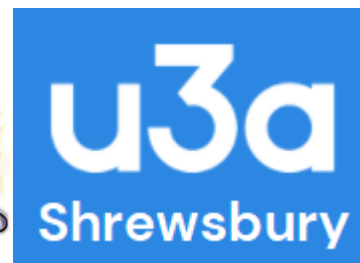


Bits & Bobs – March 2026

1. Windows & Edge “Top Tips”

Clipboard History (Win+V)



- Stores your last 25 copied items.
- Lets you paste older items, not just the most recent.
- Why isn't it on by default? Privacy reasons — Windows doesn't assume you want your clipboard stored.
- Turn on via Settings → System → Clipboard. Or when you first use Win+V

Mac:

- Built-in clipboard history doesn't exist... unless you use Universal Clipboard (copy on Mac → paste on iPad/iPhone).
- For true history, people use 3rd party apps like Paste or CopyClip.

iPad:

- No built-in history.
- Universal Clipboard works here too.

Storage Sense

- Automatically clears temporary files, old downloads, and recycle bin contents.
- Helps keep older laptops running smoothly.
- Set it to run: Settings → System → Storage → Storage Sense.
- Great for members who never empty their Recycle Bin.

Mac:

- Apple menu → About This Mac → Storage → Manage
- Empty bin automatically
- Remove old files
- Optimise iCloud storage
- Review large files

iPad:

- Settings → General → iPad Storage
- Offload unused apps
- Review large attachments
- Auto-delete old messages

Equivalent idea: Apple calls it Optimised Storage.

Edge Tab Groups

- Colour-coded groups to keep browsing tidy.
- Right-click a tab → Add tab to new group.
- Perfect for:
 - Holiday research
 - Online shopping
 - Genealogy tabs
 - Club project pages

You sometimes lose these when you shutdown the computer, so use ... Collections

Mac (Safari):

- Tab Groups built in
- Colour-coded
- Sync across devices
- Can save them permanently

iPad (Safari):

- Same Tab Groups feature
- Very touch-friendly

Equivalent: Almost identical to Edge's version.

Edge Collections

- A brilliant way to save:
 - Web pages
 - Notes
 - Images
 - AI chats
- Great for “research sessions” or saving things to revisit later.
- Found in the right-hand sidebar.

Synchronises across devices

Mac (Safari):

- Reading List (quick saves)
- Bookmarks with folders
- Shared Tab Groups
- Notes app integrates nicely

iPad:

- Same Safari features
- Plus drag-and-drop into Notes or Files

Closest equivalent: Safari's Tab Groups + Notes combo.

Edge Downloads Folder Settings

- By default, everything goes into Downloads, which can become a mess.
- Change to “Ask me every time”:
Settings → Downloads → Ask where to save each file.
- Helps members avoid losing files.

Mac (Safari):

- Safari → Settings → General → File download location
- Option: Ask for each download (same as Edge)

iPad:

- Safari → Downloads → Ask
- Or choose iCloud Drive, On My iPad, etc.

Equivalent: Yes — almost identical.

Snap Layouts

- Hover over the maximise button to arrange windows neatly.
- Great for side-by-side comparisons or writing while referencing something.

Or use Windows+Arrow keys, soon becomes intuitive

Mac:

- Hover over the green traffic-light button
- Options: left, right, full screen
- For more advanced tiling: Stage Manager or third-party tools like Magnet

iPad:

- Split View (two apps side by side)
- Slide Over (floating app)
- Stage Manager on newer iPads

Equivalent: Yes, though Apple’s version is more “curated”.

Snipping Tool

- Screenshots: Win+Shift+S
- Screen recording built in
- OCR text extraction in newer versions
- Perfect for capturing error messages or instructions.

Mac:

- Shift+Cmd+5 → screenshot & screen recording
- Shift+Cmd+4 → select area
- Shift+Cmd+3 → full screen
- Built-in annotation tools

iPad:

- Power + Volume Up → screenshot
- Apple Pencil → screenshot with a corner swipe
- Screen recording in Control Centre

Equivalent: Yes — very strong on both.

The Widgets Panel

Open and close Win+W. Some people like the Widgets panel, some don't. Although it annoyingly opens by itself. You can disable this from Settings | Personalisation | Taskbar | Widgets – Off

Extending the life of SSDs

a. Windows Write Caching

Make sure your Windows Write Caching is on. One simple click can give your SSD a much longer life

This background feature is often on by default, but not always. Write caching allows your PC to write some information to a cache to later commit to the SSD in a single batch instead of writing every little bit of data right away. It's very beneficial for the lifespan of your SSD, so make sure it's active. Doing this is simple. First, open up your Device Manager. Find your SSD, right-click on it, then ensure "Properties. | Policies then Enable write caching on the device" is checked.

b. Disable Windows Page File

With [page file](#), if your PC needs to use more RAM than it actually has available, it will use some of your SSD as RAM storage instead. Naturally, this includes a lot of write operations on your drive, which reduces its lifespan. To disable this, Use the Windows Key + R to open the Run window, then type **sysdm.cpl**. This will open the System Properties window. Click on the "Advanced" tab. Then, under the section labeled "Performance", click on Settings.

From here, click on the "Advanced" tab, go down to the "Virtual Memory" section. In the newly opened window, uncheck the "Automatically manage paging file size for all drives" if it is active. Then you will be able to select your SSD. Go down to where it says "No paging file", tick that box, then click "Set."

2. Password Managers & Biometrics

Why Password Managers Matter

- People reuse passwords because they're impossible to remember.
- A password manager creates and stores strong, unique passwords.
- Safer than notebooks or browser autofill.

Recommended Password Managers

- Bitwarden (best free option, open-source)
- 1Password (polished, paid)
- Dashlane (subscription)
- NordPass (simple)

Browser Password Saving

OK for casual use, but limited. Many users don't realise saving your password when the browser suggests it, is in fact a password manager.

A proper password manager is safer and works across devices.

Biometrics (Fingerprint / Face)

- Your fingerprint/face never leaves the device.
- Stored in a secure chip. TPM2
- Biometrics simply unlock your passwords — they don't replace them.

3. AI: Generative, Agentic & Physical

Generative AI

Creates things: text, images, summaries.

Examples: Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Midjourney.

“Generative AI is like a very advanced autocomplete.”

Agentic AI

Takes actions, not just answers.

Examples: Copilot with Windows actions, Gemini Advanced, ChatGPT GPTs.

> “Agentic AI doesn’t just answer — it *does*.”

1. Copilot in Windows / Edge (with actions enabled)

- “Turn on Bluetooth”
- “Find my recent downloads”
- “Summarise this PDF and save it as a new file”
- “Clean up storage”
- “Organise these tabs into groups”

This is agentic because it’s doing things on the device, not just talking.

Email / Calendar Agents

These are emerging fast:

- “Find a time for us to meet next week.”
- “Draft a reply to this email and attach the latest document.”
- “Summarise my inbox and highlight anything urgent.”

The AI is taking actions across apps.

Physical AI

AI inside machines that move or sense the world.

Examples: Robot vacuums, drones, self-parking cars.

“Physical AI is simply AI attached to motors and sensors.”

Comparing the Big Tools

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| - Copilot – Best for Windows/Office users | - ChatGPT – Very conversational |
| - Gemini – Strong reasoning | - Claude – Very clear writing |
| - Perplexity – Excellent research tool | |

Saving AI Conversations

- Copy/paste into Word or OneNote
- Use Edge Collections
- Export/share from the AI tool
- Print to PDF

Generative AI	Agentic AI
Pronounced: <i>jen-er-AY-tiv</i>	Pronounced: <i>ay-JEN-tik</i>
What it does: Creates things	What it does: Takes actions
Produces text, images, summaries, explanations	Follows steps, uses tools, completes tasks
Answers questions	Acts like a digital assistant
Works in a single step	Works across multiple steps
Needs you to drive the process	Can plan and carry out the process
Examples: Copilot (chat), ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Midjourney	Examples: Copilot with Windows actions, Gemini Advanced, ChatGPT GPTs, Perplexity Research Assistant, automation agents
"Write me a paragraph about the Tudors."	"Find three reliable sources on the Tudors, summarise them, and save the notes."
"Create an image of a canal boat."	"Organise my tabs into groups and save them in a Collection."

4. Layers in Image & Graphic Editing

What Layers Are

"Layers are like sheets of tracing paper — each holds one part of your design."

What Goes on Each Layer

Anything you might want to edit separately:

- Background
- Main image
- Title text
- Icons
- Effects

Avoiding Confusion

- Name layers immediately
- Group related layers
- Hide layers to see what's happening

- Lock layers you don't want to move
- Colour-code if available
- Position at the right level – a solid coloured 'page' will cover everything beneath it.

Tools

- Beginner-friendly: Canva, Microsoft Designer, Photopea
- Advanced: Affinity, Photoshop, GIMP

Where AI Helps

- Generates layered templates
- Removes backgrounds
- Suggests layouts
- Creates missing icons or graphics

5. Why Wikipedia Doesn't Use AI for Search

Wikipedia's Philosophy

- Human-written, human-checked
- Transparent citations
- AI can hallucinate or blend sources

Why Search Feels Literal

- No personalisation
- No semantic guessing
- No AI rewriting your query
- Keeps results predictable and neutral

Where AI *Does* Help

Tools like Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini can:

- Interpret messy questions
- Search Wikipedia
- Summarise pages

"Wikipedia hasn't added AI, but AI has learned how to read Wikipedia for you."

Starred / Half Star items in Google Mail

On the Gmail page (Inbox etc), there is a half-star, up at the top right, leading to a list of Favourites. Do you know how to remove an item from that Favourites list, please?