SCA Computer Club notes

Classes for the Month of May

To enroll, log into the website at https://computer.scaclub.org/. Go to **Calendars** and select **Classes/Events**. Click on the class you want to take and under "Action", <u>click</u> on "**Enroll**". (Be sure to check the date as there may be multiple offerings of the class). If you need to cancel your enrollment, please log back in, select the class again and <u>click</u> on "**Drop"**. All classes are **FREE** to Computer Club members in good standing and are geared for *beginners* unless otherwise indicated. A member can take any class as many times as desired. **IMPORTANT**: You must have your **SCA Resident ID** with you to check-in at the ***Monitor desk*** AND AGAIN in the ***front of the Classroom*** to ensure you are enrolled on the day of the class. Check-in will begin 20 minutes before the scheduled class time. If you are late, you may be bumped from the class by someone on the waiting list.

How to Stream to Your TV: This class will help you select a streaming device like a smart tv or an external streaming device like a Roku or Firestick. It will show you step by step how to setup and use one of these devices. Lastly, there will be a description of available streaming services and how to make your selection.

Photos for Mac- Part 1: An introduction to Photos including how to connect your camera or memory card and how to organize your photos. How to create albums of selected photos and smart albums using several different search criteria. If time permits, an introduction to location tagging and facial recognition will be included.

Buying a Computer: Are you considering buying a new computer for yourself or as a gift? Should you buy a desktop, a laptop or a tablet? What are the differences between them? Should you buy a Mac, PC or even a Chromebook? Will it be used for email, to watch movies, organize your photos, write a book, etc.? Have your questions answered before you shop and buy.

If you've recently joined our Club we highly encourage you to attend the **New Member Orientation** class to familiarize yourself with our Club's activities. Learn how to sign up for classes, schedule a house call, volunteer to be a monitor and more.

Introduction to Windows 11: New to Windows 11 or wondering if you should upgrade? Learn some basics before you do, or become more familiar with Microsoft's newest operating system (OS).

Photos for Mac- Part 2: This second part of the Photos class is a presentation on the editing capabilities built into Photos. We will cover correcting the lighting by changing the exposure, shadow brightness and highlight brightness. We will also cover color correction and show how to correct flaws in pictures, including restoring old photos scanned into Photos.

Photoshop Elements: Do you take pictures with either a digital camera or a smart phone? Learn how to organize and edit your pictures. This hands-on class for both Mac and Windows users give a basic introduction to Adobe Photoshop Elements.

Special Topics

Special Topics classes meet on a weekly or monthly basis. We invite ANY Computer Club member who is interested in learning more about a specific product/application or a specific topic to join in the discussions. All groups meet in the computer classroom. Participants ask questions and discuss various topics at each session.

- If you are an Apple user, attend *Apple Talk* that meets **monthly** to investigate Apple products. Did you recently buy an iPhone, Mac, an iPad, MacBook Air, or other Apple product? Do you have questions regarding specific Apple products or applications? Sit in on this month's meeting on **Saturday, May 13 from 10 AM - noon** and see if this is the group you have been looking to join.

- *Computer Talk* meets **weekly from 9—10 AM** every **Thursday** and is designed as a "question and answer" session. Can't figure out how to do something? Do you have a question regarding a specific product or application? This group is for computer related discussions and not limited to any specific product. Bring your Android, Apple, Chromebook, Windows, etc. questions and we'll try to answer them. Please don't ask how replace your garbage disposal or fix your washing machine. New members are always welcome.

- *Photoshop Elements Advanced Topics*: Enhance your ability to work with digital photos. Monthly topics build upon skills learned in the Photoshop Elements class. These have included enhancing photos by adjusting coloring and lighting, removing imperfections and unwanted objects, clearing haze, and combining photos. Some are simple fixes and others make use of the power of adjustment layers. Topics are repeated periodically, depending upon interest. Meets on **Friday, May 26 from 9:30am -11:30am**.

  Prerequisites: The basic *Photoshop Elements class* **or** some experience using either *Photoshop Elements or Photoshop.*

Did you hear the good news announcement at the General Meeting last month?

Well, if you didn't, here it is. Your Computer Club Board recently voted to open the computer club for a third session on Monday -Thursday from 3:30pm—6:30pm. It is going to be on a ***trial basis*** to see if members want the late afternoon session available now. Remember, *prior* to the Covid lockdowns, we used to be open until 6:30pm on M-Th.

This will also give our new monitors a chance to complete shifts. Currently, most shifts have been signed up for, so if you are already a monitor, please don't immediately sign up for these additional shifts. New monitors, who are enthusiastic about volunteering, were having a challenging time obtaining a shift after completing their training. So, please let them have an opportunity to serve our club and meet our membership, just like you did when you first began. Thanks.

We are also seeking new Instructors. Are you familiar with an application and would you like to share your knowledge with other club members? Have you been using a particular application, browser, email provider, etc. that you think others might be interested in? If so, please contact our Directors at Large that manage our Education program: Carol Campbell and Gary Haddan. Contact them through the website at: https://computer.scaclub.org/ and select "Contact Us"> Education. All instructors must go through specific training and we'll provide that to you. Give it a try.

And if you are wanting a class on a specific application or topic, let the Education Managers know that as well. If there is not enough interest, you can always get tutoring through out House Call Program.

What is AI? What is a chatbot?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is simply the simulation of human intelligence processes by a machine, like a computer system. Some would say that it is a science that uses machines to imitate what a human is tasked to do. You probably already have used AI in some form, especially if you have ever used Amazon's Alexa or the Google Assistant, or even Apple's Siri. You ask it a question and it responds or in Alexa's case, you ask it to do something, like "turn off the lights", and it responds (if you have a smart device hooked up, using Alexa).

Today we hear a lot about chatbots, especially ChatGPT. How is it different? Well, first let's explain what it is. ChatGPT or Chat generative pre-trained transformer (GPT) is an AI chatbot that was developed by OpenAI and is free to use. OpenAI is a research laboratory that promotes and develops friendly artificial intelligence. They have trained a model (ChatGPT) to interact with us and answer questions, challenge incorrect premises and reject what it considers to be inappropriate requests. AI collects and combines large amounts of data and through developed algorithms, learns to analyze the data and form patterns. One might say the goal of AI is to mimic human behavior to solve problems the way a human does.

So where does the data come from? Good question. Just about anywhere and everywhere. Data can be obtained from the Internet, from surveys, studies, experiments, personal interviews, pictures and graphic images, webpages, videos, emails, etc. ChatGPT can answer questions, tell stories and jokes, write reports, draft resumes, create websites and so much more. But it really doesn't provide solutions to problems. If you ask it "what is the *best* Internet website", it'll likely come back with several sites, stating their similarities, differences, etc. but not saying one is better that the rest overall. It provides parameters for one to think about; maybe something that one hadn't thought of initially when asking a question.

While AI is something that is widely publicized lately, it doesn't always get the answers correct. It is only as correct as the data it analyzes, so sometimes it must be taken with a grain of salt and not the "be all or end all" that some young folks think it is. And ChatGPT is only one of the AI products in use today. **Google has introduced Bard.** It is a competitive program that is being developed to compete with ChatGPT and others. **Microsoft recently introduced an AI-powered Bing search engine.** It has been implemented in its Edge browser. There are other AI chatbots, but these three are the most talked about right now.

So how exactly are these chatbots different? Well, for one, they may use differing data sets to obtain their information and analysis. And although the sources may be different, they may produce similar results or not.

ChatGPT uses a "fixed dataset" the has been pre-processed by OpenAI. It included articles, websites, books and other written materials available at the time the dataset was curated. Currently, it does not have access to new information on the Internet.

Bard also uses a pre-determined dataset that claims to be massive, including books, articles, codes, etc. and crawls the web via Google Search. Therefore, it claims to provide new information or "real world" information.

Bing AI suggests that it only uses the web and doesn't mention using any sort of "fixed datasets" like the other two do. The sources include web pages, images, videos, new articles, etc. from all over the Internet. But Bing offers the user the ability to choose whether or not its answers are "more creative", "more balanced" or "more precise" so it is continuing to expand and analyze data.

Now do any of these replace what we already have, like Siri or Google Assistant? Not exactly. Why, because ChatGPT, Google Bard and Bing Chat are not considered to be virtual assistants, like Siri and Google Assistant. You see, AI chatbots are more about talking. Remember, in the beginning of this article we mentioned that they were developed to imitate what humans do. Whereas, the virtual assistants (Siri, Google Assistant, Alexa) are more about "doing", rather than just talking about it. Remember, turn off the lights, play 80s country music, tell me my events on my calendar for tomorrow, set a timer or reminder for me to take my medicine, etc. But. ChatGPT has the ability to write recipes given specific ingredients. Try that with Siri or Google Assistant. You'll just probably get a list of web results instead.

So, remember, you can use both, virtual assistants AND chatbots because they do different things. You don't have to give up one for the other. But the important question might be, do you really want to? Sure, it might be fun to have a chatbot write an email for you or answer so obscure question but remember, these chatbots collect data. That's how they get better and more developed. So, what type of data does the parent company, OpenAI collect for ChatGPT?

How about your log data, e.g., your IP address, browser type, settings, and chats. Yep, all collected and stored. What about your usage data? That can include your log data, location, how you engage with the site, when you access it (date/time), and what device you are accessing it from (e.g., iPhone, PC, Android, Mac, etc.) as well as its operating system. Remember cookies? They include bits of browsing data used to "improve your experience". OpenAI shares this information with third parties (though it claims it is shared anonymously). Really? You decide.

What about your account information or other personal information? Perhaps financial information too? Yes, all collected to "improve" the AI model. And some companies will even tell you that their employees may manually "review" the data it collects when you use its services: think Microsoft and Amazon. All done to "improve its products and YOUR experiences".

So, if you still want to interact with these new technologies, just be aware. Be careful what you disclose. Do you really want to tell the world where your kids live, how much of a salary they are pulling in, the ages and favorite activities of your grandkids, when you are traveling overseas for the holidays, etc.? Don't share information you wouldn't share with a total stranger. Does someone really need to know where you shop, bank or the casino you play bingo at every Friday from noon-4 PM?

Remember, sharing too much information could make you susceptible to scammers or even jeopardize you or your loved ones. There is so much information out on the Internet these days and scammers continually use it to their advantage. Just be aware of it.

If you do sign up for ChatGPT and no longer want to use it (maybe until it develops more or gets more accurate), do yourself a favor and delete your account. Log in to your account at openai.com/login and select "Help" (at the bottom right). Select "Send us a message". Select "Account Deletion" and follow the onscreen steps to delete your account.

If you are currently using one of the chatbots, let us know how you like it. Contact us via the website, Contact Us, select Newsletter and give us your thoughts. We'd love to hear from you.

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Did you see in the class offerings for May that there's a **New** CLASS ? Have you cut the cord on cable or are you considering doing so? What might be your alternatives, if you do? Ever consider using a streaming device? Want to learn more about them?

Well, this class will help you select an external streaming device such as a Roku or Firestick or stream from your smart TV. There will be step by step instructions on how to set up and use one of these devices. Also we'll describe available streaming services and address how to make your selection. Are you interested? If so, sign into our club website, go to the May calendar and sign up for the class. It is scheduled for **Tuesday, 9 May at 10 am**.

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What's a local account and what's a Microsoft account on Windows?

Sometimes we get asked this same question. A lot of folks may have both types of accounts on their PC. But is there really any difference between them?

A *local account* is exclusive to the Windows computer you created it on and exists on your computer . For this reason, many consider it a more secure account. Many households may share the computer and each member has a separate account for themselves on it. Grandparents may not want their teenage grandkids accessing their accounts while visiting, so they set up a separate local account for each grandchild. Other households may simply share the same account. If someone were to access your account's credentials, they could not access them on any of your other Windows devices.

A Microsoft account gives you access to Microsoft's cloud storage, e.g., OneDrive. If you have files and folders on OneDrive, you can access them from more than one computer (if your are using a Microsoft account). You can also backup your folders (e.g., Desktop, Documents, Pictures, etc.) automatically and sync them to the cloud. That way if you are on another computer, you can simply sign into your Microsoft account and access your stuff. But wait, can't I use OneDrive with a local account? Yes, you can still use OneDrive without linking your Microsoft account by signing in to it while on your local account. But remember, you can only do so from the computer for which you created that local account from and not any other computer. So if you only have a local account are away from home, you won't have access to your OneDrive account.

Although you can download apps from the Microsoft store using a local account, there are some apps (e.g., Netflix, Spotify, etc.) that require you to have a Microsoft account to download them. It also applies to paid apps since you have to pay for them using payment methods linked to your Microsoft account.

You can get the best of both by using your local account. but if you need to go to the Microsoft store, simply sign-in to the store with your Microsoft account. Also if you forget your password on your local account, to reset it you need to remember your security questions. With a Microsoft account, you can reset it online. Just go to the Microsoft login page and click on ***Can't access account link?*** Then follow the instructions to finish resetting your account's password.

Browser history and browser cache

So, we know that you have heard about clearing your browser history and/or your browser cache, but do you know why? Are they the same things? Let's take a look and see.

First, browser history and browser cache are not the same. Browser history is the list of sites that you have visited when using a specific browser; when you visited them as well as links of those visited websites. So, if you use multiple browsers, then you would have to clear the history from each one separately. Clearing the history from one, does not clear it from another. And clearing your browser history only deletes that history stored locally on your computer.

Cache on the other hand stores temporary files, e.g., web pages and other online media that your browser may have downloaded. The purpose of the cache is to speed up loading the particular sites (or pages) that your previously visited, the next time you use the site. Also, if you are having issues with a particular website, perhaps loading, etc., clearing its cache will remove all the temporary copies of the website and its files so the next time you go there, a "clean" copy of the website will be launched and maybe your issues are resolved.

Browsing history and browsing data are also two different things. Really? While the history is a record of the sites you visited, browsing data encompasses the history along with cache, cookies, passwords, etc. That is why you might see several options from which to choose from when you go to clear your browsing data. They may include such things as your browsing history, cookies and other site data and cached images and files. So, yes, it is possible to clear your web cache and not one's browsing history and cookies.
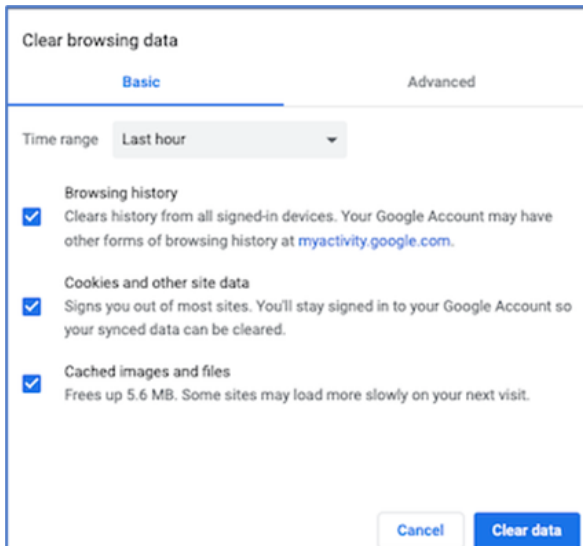
Before we look at "how" to clear this information, one thing should stand out. Information about your likes and dislikes (e.g., what websites you are visiting) and privacy information (e.g., forms you may have filled out online) may provide information about you that you don't want others to see.

For example, your 30th Anniversary is coming up and you know your wife wants a remodeled kitchen. So, you have been searching for contractors, comparing prices, layouts, materials, etc. and want to surprise her. But you share your only desktop computer and you know she also wants to know what you've been doing on the computer (and she just happens to be very tech savvy). The last thing you want her to see is your history or the multiple sites you were visiting for a kitchen remodel because then your BIG surprise will be spoiled. To prevent that, you will want to delete your search history so she won't know what you are up to. Right?

One should definitely practice clearing one's browsing data when using public computers (and that includes anytime you use the computers at our club). One good thing about our club computers is if you in fact forget to do so, we've got you covered (sort of). If you forget to log out of your online account or your email, and someone uses that same computer after you, then your information can be exposed. This happens. If no one uses the computer that day (after you), rest assured that our club resets all of its computers each night, essentially wiping it and clearing its temporary information so that the next day, each computer is fresh and ready to use (and if you did in fact forget to log out the previous day, your information will not be there the next day).

Now let's look at a couple of the specific browsers you might use. Do you use the Chrome browser?
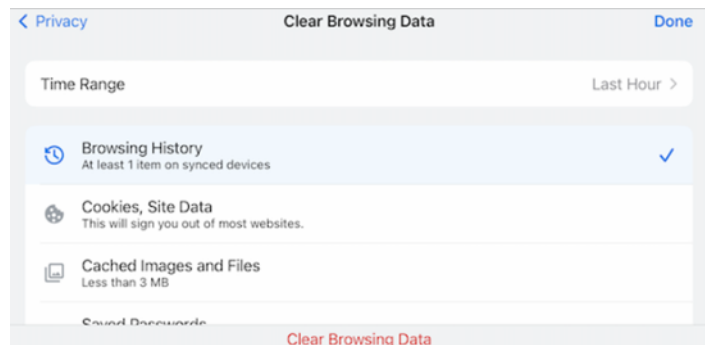

If so, then here is how to clear your browsing history in the **Chrome browser** while on a Mac or Windows PC.

1. Click the three (3) dots in the upper right corner of your Chrome browser.
2. Hover your mouse cursor over "More Tools" and then choose "Clear Browsing Data".
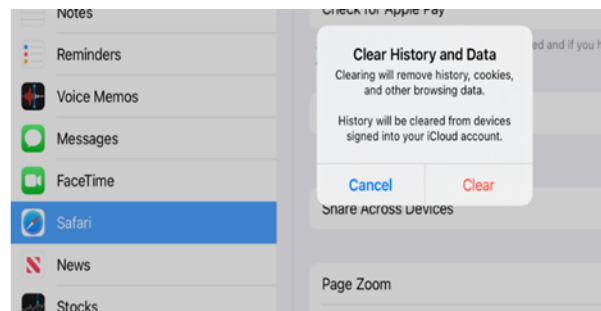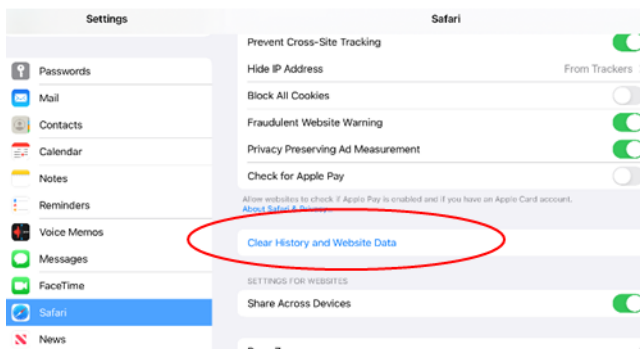
To clear your browsing history on google Chrome if using an Android, iPhone or iPad:

1. Tap the three (3) dot menu icon.
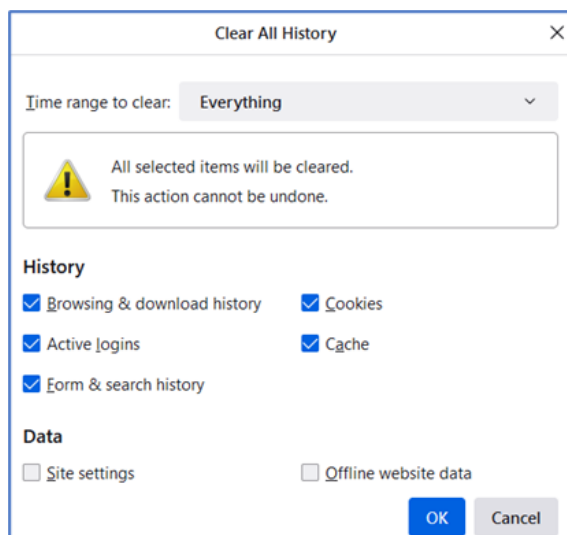2. Select Settings> Privacy and Security> Clear Browsing Data.

Using Safari on your iPhone or iPad? To clear its browsing history:
1. Open Settings.
2. Tap "Clear History and Website Data" and confirm your choice. This will clear all sensitive browsing data, including your cookies and cache.

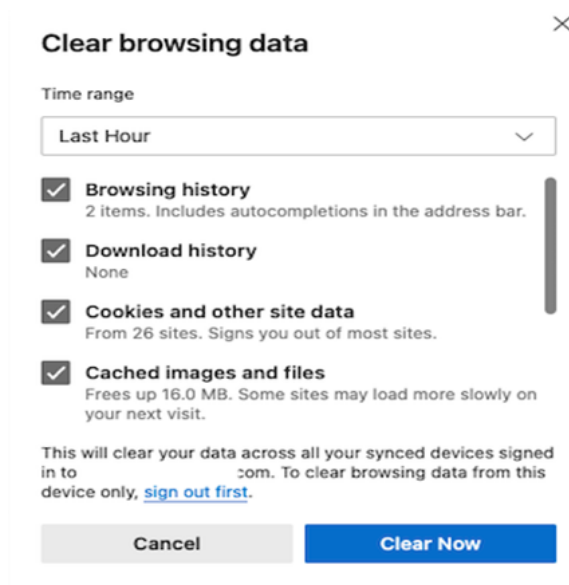# Browser history and browser cache (continued)

What if you use Mozilla Firefox? To clear your browsing history in Firefox on your desktop, click on the three (3) line menu in the upper right-hand corner and go to:

1. History> Clear Recent History.
2. You can choose to clear other types of private data from here, including cookies, browser cache, offline website data, etc.

OK, so you use Microsoft Edge. To clear your browsing history in Microsoft Edge, click the three (3) dot menu, then:
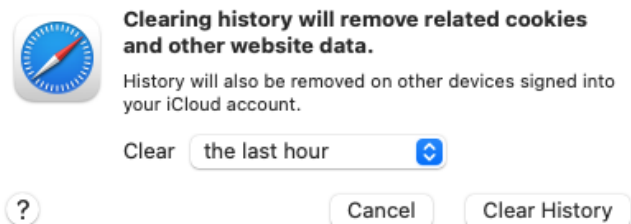
1. History> Three-Dot Menu button> Clear Browsing Data.
2. Ensure the "Browsing History" box (and any other box you desire, and then click "Clear Now".

To clear your browsing history in Safari on a Mac:

1. Click History> Clear History from the menu bar at the top of your screen.
2. Select the time period you want to clear history from and click "Clear History". To clear everything, select "all history".
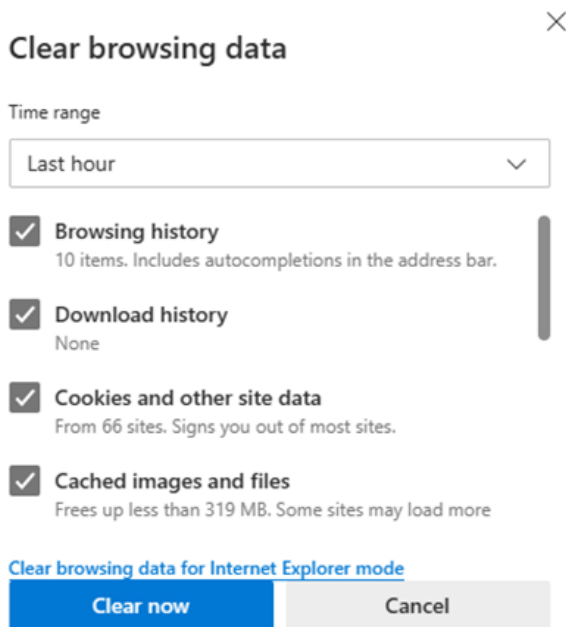
Safari will delete your browsing history as well as your cookies, cached file and other browsing related data.

Browser history and browser cache (continued)

Ok, if you are still with us, here is the **easiest way to clear your web browser history on a PC.** Simply simultaneously press the **Ctrl** + **Shift** + **Delete** keys while on your browser.

On a Mac, press the **Command** + **Shift** + **Delete** keys instead. (On a Mac, the *backspace key* is labeled "Delete." Pressing the Delete key beside the Home and Edit keys doesn't work).

In either case, a window should pop-up displaying "Clear Browsing Data" or "Clear History".

You can also pick a time range (last hour, last 24 hours, last week, all time) and the type of data (browsing history, download history, cookies, cached files, etc.) you want to clear. Once you make your selections, click the "Clear Data" or "Clear Now" button.

Hopefully you will use this information and clear your browsing history regularly. How often should one do this? It all depends. How much do you use your computer? How much time or how often do you surf various websites on the Internet?

If you only use your computer for emails and occasional Internet shopping, then you may not need to clear your browser as often. But, if you are a daily Internet shopper, fill out a lot of surveys on line, etc. you may want to clear your browsing history more frequently. Why don't you just go to your browser's history and see just how much is there? If there's quite a bit, then decide if you want to delete it. Let us know if this helps you.

Useful things you may want to know, or Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
that we made up ourselves

Q. I share my Netflix account with my son, who lives in Michigan. I've heard that Netflix does not want folks doing this and will shutdown the account, but so far I haven't had any issues and neither has he. Are they just trying to get me (or him) to buy an individual account?

A. We have heard the same thing, but Netflix recently has stated that they are going to crackdown on password sharing for those who do not actually reside in the same household. They realize a lot of folks do share with family members (who live elsewhere) so they are going to introduce what they deem as "paid sharing". Tested already in Latin America and Canada, they expect to do the same in the U.S. in the coming months. This "new" feature will let one pay an extra fee for an additional household to share one's current account. Although they have yet to announce the cost of the fee, it is estimated to be around $5 or $6 (in the U.S). Netflix will probably notify account holders in the next few months as they implement the paid sharing feature.

Q. Is there a way I can save voicemails from my phone? My Uncle is very ill and we used to converse frequently. He may be going into hospice and I want to save some of his voicemails because he has been such a good mentor to me and I know I'm going to miss him immensely, should he pass.

A. Actually, yes there is. You didn't mention the type of phone you have so here are the ways to save voicemails on both the iPhone and Android mobile phones.

iPhone:
- Go to your Phone app and tap *Voicemail* (bottom right), then tap on the voicemail you want to save.
- Now tap the *share button* (a box with an arrow pointing at it).
- You can now share this voicemail via *AirDrop*, Messages, *Mail* or *Voice Memo*. To save it on your phone, select either *Notes* or *Voice Memo*. Then you can access it within the app itself. If you backup to the iCloud, it will automatically save it there.
- To save it to your computer, select *AirDrop* and then your computer's name. Be sure that both your iPhone and computer are connected to the same network. On your computer, *accept AirDrop* and save the voicemail wherever you want.
- If you want to send the voicemail to someone else, you can select that contact in *Messages* or *Mail* or you can also *AirDrop* it (if they are nearby).

Android:
- Open your Voicemail app or go to the Voicemail section in your Phone app.
- Tap, or tap and hold the message you want to save. A menu appears.
- In the menu, look for options like *Save, Export,* or *Archive.*
- Select the storage location within your phone that you would like to save the message to and then *tap OK* or *Save*.

Q. My daughter asked me if I was using the Echo device she bought me for my 75th birthday earlier this year. I told her I was and she asked me if I was using Amazon Sidewalk, but I have no idea what that is. Can you explain? Is there something I need to do to use it or not?

A. Amazon Sidewalk is a shared network designed to create smart neighborhoods by letting everyone's smart home devices connect across Bluetooth and Wi-Fi. Amazon Sidewalk is a free to connect network that uses a portion of your Internet bandwidth to connect, as opposed to Wi-Fi and cellular networks that use high-bandwidth (to do web browsing, video calling, stream videos, etc.) High bandwidth works over short distances (like around your house). Since Amazon Sidewalk uses low bandwidth, it can transmit data up to a kilometer or half-mile away. The premise behind it is that it makes it possible for smart home devices to serve as a sort of bridge between your Wi-Fi connection and one another. That way, if your Ring doorbell, for example, isn't located close to your Wi-Fi router, but it happens to be near an Echo Dot, it can use Sidewalk to stay connected. When the Sidewalk Bridges in your house are active, wireless signals that reach outside your home to the *sidewalk* and beyond will allow any passing Sidewalk-enabled device (called a Sidewalk Endpoint) to instantly connect. Sidewalk will also help set up new Amazon products on your home Wi-Fi. So Amazon customers who have Alexa devices are basically **connected (by default) and no set-up is required,** allowing one to use sidewalk enabled smart lights, smart locks, one's Ring device, etc. when not at home. It is estimated that over 90% of people in the United States live in an area with Sidewalk coverage. Amazon says that although yours and your neighbor's devices are connected to their network, no one can access personal data from yours (or your neighbor's) home Wi-Fi and that privacy and security are foundational to Sidewalk. It cannot see the content of messages or other content on one's home network because it uses security keys and multiple layers of encryption to secure data in transit. But if you do not want to use Amazon Sidewalk, you have to turn it off manually using your Alexa app settings (or the Ring app's Control Center, if you have a Ring doorbell installed). Here's how to do so:

1.   Open your Alexa app (on your phone or tablet). Select the **More** tab (from the bottom).

2.   Select **Settings** (the gear icon).

3.   Next select **Account settings> Amazon Sidewalk** and **change the toggle to Disabled.** That's it.

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   If you like reading the Newsletter each month, let us know. You can login to your account at: https://computer.scaclub.org/ then select **Contact Us** from the menu.

   Select **Newsletter** from the contact options, then **Next**. Fill out the information and **Send message**. Is there a particular topic you are interested in? Want more articles on Android devices, networking, staying safe while on the Internet or ???

   While we try to keep articles relevant, we could always use an idea or two, so don't be shy. Contact Us and let us know if you like the Newsletter, or ways to improve it. Or, if you don't even read it and couldn't care less if one is written or not, let us know that too. It could save us a whole lot of time and effort (smile) and we could go out for dinner (yum, dim sum), enjoy a hike on the Shadow Canyon Trailhead, take the grandkids to the local museums, gamble that extra money from our Social Security check on our favorite slots down on the Strip, etc. (Ha Ha). No, really, we'd love hearing from you, so don't be shy!