

My Google Chromebook™

Second Edition



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Michael Miller

FREE SAMPLE CHAPTER



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My Google
Chromebook™
Second Edition



Michael Miller

que®

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My Google Chromebook™, Second Edition

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ISBN-13: 978-0-7897-5138-6

ISBN-10: 0-7897-5138-0

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file.

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing: April 2013

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About the Author

Michael Miller is a prolific and popular writer of more than 100 non-fiction books, known for his ability to explain complex topics to everyday readers. He writes about a variety of topics, including technology, business, and music. His best-selling books for Que include *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Computer Basics*, *Easy Computer Basics*, *Using Google Advanced Search*, *Your First Notebook PC*, *Facebook for Grown-Ups*, and *My Pinterest*. Worldwide, his books have sold more than 1 million copies.

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Dedication

To my wonderful grandkids Alethia, Collin, Hayley, Judah, and Lael.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to all the folks at Que who helped turned this manuscript into a book, including Rick Kughen, Greg Wiegand, Charlotte Kughen, and technical editor Karen Weinstein.

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In this chapter, you get an introduction to web-based computing with Google's Chrome OS running on Chromebook and Chromebox computers.

- What Is a Chromebook?
- What Is a Chromebox?
- What Is Google Chrome OS?
- What Is Cloud Computing?
- Should You Buy a Chromebook?
- Which Chromebook Should You Buy?

A large blue square containing a white letter 'P'.

Understanding Chrome, Chromebooks, and Cloud Computing

A Chromebook is a new breed of ultra-portable netbook computer—kind of like a tablet PC but with a keyboard. They're lightweight and have very long battery life, and with one you can do all your computing from wherever you have an Internet connection.

Chromebooks run the Google Chrome operating system (also known as Chrome OS), a new type web-based operating system. They can run any web-based application. Everything a Chromebook does is a form of cloud computing, which uses applications and data files stored in the "cloud" of the Internet, not on any individual personal computer.

Because of its web-based nature, using a Chromebook and the Chrome OS is quite a bit different from using a traditional notebook PC and either Microsoft Windows or the Mac OS. To get the most use out of your new Chromebook, then, you need to become familiar with how cloud computing works—as well as all the ins and outs of your new Chromebook.

What Is a Chromebook?

Put simply, a Chromebook is a netbook computer that runs the Google Chrome OS. A netbook is a particularly small and lightweight type of notebook PC; whereas most netbooks run a version of the Microsoft Windows operating system, Chromebooks instead run Google's web-based operating system. (Hence the name Chromebook—a netbook running Google Chrome OS.)

Like all netbooks, a Chromebook is smaller and lighter than a traditional notebook PC. Because most Chromebooks don't contain a hard disk or CD/DVD drive, that space and weight is removed from the equation. Most Chromebooks have 12" (or so) diagonal screens, are very thin, and weigh less than three pounds.

If there's no hard drive inside, how does a Chromebook store your data? The answer is *solid state storage*, the same kind you find on USB flash drives and the memory cards you use with your digital camera. Most current Chromebooks come with 16GB of internal solid state storage—considerably less than what you find with a traditional notebook, but it's all that Chrome OS needs to run. As for storing your data, that's what the Web is for; a Chromebook needs only minimal local storage.

Exceptions

The one exception to the no-hard drive rule is Acer's C7 Chromebook, which comes with a 320GB hard drive for local storage—even though you can still use cloud storage for your data, if you like. And the singular exception to the 12" screen size is HP's Pavilion Chromebook, which has a 14" screen.

In terms of processing power, today's Chromebooks use one of two dual-core processors. Acer, HP, and Lenovo models use an Intel Celeron processor; the Samsung Chromebook opts for a proprietary Samsung Exynos 5 Dual processor. To be honest, these aren't the most powerful processors available today, but they're all that's needed to run the small-footprint Chrome OS.

This combination of small screen, minimal solid state storage, and efficient processor means that a Chromebook has an impressive battery life—anywhere from 6 to 8 hours on a charge. (Less for the Acer model with a built-in hard drive and the HP with the larger screen; both of these units get only 4 hours or so of battery life.) Chromebooks are also virtually instant on; most boot up in 10 seconds or so, and resume instantly from sleep mode. It's a

much different—and much more efficient—computing experience than what you're used to.

In essence, then, a Chromebook is a computer that is built and optimized for the Web, using Chrome OS. It provides a faster, simplified, and more secure computing environment than with traditional Windows or Mac computers.

Chromebooks Online

Learn more about Chromebooks and Google Chrome OS online at www.google.com/chromebook/.

What Is a Chromebox?

Chromebooks aren't the only devices that run Google's Chrome operating system. If you want a Chrome computer in a traditional desktop form factor, check out Samsung's Chromebox—a small device that's perfect as the base unit for a desktop PC system.

A Chromebox is merely a Chromebook without a screen or keyboard. It's a small box you can hold in your hand, but it has enough inputs and outputs to connect an external monitor, keyboard, and mouse—and thus create a Chrome-based desktop PC.

As such, a Chromebox is ideal for companies wishing to replace existing Windows-based desktop PCs. It's a perfect choice for organizations that have standardized on the Google Apps suite of applications. Like portable Chromebooks, Chromeboxes run Google's Chrome operating system.

What Is Google Chrome OS?

We've talked a lot about the Chrome operating system that runs on Chromebook and Chromebox devices. But what exactly is the Chrome OS?

Google's Chrome OS is the world's first operating system for the new era of cloud computing. It's a web-based operating system in that it relies on a variety of web-based services and applications to work; it doesn't run traditional desktop applications. It's designed to be used on smallish computers, such as the portable Chromebook and living room-based Chromebox, that are wirelessly connected to the Internet.

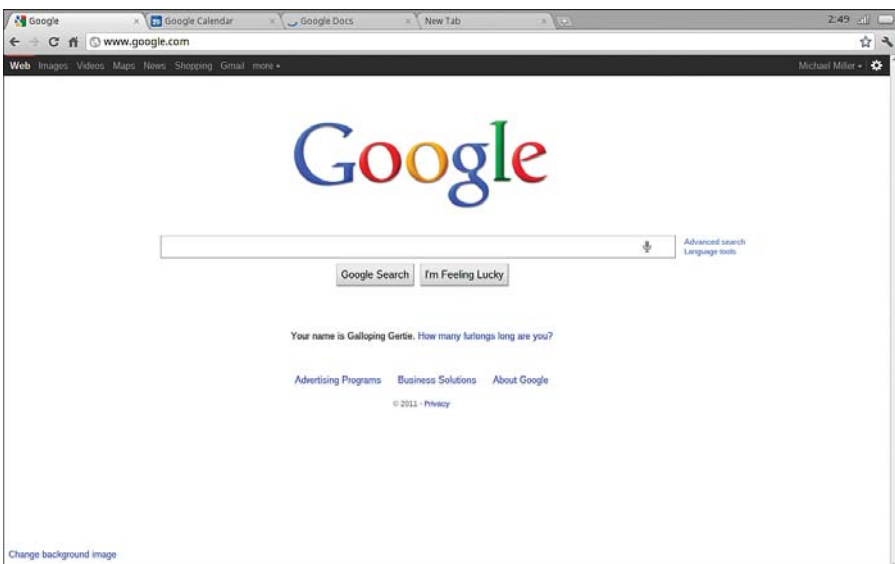
Because it runs over the Web, Chrome OS is a “lightweight” operating system, meaning it doesn’t have a large footprint in terms of file size or memory or processing requirements. It can fit quite easily within the limited internal storage space of a small Chromebook or Chromebox computer, and it is automatically updated whenever the computer is connected to the Internet. It’s also relatively fast and efficient, which results in short startup times and sprightly operation.

Chrome and Linux

Chrome is an open source operating system, which means that it can be freely distributed without paying expensive licensing costs. It is based on a version of Linux, another operating system that itself is based on the established UNIX operating system. The Chrome OS interface runs on top of the underlying Linux kernel.

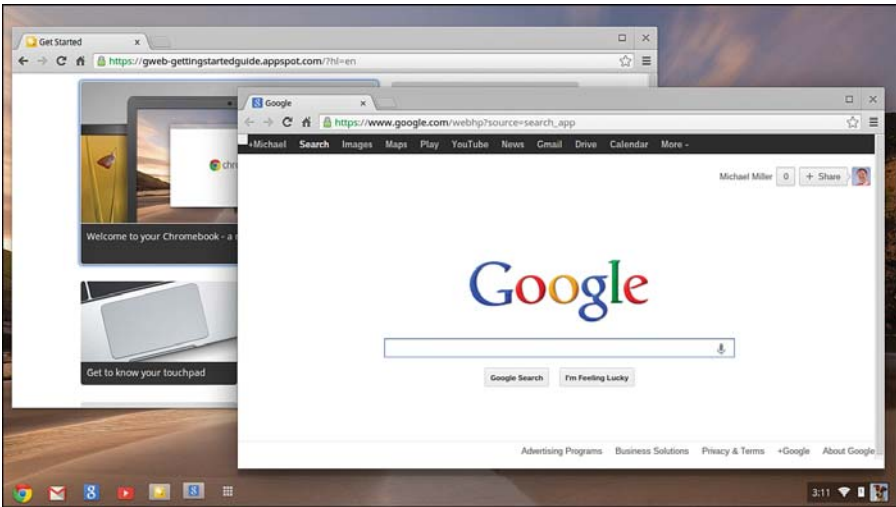
The first iteration of Chrome OS closely resembled Google’s Chrome web browser. There was no traditional desktop, as is found in Microsoft Windows or Apple’s Mac OS, and applications were launched in individual tabs within the Chrome browser. Using this early version of Chrome was more like browsing the Web than it was navigating a complex operating system, such as Windows.

The initial version of Chrome OS; no desktop, just a single browser with multiple tabs.



People didn't like that browser-based interface, so Google changed it. The current version of Chrome OS features the same sort of desktop you find in Windows or the Mac OS. Applications open in their own multiple windows on the desktop, and you can easily switch from one open window to another. It's very similar to using Microsoft Windows or the Mac OS; the big difference is that most of what you launch is housed on the Web, not locally.

The current version of Chrome OS, complete with traditional desktop and multiple windows.



That's right, Chrome OS does not and cannot run traditional software programs; everything it runs must be a web-based application. This means that you can't use programs like Microsoft Office or Adobe Photoshop.

That's not necessarily a bad thing. Using web-based applications—or what we call *cloud computing*—has a lot of benefits, as we'll discuss next.

What Is Cloud Computing?

Cloud computing represents a major shift in how we run computer applications and store data. With cloud computing, instead of hosting applications and data on an individual desktop computer, everything is hosted in the “cloud”—a nebulous assemblage of computers and servers accessed via the

Internet. Cloud computing lets you access your applications and documents from anywhere in the world, freeing you from the confines of the desktop and facilitating wholesale group collaboration.

How Traditional Desktop Computing Works

Traditional desktop computing is all about the sovereignty of the individual computer. Although individual computers can be networked together, all the computer power resides on the desktop; each personal computer has its own massive amounts of memory and hard disk storage.

This storage is put to good use for storing all your programs and data. You have to install on your computer a copy of each software program you use. These programs are run from your computer's hard drive, and the documents you create are stored on the same computer and hard drive. Programs and documents are specific to individual machines.

In other words, desktop computing is computer-centric.

How Cloud Computing Works

In contrast, cloud computing doesn't depend on individual computers much at all. With cloud computing, the applications you run and the documents you create aren't stored on your personal computer, but are instead stored on servers that you access via the Internet. If your computer crashes, the application is still available for others to use—or for you to run from another computer.

It's the same thing with the documents you create, but even more so. Because the documents are stored in the "cloud," anyone with permission can not only access the documents but can also edit and collaborate on those documents in real time.

Unlike traditional computing, then, this cloud computing model isn't computer-centric, it's user- or document-centric. Which computer you use to access a document simply isn't important; instead, the focus is on your apps and data, which you can access from anywhere, on any device—such as a Chromebook or Chromebox PC.

DEFINING THE CLOUD

Key to the definition of cloud computing is the “cloud” itself. Put simply, the cloud is a grid of interconnected computers. These computers can be personal computers or network servers; they can be public or private.

For example, Google hosts a cloud that consists of both smallish PCs and larger servers. Google’s cloud is a private one (that is, Google owns it) that is publicly accessible (by Google’s users).

This cloud of computers extends beyond a single company or enterprise. The applications and data served by the cloud are available to a broad group of users, cross-enterprise and cross-platform. Access is via the Internet; any authorized user can access these docs and apps from any computer over any Internet connection. And, to the user, the technology and infrastructure behind the cloud is invisible; all you see are the applications and documents you use, not the technology that drives access.

Should You Buy a Chromebook?

Chromebooks and Chromeboxes both define and depend on the concept of cloud computing. All the apps you run and all the files you create are stored on the Web and accessed via the Internet on your Google Chrome device.

But Chromebooks and Chromeboxes aren’t the only type of computing devices that rely on cloud computing. Smartphones and tablets are much like Chromebooks (but without the keyboard) in that they have minimal internal storage because they store most of their data on the Web. Although these devices might store many of their apps locally, there’s still a lot of cloud streaming going on.

For this reason, people use Chromebooks for many of the same tasks they do on their iPads or other tablets. Watching streaming video from the cloud is a snap with a Chromebook, as is listening to streaming music, viewing your Facebook or Twitter feed, and the like. The fact that you have a keyboard attached just makes the Chromebook that much more versatile.

This begs the question—is a Chromebook the right device for you? Or should you invest in a tablet, or a traditional PC?

As with any technology purchase, you need to weigh the pros and cons and then decide what's best for your personal use. With that in mind, let's take a look at the benefits and disadvantages you might find in using a Chromebook running Chrome OS.

Chromebook Versus Tablet

For many users, a Chromebook is a viable alternative to purchasing an iPad or similar tablet computer. There are many advantages to using a Chromebook over a tablet, including the following:

- **Keyboard and touchpad**—A tablet is just a screen—a touchscreen, mind you, but a screen nonetheless. If you want to do anything beyond watching movies and browsing web pages, it's difficult; you have to tap an onscreen virtual keyboard, which isn't that great for anything more than a tweet or a short Facebook post. A Chromebook, on the other hand, includes a traditional computer keyboard and mouse-like touchpad, both of which are necessary if you need to input much of anything at all. Given the similar price, that keyboard and touchpad add tremendous value to a Chromebook.
- **More productivity**—The Chromebook's keyboard and mouse input let you be a lot more productive than you can on a tablet. Whether you're writing school essays or business reports, you need that keyboard. Same thing if you do a lot of emailing or number crunching; you just can't do it as well or as accurately on a tablet's onscreen keyboard. The touchpad is also useful if you're doing heavy-duty photo editing or serious game play. In other words, if it's productivity you're looking for, a Chromebook is the way to go.
- **Inputs and outputs**—Some tablets have a USB port or two, but many (including the best-selling Apple iPad) don't. That's where a Chromebook shines. In terms of connectors, it's outfitted like a traditional notebook PC. There are some differences between models, but expect to find at least two USB input/output ports and an HDMI output. The USB ports let you connect USB flash drives, external storage devices, and peripherals; the HDMI port provides high definition audio/video output to a wide-screen TV or home theater system. You don't get all this with a typical tablet.

- **Bigger screen**—Tablets today come in two primary screen sizes—small (8" or so) and large (10" or so). Small tablets typically cost about the same as a Chromebook, in the \$200 to \$250 range, but with a much smaller screen. And the larger tablets, while much more expensive, aren't that much larger—and their screens are still smaller than a Chromebook screen. If you need the screen real estate, whether for watching movies or browsing websites, the Chromebook is the choice for you.
- **Price**—Starting at \$199, Chromebooks are price-competitive with the lower-end tablets, such as the small-screen Google Nexus 7 and Amazon Kindle Fire HD. Even the higher-priced Chromebooks are considerably lower-priced than even the lowest-price Apple iPad. The price comparison is even more compelling when you realize that for the price of an iPad (\$500 and up), you can buy *two* Chromebooks—or just one and have money left over for other fun stuff.

In other words, a Chromebook gives you all the productivity and connectivity of a notebook computer, but in a tablet-like form factor and price point. If you're comparing a Chromebook to a tablet, you can do a lot more with the Chromebook.

Chromebook Versus Traditional Notebook

A Chromebook is also a viable alternative to a traditional Windows or Mac notebook PC. There are a lot of advantages to the Chromebook in this comparison, including the following:

- **Low price**—Today's third-generation Chromebooks cost between \$200 and \$400—much lower priced than traditional notebook PCs, which are likely to set you back \$500 or more. (Much more, in the terms of Apple products.) When you want a second device for consuming media or casual productivity, the low cost of a Chromebook is very appealing.

First-Generation Chromebooks

The initial round of Chromebooks, released in 2011, were not as appealing, price-wise. Those Chromebooks sold for \$350 to \$500, and didn't represent as good a value compared to tablets or traditional notebook PCs.

- **No software to buy**—Not only does a Chromebook cost less than a comparable notebook PC, you also don't have to lay out big bucks for software to run on the device. Because a Chromebook doesn't run traditional (and expensive) computer software, you instead load a variety of free or low-cost web-based apps. Considering the high price of Microsoft Office and similar programs, you can save hundreds or even thousands of dollars by using web-based applications instead. That also means you don't have to worry about installing multiple programs, or managing regular upgrades; with web apps, there's nothing to install, and all upgrades happen automatically.
- **No worry about local storage and backup**—With a traditional computer, you have to manage limited hard disk storage space and worry about backing up your important files. Not so with a Chromebook; all your files are stored on the Web, where you have virtually unlimited storage, so you don't have to worry about data storage at all. You also don't have to worry about backups because you always have a copy of your files online.
- **Reduced malware danger**—Because you don't download and run traditional computer software, computer viruses and spyware are virtual non-issues on a Chromebook. You don't even have to run antivirus programs because viruses simply can't be installed on Chrome OS.
- **Enhanced security**—If you lose a traditional computer, all your personal files and information is also lost—or, in the case of theft, placed in the hands of criminals. Not so with a Chromebook. If somebody steals your Chromebook, all they get is a piece of hardware; because all files and data are stored on the Web, nothing important resides on the machine itself. This makes a Chromebook the most secure computer today.
- **More portability**—Like a tablet, a Chromebook is smaller and lighter than a traditional notebook PC. That's great for when you're on the go.
- **Faster boot up**—Instant resumption from sleep mode. Reboot from scratch in less than 10 seconds, on average. Try to find a Windows-based computer that can do that.
- **Enhanced collaboration**—Cloud computing is built for collaboration. Because your documents are all stored on the Web, multiple users can access and edit those documents in real time. No more passing files around from user to user—all you have to do is use your Chromebook to go online and start collaborating.

- **Ideal for multiple users**—With traditional computing, every user has to have his own computer, which stores all his files and personalized computing environment. With Chrome OS, your files, applications, and personalized desktop are stored on the Web; any Chromebook you use becomes your personal Chromebook after you log into your Google Account. A single Chromebook can easily be shared between multiple users, and it really doesn't matter whose computer it is.

Put simply, a Chromebook gives you all the advantages of a tablet combined with traditional notebook PC productivity—at a very attractive price. A Chromebook is smaller, lighter, faster, and more secure than a Windows or Mac notebook, and costs a lot less, too.

Chromebooks in Schools

Chromebooks have proved particularly popular in the education market. The low hardware cost, coupled with less need for expensive software and easier maintenance, have encouraged many schools to standardize on Chromebooks for their students.

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. When you're offline, a Chromebook really can't do anything.

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.)

- **Doesn't work well with slow connections.** Similarly, a low-speed Internet connection, such as that found with old school dial-up services, 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 dial-up 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.** There are lots of free or low-cost web-based applications available, but not all the programs you currently use have web-based counterparts. For example, if you do a lot of photo editing, you'd be hard pressed to find a web application with all the functionality of Adobe Photoshop. Even those apps that have web-based versions, such as Microsoft Office, often offer less functionality and compatibility online. Make sure that 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 important questions, and well worth further examination. If you're worried about data security or reliability, using Chrome OS might not be for you.

And when you're comparing a Chromebook with a tablet PC, 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. The Samsung Chromebook comes in at 2.4 pounds, which is about a pound more than the iPad.

(Other models are even heavier; the Acer C7 weighs a tad over 3 pounds, and both the HP Pavilion and Lenovo Chromebooks are closer to 4 pounds.) If weight matters, a tablet might be more appealing.

- **It has a shorter battery life than a tablet.** The 4-to-6 hour battery life of a third-generation Chromebook sounds good compared to the battery life of a typical notebook PC, but is somewhat shorter than what you get with most current tablets. For example, Apple's iPad 4 boasts a 10-hour battery life, which is nothing to sneeze at.

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 the holiday season.

The lowest-priced third-generation Chromebook is the 11.6" Acer C7, priced at \$199.99. It comes in an iron gray finish and offers 2GB memory and a 320GB hard drive for internal storage. It offers Wi-Fi wireless connectivity and a built-in webcam, and weighs just a hair more than 3 pounds.



Acer's C7 Chromebook

The silver-finish Samsung Chromebook (that's its full name, really) is priced at \$249.99. Like the Acer, it offers an 11.6" high-definition display, 2GB memory, Wi-Fi connectivity, and a built-in webcam (standard definition instead of the Acer's high def). Instead of a hard disk, you get 16GB of faster solid state storage. The Samsung is a little smaller than the Acer, at 0.69" high compared to 1.1" for the Acer; it's also more than a half pound lighter, at just 2.4 pounds. Battery life is also better—6.5 hours for the Samsung, versus 4 hours for the Acer.



The Samsung Chromebook

3G Chromebook

Samsung's Chromebook is also available in a model with both Wi-Fi and 3G wireless connectivity—which means you can connect it to your cellular data network when there are no Wi-Fi hotspots around. The 3G version sells for \$329.99.

HP is a newer entrant into the Chromebook market, with its Pavilion Chromebook (model 14-c010us). HP's Chromebook is unique in having a larger 14" screen, which is nice for viewing but limits battery life to just over 4 hours. Other than the screen, specs are similar to the Samsung Chromebook—2GB memory, 16GB solid state storage, and such. Weight is a little heavier, at 3.96 pounds, and the price is also a little higher, at \$329.99.



HP's 14" Pavilion Chromebook

The final current Chromebook manufacturer is Lenovo, which aims its Thinkpad X131e Chromebook squarely at the education market. The Thinkpad Chromebook looks more rugged than its competitors, and adds Lenovo's unique nub-like TrackPoint stick controller. In terms of specs, it offers an 11.6" screen, 4GB memory, 16GB solid state storage, and 6.5-hour battery life. The price is relatively high, at \$429.99—but then again, Lenovo has no plans at present to sell this unit direct to consumers, only to K-12 educational institutions, which have unique needs.



Lenovo's Thinkpad Chromebook

The following table compares the third-generation Chromebooks.

Chromebook Model Comparison

	Acer C7	Samsung Chromebook	HP Pavilion Chromebook	Lenovo Thinkpad Chromebook
List price	\$199.99	\$249.99	\$329.99	\$429.99
Screen size	11.6"	11.6"	14"	11.6"
Resolution (pixels)	1366 × 768	1366 × 768	1366 × 768	1366 × 768
Dimensions	8.0" × 11.2" × 1.1"	8.1" × 11.4" × 0.69"	9.37" × 13.66" × 0.83"	N/A (1.3" thick)
Weight	3.04 lbs.	2.43 lbs.	3.96 lbs.	3.92 lbs.
Battery life	4 hours	6.5 hours	4 hours, 15 minutes	6.5 hours
Wi-Fi wireless connectivity	Yes (802.11 a/b/g/n)	Yes (802.11 a/b/g/n)	Yes (802.11 a/b/g/n)	Yes (802.11 a/b/g/n)
Memory	2GB	2GB	2GB	4GB
Solid state data storage	None	16GB	16GB	16GB
Hard drive storage	320GB	None	None	None
Processor	1.1GHz Dual-core Intel Celeron	1.7GHz Samsung Exynos 5 Dual	1.1GHz Dual-core Intel Celeron	Intel Celeron
USB ports	3 (USB 2.0)	2 (1 USB 2.0 + 1 USB 3.0)	3 (USB 2.0)	3 (1 USB 2.0 + 2 USB 3.0)

	Acer C7	Samsung Chromebook	HP Pavilion Chromebook	Lenovo Thinkpad Chromebook
Memory card slot	2-in-1 (SD/MMC)	3-in-1 (SD/SDHC/SDXC)	2-in-1 (SD/MMC)	N/A
External video port(s)	VGA, HDMI	HDMI	HDMI	VGA, HDMI
Ethernet port	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Built-in webcam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Webcam resolution	HD	VGA	HD	HD
Operating system	Google Chrome OS	Google Chrome OS	Google Chrome OS	Google Chrome OS

Google Chromebook Pixel

There's one more Chromebook to consider, although it's definitely not aimed at the general consumer market. Google's new Chromebook Pixel features an ultra-high resolution display, bigger screen, and state-of-the-art hardware design—but sells for \$1,299. Learn more in Appendix B, "Google Chromebook Pixel."

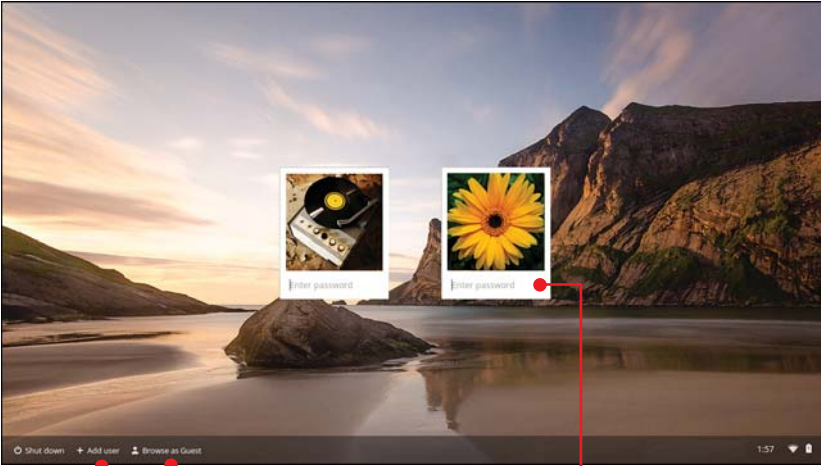
Samsung Chromebook 550

Some outlets still have available Samsung's second generation Chromebook 550. This model has a slightly larger 12.1" display, 4GB memory, an HD webcam, and 4-in-1 memory card slot. It weighs 3.3 pounds and promises 6 hours of battery life. The big downside is the cost—\$449 for a Wi-Fi only model, or \$549 for a model with both Wi-Fi and 3G wireless connectivity.

If you're in the market for a Chromebox for your living room, there's just one model to choose from. The Samsung Series 3 Chromebox is run by a 1.9GHz Intel Celeron B840 dual-core processor and includes 4GB memory and 16GB solid state storage. It's a compact device, measuring just 7.5" × 7.5" × 1.28". It comes with built-in 802.11 a/b/g/n Wi-Fi, six USB ports, and DisplayPort and DVI outputs. The Series 3 Chromebox sells for \$329.99.



The Samsung Series 3 Chromebox



**Add new
user to this
Chromebook**

**Browse the Web
via Guest
account**

**Enter account
password**

In this chapter, you find out how to create multiple users for your Chromebook, how to switch from user to user, and how to use Chromebook's Guest account

- Adding Users to Your Chromebook
- Editing User Information
- Switching Users

4

Managing Multiple Users

A Chromebook is only a piece of hardware; all your personal settings, information, and data are stored on the Web. As such, you can log into any Chromebook machine with your Google Account, and it will look and feel just like your own Chromebook. And it's easy enough for other users to log into your Chromebook, as well, and make it their own.

How easy is it to add new users to a Chromebook? Pretty easy, as you'll soon discover.

Adding Users to Your Chromebook

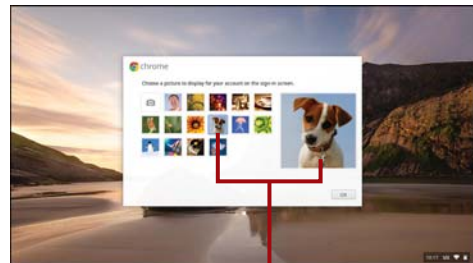
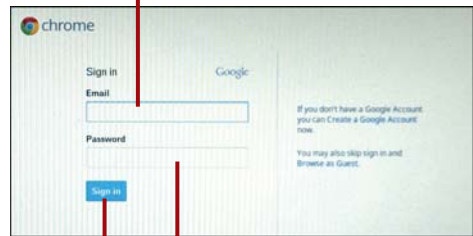
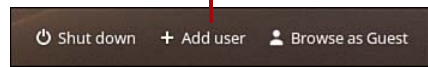
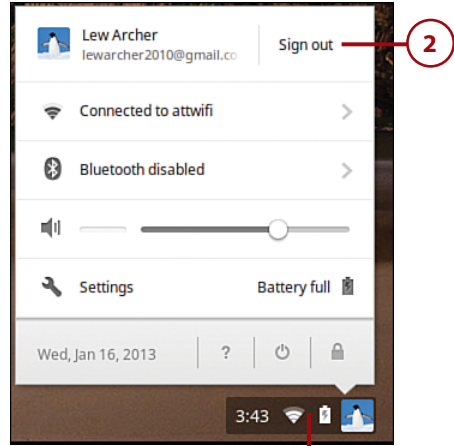
When you first started up your Chromebook, you were prompted to enter your Google Account name and password. This account becomes your default user account on your Chromebook. You can, however, add other users to your Chromebook—that is, let other people with Google Accounts use this particular Chromebook.

Add a User

You can let any number of users log onto your Chromebook, as long as they all have Google Accounts.

1. Click anywhere in the status area to display the Settings panel.
2. Click Sign Out.
3. From the login screen, click + Add User. The Sign In screen displays.
4. Enter the new user's Gmail address into the Email field.
5. Enter the user's Gmail password into the Password field.
6. Click the Sign In button.
7. Select a picture for the new account and then click the OK button.

Chrome displays the Welcome to Your Chromebook window. Close this window to begin using Chrome as normal. The next time you open your Chromebook, this account will be one of the options on the login screen.



USING OTHER CHROMEBOOKS

With the Chrome OS, you're not limited to a single Chromebook. You can also use other people's Chromebooks, by logging into your Google Account on that machine.

When you log into any Chromebook with your Google Account, that Chromebook displays all the apps and personalization that you've made to your own Chromebook. In essence, your Chromebook settings travel from machine to machine; they're tied to your account in the cloud, not to any particular piece of hardware.

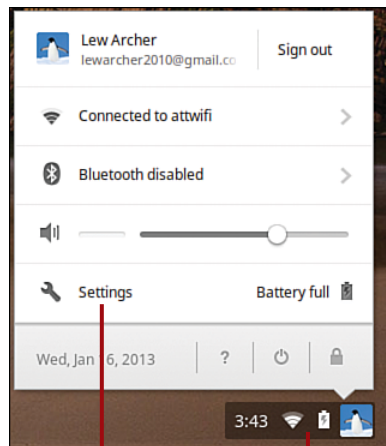
Editing User Information

Don't like the picture you've chosen for your Chromebook user account? It's easy enough to change—along with other information in your Google Account.

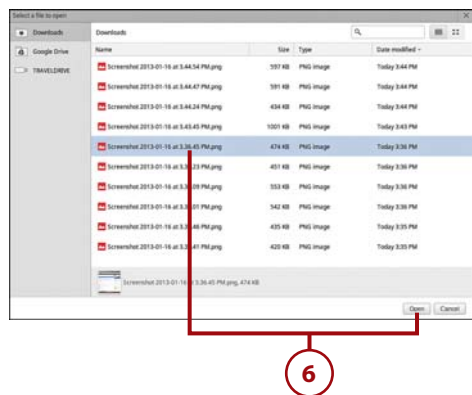
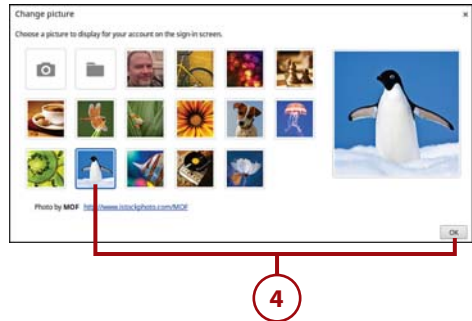
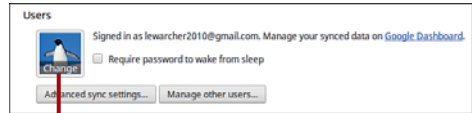
Change Your Profile Picture

Google Chrome lets you choose from a selection of built-in icons for your user account picture, upload an existing picture, or shoot a new picture using your webcam.

1. Click anywhere in the status area to display the Settings panel.
2. Click Settings to open the Settings page.



3. Scroll to the Users section and click the thumbnail image. The Change Picture panel displays. Use step 4, 5, or 6 as appropriate.
4. To use one of the built-in icons, click the image you want to use for your picture and then click OK.
5. To take a picture with your Chromebook's webcam and use it for your account picture, click the Camera icon. When the live image from your webcam appears, smile into the camera and click the green camera button. If you like the picture that results, click the OK button. (If you don't like what you see, click the Trash icon and take another picture.)
6. To upload a stored picture for your account picture, click the Folder icon. When the Select a File to Open panel appears, navigate to and select the file you want to upload and then click the Open button.

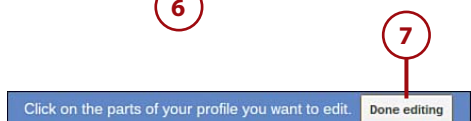
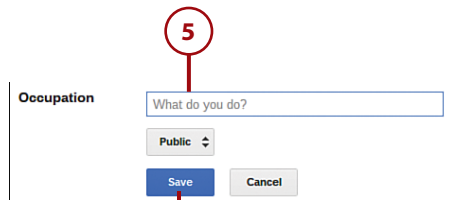
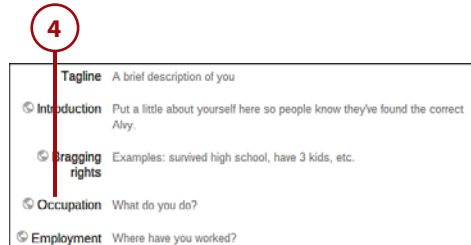
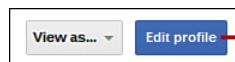
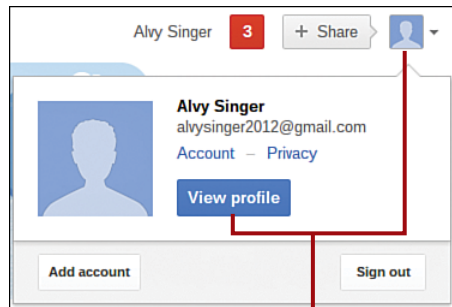


Edit Your Profile

Your Chromebook account is tied to your Google Account, in that they both use the same username (email address) and password. As a result, you can log into your account from any Chromebook.

Your Google Account is used by all Google services and applications, and includes your personal account profile. If this is a new Google Account, you need to create a new profile. You can also edit your profile at any time.

1. Open a new Chrome window and go to www.google.com.
2. Click your account name or picture in the top-right corner of the page and select View Profile. Your profile page displays.
3. Click the Edit Profile button. This makes everything in your profile editable.
4. Click the section of your profile you want to edit; this opens a panel for editing.
5. Enter the appropriate information for that section.
6. Click the Save button when you're done entering information for that section.
7. Move to the next section you want to edit and repeat steps 4 through 6. When you're done editing your profile, click the Done Editing button at the top of the page.



Click on the parts of your profile you want to edit. Done editing

Google Account

A single Google Account provides your own personal access to all of Google's various sites and services. That includes personalized search results from Google's search engine (www.google.com), email service from Gmail (mail.google.com), online calendars on Google Calendar (www.google.com/calendar/), and your own account on Google+ (plus.google.com), Google's social network.

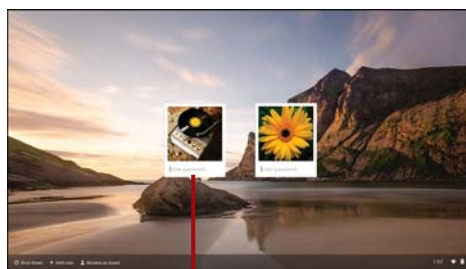
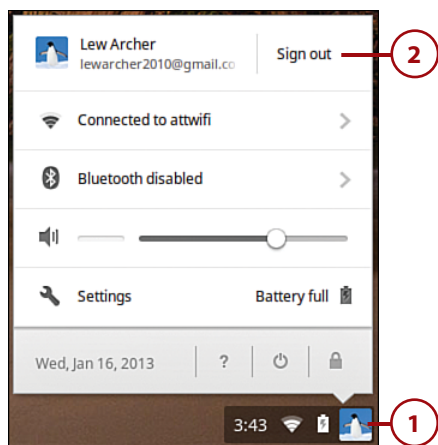
Switching Users

If you've created multiple user accounts for your Chromebook, it's easy to switch from one user account to another—without shutting down your machine.

Switch User Accounts

To switch users, you need to sign out from one account on your Chromebook and sign into another.

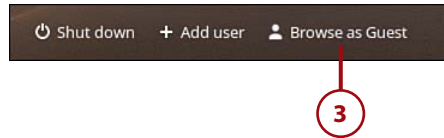
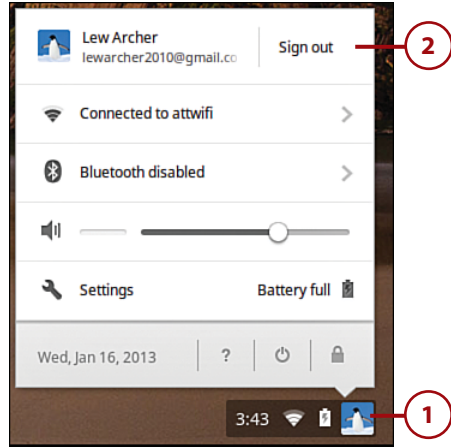
1. Click anywhere in the status area to display the Settings panel.
2. Click Sign Out.
3. Your Chromebook displays the login screen. Select the user account to log into, enter the password, and press Enter.



Log in as a Guest User

Any person can log into your Chromebook as a Guest user. A Guest user has limited use of the Chromebook; he or she can browse the Web, but not save or access files on your machine. In addition, a Guest user's browsing and search history are not saved.

1. Click anywhere in the status area to display the Settings panel.
2. Click Sign Out.
3. Your Chromebook now displays the log in screen. Click Browse as Guest.



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