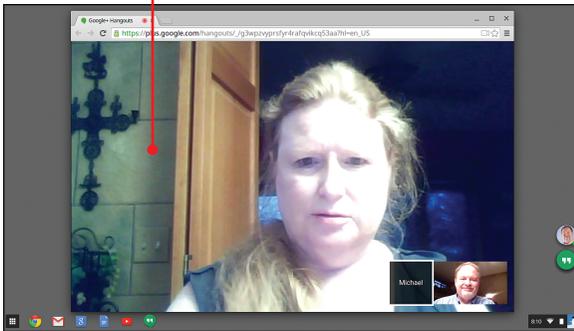
## Open and Read a PDF File

Because Chrome OS includes a built-in PDF viewer, reading PDF-format eBooks is a snap.

1. Open the Apps panel.
2. Click Files to open the Files app.
3. Navigate to and select the PDF file you want to read.
4. Click the Open button. The file now appears in a Chrome browser tab.
5. To scroll through the document, use your keyboard's up- and down-arrow controls, or the onscreen scroll bar.
6. To display additional controls, mouse over the lower-right corner of the page.
7. To display the document a full page at a time, click the Full Page button.
8. To view the document so that the width of the page fills up the browser window, click the Page Width button.
9. To zoom out of the page, click the Zoom Out button.
10. To zoom in to the page, click the Zoom In button.



## Video chatting with Google Hangouts



In this chapter, you learn how to keep in touch with friends, family, and colleagues via Google Hangouts.

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- Participating in Video Hangouts
- Participating in Text Chats

# 22

## Video Chatting with Google Hangouts

If you travel a lot or conduct a lot of remote business meetings, you need a way to keep in touch with your friends, family, and colleagues. The best way to have a face-to-face conversation when you're not in the same room is to conduct a video call. With your Chromebook, you do this over the Web, via Google Hangouts.

Google Hangouts are real-time video chats you can participate in either one-on-one or with a group of people (up to ten). To participate in a Hangout, all you need is your Chromebook (with its built-in webcam, microphone, and speakers), an Internet connection, and a Google Account. (And, if you prefer text chatting, you can do that, too!)

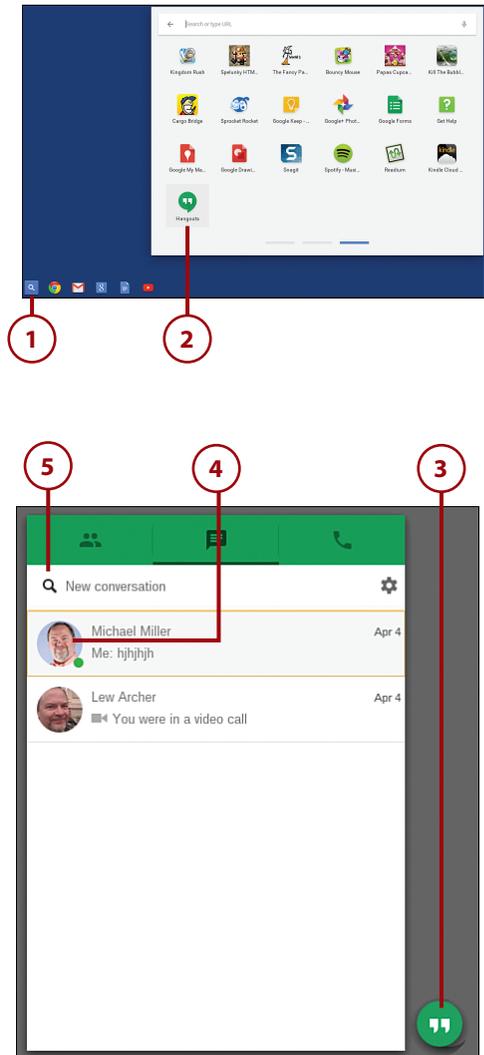
# Participating in Video Hangouts

Google Hangouts started out as part of the Google Plus social network, but it has since become a standalone service. On your Chromebook, you use the Hangouts app to initiate and participate in Google Hangouts.

## Open a Hangout

Before you open your first Hangout, you'll need to download the Hangouts app. You can find it in Google's Web Store. Just search for Hangouts; it's free.

1. Open the Apps panel.
2. Click the Hangouts icon.
3. This displays a green Hangouts ("") icon on the right side of the desktop. Click this icon to display a new Hangouts panel.
4. Your most recent Hangouts are listed in this panel. Click a Hangout to resume the conversation.
5. To start a new Hangout, click the search box and enter the Google Account name or email address of the person you want to talk to. (Alternatively, check any of the names already listed; these are people you've previously talked with.)



- The pane changes to a chat pane. To initiate a video call, click the Video Call (camera) icon. This opens a new browser tab and calls the person you want to talk to.
- When your friend answers the call, her picture appears large in the Hangout window. Your picture appears smaller, at the bottom. Start chatting!

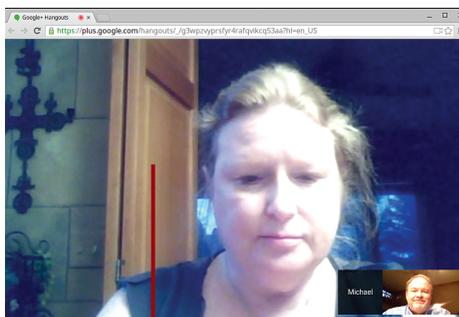


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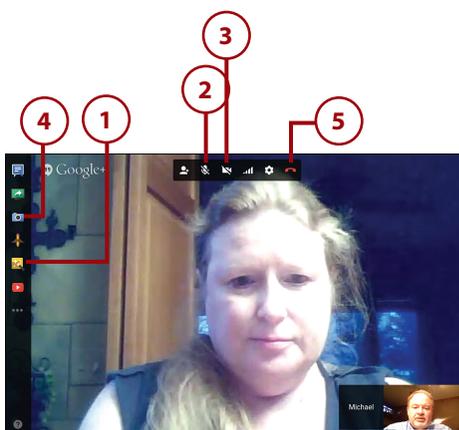
## Manage and Exit a Hangout

Most hangouts are simple affairs, where you talk one-on-one with the other person. You can, however, mute the sound or picture during the Hangout, as well as employ one or more tools that Google supplies.

- Mouse over the screen to display the options bar at the top of the window, as well as the toolbar along the left side.
- To mute your microphone, click the Mute Microphone button.
- To turn off your Chromebook's camera, click the Turn Camera Off button.
- To use the tools that Google supplies, click the appropriate icon along the left side of the screen. For example, to capture a screenshot of the session, click the Capture icon. To add a text-based chat to the Hangout, click the Chat button.
- To exit the hangout, click the Leave Call (telephone) button.



7



## Join an Existing Hangout

You don't have to initiate all your Hangouts. In many cases, it's someone else who wants to talk, and invites you. If you're online, it's easy to join a Hangout.

### Email Invitations

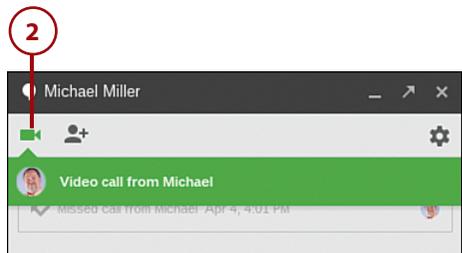
Some users prefer to email invitations to their Hangouts in advance, which is a useful method to use when scheduling a business meeting. When you receive an email invitation, you can join the Hangout by clicking the link in the message.

1. When another user invites you to a Hangout, you see a message to that effect on the Chrome desktop. Click the message to display a chat pane.
2. Click the Video Call button to open the Hangout in a browser tab.

## Invite Others to an Existing Hangout

In addition to one-on-one video chats, you can create group Hangouts with more than two people participating.

1. Start a normal Hangout; then mouse over the screen to display the options bar and click the Invite People button. This displays the Invite pane.



2. Enter the Google Account name or email address of the person you want to invite into the Send Invite box. Enter multiple names if you want.
3. Click the Invite button.
4. When the other person answers, he is automatically added to the Hangout. Whomever is talking at the moment appears in the main window; the other participants appear in smaller windows along the bottom of the screen.

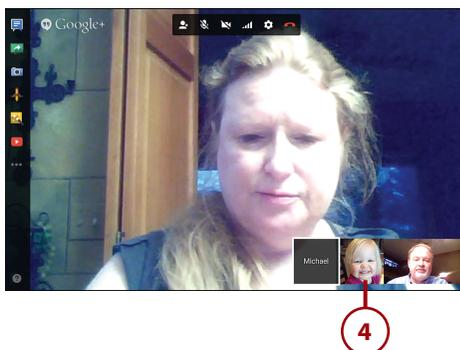
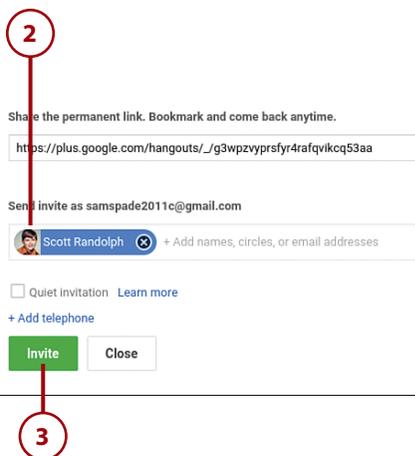
## Invite via Email

You can, if you prefer, set up a Hangout in advance and then email the link to the participants. Just start a Hangout and click the Invite People button. When the Invite pane appears, copy the link in the first box and paste it into your email message. When participants open the email, they can enter the Hangout by clicking the link.

## Quit Google Hangouts

The Google Hangouts app remains open on your desktop until you manually close it.

1. Mouse over the green Hangouts icon on the desktop and click the X.
2. When prompted, click the Quit button.



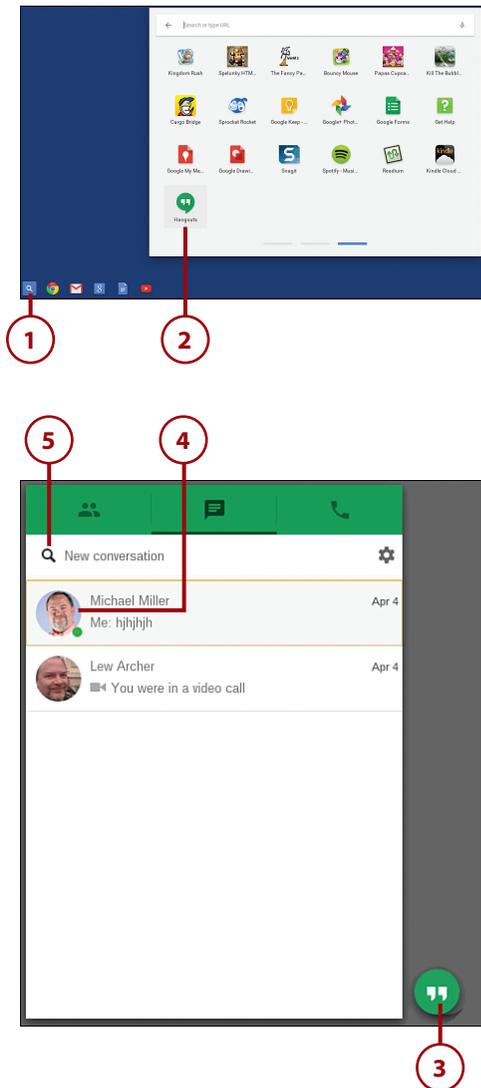
## Participating in Text Chats

Google also offers the ability to participate in text chats with your friends and colleagues. This is part of Google Hangouts.

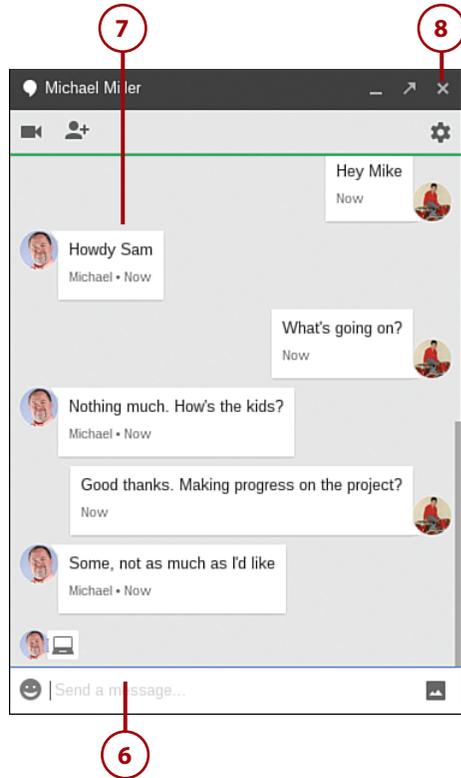
### Create a New Text Chat

The advantage of text chats is that you can talk to people who don't have webcams installed on their computers. You also don't have to look your best when chatting; there are no webcams staring you in the face.

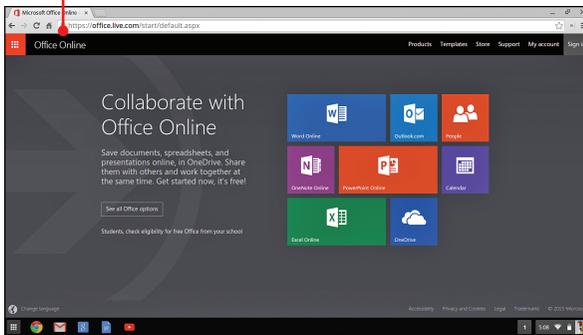
1. Open the Apps panel.
2. Click the Hangouts icon.
3. This displays a green Hangouts ("") icon on the right side of the desktop. Click this icon to display a new Hangouts panel.
4. Your most recent Hangouts are listed in this panel. Click a Hangout to resume the conversation.
5. To start a new Hangout, click the search box and enter the Google Account name or email address of the person you want to talk to. (Alternatively, check any of the names already listed; these are people you've previously talked with.)



6. The pane changes to a chat pane. Enter your first message into the box at the bottom of the pane and then press Enter.
7. Your conversation with the other person appears in the main chat pane. Continue typing to send more messages.
8. To end the chat, click the X at the top-right corner of the chat pane.



## Microsoft Office Online



In this chapter, you learn how to use Microsoft Office Online on your Chromebook.

- Understanding Microsoft Office Online
- Working with Word Online
- Working with Excel Online
- Working with PowerPoint Online

# 23

## Using Microsoft Office Online

The Google Docs suite isn't the only web-based productivity tool you can use on your Chromebook. More and more productivity apps are moving from the traditional software world to the world of cloud computing—including the venerable Microsoft Office.

### Understanding Microsoft Office Online

Microsoft Office has long been the most popular productivity suite for both home and office workers. Until recently, the only way to use Office was to install the software package on your computer—which you can't do on a Chromebook. Fortunately for Chromebook users everywhere, Microsoft has released a web-based version of Office, and it works great on the Chrome OS.

Microsoft Office Online, as the web-based suite is called, consists of seven applications plus OneDrive, Microsoft's web-based storage service (similar to Google Drive). The applications include the following:

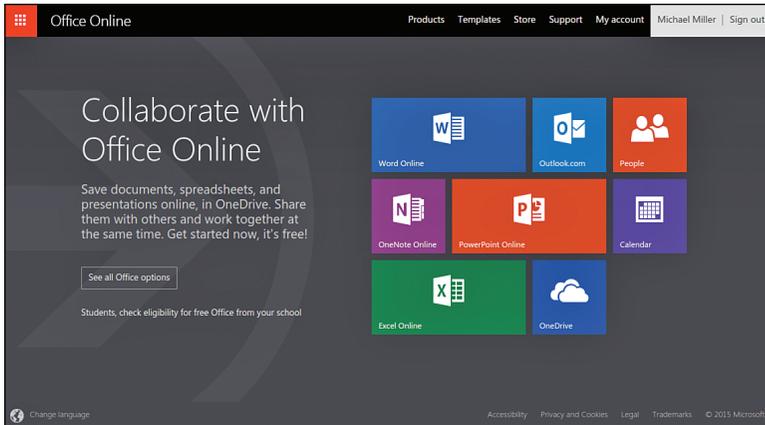
- Word Online (word processing)
- Excel Online (spreadsheets)
- PowerPoint Online (presentations)
- People (contact management)
- Calendar (scheduling)
- Outlook.com (email)
- OneNote Online (note taking)

Obviously, a web-based version of Office has appeal to the hundreds of millions of people who use the traditional Office software. Also appealing is the price; Microsoft Office Online is completely free, unlike the more expensive software versions.

Note, however, that the individual apps in Office Online don't come with all the power features of the software versions. In this aspect, Office Online resembles Google Docs; average users will find all the features they need, whereas power users might need more sophisticated functionality.

That said, Microsoft Office Online is very, very similar in functionality to the Google Docs suite. Both suites let you work and store your files online, as well as share those files with collaborators via the Internet.

You access Office Online from within the Chrome browser. Go to [www.office.com](http://www.office.com) and sign in with your Microsoft account. (If you don't have a Microsoft account, click My Account and then click Sign Up for a New Account.) You can also download Office Online apps from the Chrome Web Store.



The main Office Online page displays tiles for all available web-based apps. To launch an app, click the app's tile. From there you can open existing files or create new ones.

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## Microsoft OneDrive

You can also open and edit existing Office Online documents from Microsoft OneDrive. Go to [www.onedrive.com](http://www.onedrive.com) to view your online files; click a file to open it in the corresponding online app.

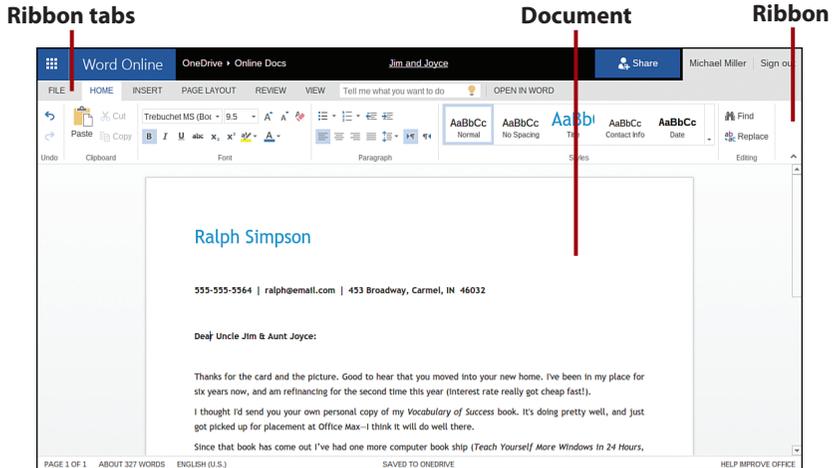
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You can also use Office Online to share documents with friends and co-workers. Click the Share button in any app to invite individuals to share that particular file; you can choose whether users can edit or only view a given file.

## Working with Word Online

If you're familiar with the desktop version of Microsoft Word, Word Online will look quite familiar. At the top of the screen is the ribbon, which provides all the buttons and controls you need to create and edit a document. Different tabs on the ribbon display different collections of functions; click a tab, such as File, Home, Insert, or View, to access commands associated with that particular operation.

For example, the File tab contains basic file opening and saving operations; the Home tab contains most of the editing and formatting functions you use on a daily basis; the Insert tab contains commands to add images and tables to a document; and the View tab contains commands that enable you to change how a document is viewed or displayed.



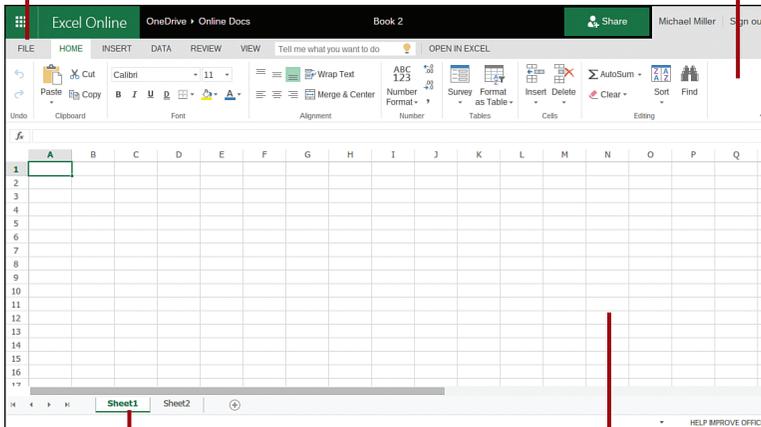
Beneath the ribbon is the document itself. To enter text, position the cursor where you want (in a blank document, it's in the first line of the document) and start typing.

As with Google Docs, you don't have to manually save your files in Word Online. Any changes you make are automatically saved, and the files themselves reside in the cloud, in OneDrive.

## Working with Excel Online

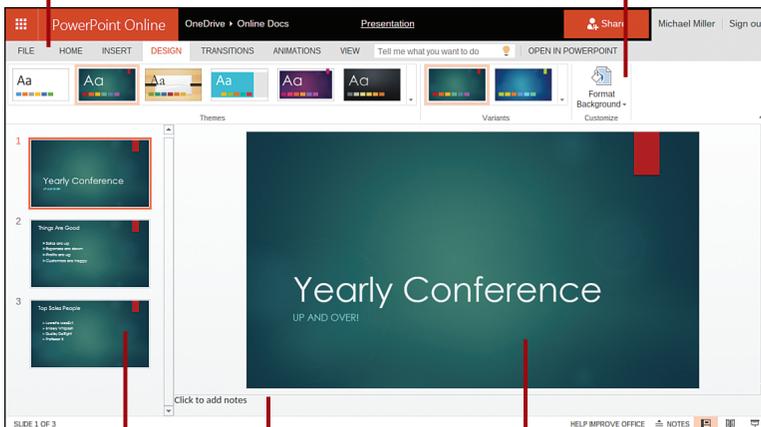
Excel Online looks and feels much like the traditional desktop version of Excel. As with Word Online, Excel Online features a ribbon at the top of the screen, with different tabs for different functions. The Home tab contains basic editing tools; the Insert tab is used to insert charts and tables and such; the Data tab is where you sort your data; and so on.

Excel calls its spreadsheets *worksheets*, and each worksheet can contain multiple sheets, accessible via tabs at the bottom of the workspace. As with all spreadsheet programs, Excel Online lets you create complex formulas and includes a robust set of built-in functions.

**Ribbon tabs****Ribbon****Sheet tabs****Worksheet**

## Working with PowerPoint Online

You use PowerPoint Online to create and give presentations. It isn't quite as functional as the software version of the program, but it's similar in functionality to Google Slides.

**Ribbon tabs****Ribbon****Slide sorter****Speaker notes****Slide editor**

As with the other Office Online apps, you access all necessary functions from the ribbon at the top of the screen. Beneath the ribbon, the screen is divided into three areas: the slide sorter on the left, the slide editor on the right, and the speaker notes at the bottom. You can apply a variety of visually interesting themes, as well as slide transitions and animated elements on a slide.

Giving a presentation is as easy as clicking the Slide Show button at the bottom-right corner of the screen. This displays your presentation full screen; use the right-arrow key on your keyboard (or click your touchpad) to move from slide to slide.

## >>> *Go Further*

### OFFICE ONLINE VS. GOOGLE DOCS

For some time, Google Docs was the only viable web-based productivity suite. With the advent of Microsoft Office Online, however, you now have a choice. Which of these suites should you use?

Because of its time in the market, Google Docs has a large base of satisfied users. The individual apps have been greatly enhanced over the years, and chances are they'll do everything you need them to do.

Office Online, on the other hand, is both newer and older. It's a newer entry into the web-based market, but it's based on the long-established desktop program.

If you use Microsoft Office every day at work, then Office Online is a good choice. Not only does it sport a familiar interface, it's fully file compatible with the desktop version of the program.

Google Docs is also file compatible with Office, but the interface for each app is different. There are no ribbons in Google Docs; you have to use the older pull-down menus and toolbars, instead. That may not be a big thing for you, or you may find it more productive to stay with the similar interface of the Office products. That's a user choice.

Although both suites store their files online and claim robust sharing and collaboration features, I've found that Google Docs is just a little better at the whole sharing thing. You can certainly share your Office files online, but it's just a tad easier with Google Docs and Google Drive. That's probably Google's online experience showing.

Bottom line, you can't go wrong with either Google Docs or Microsoft Office Online. They both offer the necessary features to help you do what you need to do, they both let you share your files online, and they both work great on a Chromebook. Equally important, they're both free—so try them both and use the one that works best for you.



# Task

## What Chromebook Should You Buy?

### What's Not to Like?

Whether you're in the market for a tablet or notebook computer, a Chromebook certainly sounds like a contender for your purchase dollars. But Chromebooks aren't for everyone; there are some limitations in using a Chromebook for your computing and web surfing. In particular, consider the following:

- **You need an Internet connection.** Because Chrome OS is a web-based operating system, a Chromebook is virtually useless if you can't connect to the Internet. You use the Internet to connect to both your applications and documents, so if you don't have an Internet connection, you can't access anything, even your own documents. A dead Internet connection means no work, period—and, in areas where Internet connections are few or inherently unreliable, this could be a deal breaker. Aside from being able to listen to some music that you may have stored on the hard drive, when you're offline, a Chromebook really doesn't do anything.

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## Working Offline

Some web-based applications, such as Google Docs and Gmail, have offline modes that let you continue working without an Internet connection. Most other apps, however, need to be connected to run. (And, naturally, you need an Internet connection to view or listen to streaming media, and to browse the Web.)

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- **Doesn't work well with slow connections.** Similarly, a low-speed Internet connection, of which parts of this country have way too many, makes using a Chromebook painful at best and often impossible. Web-based apps often require a lot of bandwidth to download, as do streaming movies and music. If you're laboring with a low-speed connection, it might take seemingly forever just to change from page to page in a document, let alone use a streaming audio or video service. In other words, using a Chromebook isn't for the slow or "broadband impaired."
- **You can't use traditional software.** Even though lots of free and low-cost web-based applications are available, not all the programs you currently use have web-based counterparts. Although the number of web-based apps is rapidly increasing, and most major apps (including Microsoft Office and Adobe Photoshop) have web-based versions, these cloud applications sometimes offer less functionality and compatibility than their traditional software cousins. And if you like to play games on your computer, you're pretty much limited to what's available for online play. Make sure you can do what you need to do totally over the Web before you make the jump to a Chromebook.
- **Is cloud-based data really secure?** With cloud computing, all your data is stored on the cloud. That's all well and good, but how secure is the cloud? Can other, unauthorized users gain access to your confidential data? These are all important questions, and well worth further examination. If you're at all worried about data security or reliability, using Chrome OS might not be for you.

And when you're comparing a Chromebook with a tablet, consider the following issues:

- **It's heavier than a tablet.** Although a Chromebook is a very light notebook PC, it's still a little heavier than a tablet. HP's 11-inch Chromebook comes in at 2.83 pounds, whereas its 14-inch model weighs

3.78 pounds, both considerably heavier than the iPad, which weighs just 1.44 pounds. If weight matters, a tablet may be more appealing.

- **You need someplace to type.** This isn't a big deal, but you can operate a tablet while holding it in your hand. Not so much with a Chromebook; you either need to sit it in your lap or on a desktop in order to type on the keyboard. If ultimate portability is your goal, the tablet wins, hands down.

## What Chromebook Should You Buy?

If you've read this far, I'll assume that you're still interested in purchasing a new Chromebook computer. The next question is a simple one—what models are available?

The first generation of Google Chromebooks launched back in 2011. These were more expensive units, running anywhere from \$349 to \$499. As you might suspect, that pricing made them less than stellar performers in the marketplace.

In mid-2012, Samsung introduced two second-generation Chromebook models, priced at \$449 and \$549. Despite display and keyboard improvements, these models were viewed as too expensive and generally ignored by consumers.

That all changed in October of 2012, when the third generation of Chromebooks hit the market—and were an immediate hit with consumers. Not only was Chrome OS itself improved over the initial version, but these new Chromebooks—from Acer and Samsung—offered a lot more bang for the buck. With pricing starting as low as \$199, Chromebooks suddenly became a lot more attractive, especially for users looking for a second computer-like device for casual use. In fact, these new Chromebooks were so popular that they sold out well before Christmas, and the Samsung Chromebook was Amazon.com's best-selling notebook PC of that holiday season. (Chromebooks were also Amazon's bestsellers in the 2013 and 2014 holiday seasons.)

We're now into the fourth generation of Chromebooks, and there are a lot of models to choose from. Just about every major computer manufacturer has jumped on the Chromebook bandwagon, including Acer, ASUS, Dell, HP, Lenovo, and Toshiba. In all, there are almost two dozen different models to choose from.



### Dell Chromebook 11

The following table details some of the most popular fourth-generation Chromebooks available today.

### Comparing Chromebook Models

Manufacturer/Model	Screen	Memory/Solid State Storage	Processor	Battery Life	Price
Acer Chromebook 11 CB3-111-C8UB	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Dual-Core 2.16GHz	8.5 hours	\$199.99
Acer Chromebook 13 CB5-311-T9Y2	13.3" (1366×768)	4GB/16GB	NVIDIA Tegra K1 Quad- Core 2.10GHz	13 hours	\$269.99
Acer Chromebook 13 CB5-311-T1UU	13.3" (1920×1080)	4GB/32GB	NVIDIA Tegra K1 Quad- Core 2.10GHz	11 hours	\$379.99
Acer Chromebook 15	15.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 1.6GHz	9 hours	\$249.99
Acer Chromebook 15 CB5-571-C09S	15.6" (1920×1280)	4GB/32GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 1.6GHz	9 hours	\$349.99
Acer Chromebook 15 C910	15.6" (1920×1280)	4GB/32GB	Intel Core i5 Dual-Core 2.2GHz	8 hours	\$499.99
ASUS Chromebook C200	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 2.16GHz	11 hours	\$199.99
ASUS Chromebook C300	13.3" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 2.16GHz	10 hours	\$199.00
Dell Chromebook 11	11.6" (1366×768)	4GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Dual-Core 1.4GHz	10 hours	\$256.00
Dell Chromebook 11	11.6" (1366×768)	4GB/16GB	Intel Core i3 Dual-Core 1.7GHz	10 hours	\$379.00
Google Pixel 2	12.85" (2560×1700) touchscreen	8GB/32GB	Intel Core i3 Dual-Core 2.2GHz	12 hours	\$999.00

Manufacturer/Model	Screen	Memory/Solid State Storage	Processor	Battery Life	Price
Google Pixel 2	12.85" (2560×1700) touchscreen	16GB/64GB	Intel Core i5 Dual-Core 2.4GHz	12 hours	\$1,299.00
Haier Chromebook 11 (Amazon exclusive)	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Rockchip A17 Quad-Core 1.8GHz	10 hours	\$149.00
Hisense Chromebook (Walmart exclusive)	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Rockchip A17 Quad-Core 1.8GHz	10 hours	\$149.00
HP Chromebook 11	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 2.16GHz	8 hours	\$279.99
HP Chromebook 14	14" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	NVIDIA Tegra K1 Quad-Core 2.10GHz	8 hours	\$299.99
Lenovo N20p (hybrid Chromebook/tablet)	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Dual-Core 1.83GHz	8 hours	\$329.00
Lenovo ThinkPad 11e	11.6" (1366×768)	4GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Dual-Core 1.83GHz	8 hours	\$349.00
Samsung Chromebook XE303C12	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Samsung Exynos 5 Dual-Core 1.7GHz	7 hours	\$249.99
Samsung Chromebook 2 XE500C12	11.6" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 2.16Hz	9 hours	\$249.99
Samsung Chromebook 2 XE503C12	11.6" (1366×768)	4GB/16GB	Samsung Exynos 5 Quad-Core 1.9GHz	8 hours	\$299.99
Samsung Chromebook 2 XE503C32	13.3" (1920×1280)	4GB/16GB	Samsung Exynos 5 Quad-Core 2.0GHz	8.5 hours	\$399.99
Toshiba Chromebook 2 CB30	13.3" (1366×768)	2GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 2.16GHz	11.5 hours	\$249.99
Toshiba Chromebook 2 CB30 (Full HD)	13.3" (1920×1080)	4GB/16GB	Intel Celeron Bay Trail-M Dual-Core 2.16GHz	9 hours	\$299.99

As you can see, most of these models fall into a few general types. Some models have 11.6" screens; some have slightly larger 13.3" screens; and a few (note Acer's new Chromebook 15 models) have more traditional 15.6" screens. Most screens (regardless of size) have 1366×768 pixel resolution, while a few are "true HD" with 1920×1080 (or 1920×1280) resolution. Some Chromebooks have 2GB of memory onboard, some have 4GB, and the Google Pixel 2 Chromebook offers up to 16GB. Most offer 16GB of solid state storage, whereas some higher priced models offer 32GB.

And there are a range of processors available, from Intel, NVIDIA, Rockchip, and Samsung.

When it comes to choosing one model over another, look at the specs, of course, as well as the price. (And remember that actual selling price is often lower than the suggested retail prices listed here.) But it also helps to look at the fit and feel of each model; some units have better keyboards than others, some have touchscreens, some feel more robust than others, and so forth. Choose a model that fits what you want at the price you want to pay.

## >>>Go Further

### GOOGLE PIXEL 2

One model (in two variations) stands out from the other consumer-oriented Chromebooks: Google's own Chromebook Pixel 2, a state-of-the-art ultrabook computer that happens to run the Chrome operating system.



What makes the Pixel 2 different from other Chromebooks is the hardware. Instead of a standard Chiclet keyboard, it features a pretty cool backlit keyboard that lights up for nighttime computing. The touchpad is made from etched glass for smooth control and enhanced accuracy. The Pixel 2 also features an ultra-high resolution 3:2 aspect ratio 12.85" touchscreen display, a speedy 2.2GHz or 2.4GHz dual-core Intel i3 or i5 processor, 8GB or 16GB of RAM, and 32GB or 64GB of solid state storage. And the Pixel 2 is the first Chromebook to feature the new USB-C ports (two of them, actually), the new standard for mobile device connectivity that transmit ten times the power of older USB ports.

Another way the Pixel 2 stands out from the rest of the pack is its price. The base model sells for \$999, whereas the step-up model sells for \$1,299. This puts the Pixel 2 more in competition with Apple's MacBook Air than other Chromebooks, but it may have appeal among elite users. I tend to consider it more of a proof of concept than a viable consumer PC, but it's there if you want it.