

Switch from Windows or Mac to an Android PC?

You can buy an Android PC for less than £50. The one I have is a Maxesla from Amazon with 2GB RAM running Android 6. It has 4.2GB storage plus a microSD card slot for more. It has two USB ports and supports Bluetooth. It will do everything that most home users need for a fraction of the price of a Windows PC. Being tiny, it can sit discretely by your TV or computer monitor.



It is not suitable for heavy duty gaming or office use.

Connections:

1. Monitor: Connect to your monitor or TV with an HDMI cable. If your monitor does not have an HDMI port, you can use an adapter, e.g. HDMI to VGA adapter.
2. Keyboard: A wireless keyboard and touchpad, like the Logitech K400 works well.
3. Mouse: If you need one, plug it in. You can use a USB adapter if you have run out of USB ports.
4. Power: Plug in, turn on and wait a minute for it to boot to the desktop.
5. WiFi: Is not brilliant for streaming audio and video. So connect to your router with an Ethernet cable, via a pair of homeplugs if necessary.
6. Speakers: Best to use Bluetooth speakers. Bose ones are super; Inateck are good. The Maxesla does not have an audio jack socket, though you can use a USB audio adapter.
7. Printer: Connect wirelessly. HP Envy printers are a good choice.

Apps from the Google play store:

1. Adobe Acrobat: To open PDFs that you have downloaded from the web.
2. Google Chrome for browsing.
3. Google Docs, Sheet and Slides apps for word processing etc.
4. Kaspersky Security: A multi-device licence is usually under £20 at Amazon.
5. Kodi for entertainment. Have a look at www.tvaddons.ag for Kodi add-ons.
6. NordVPN: To watch TV content as though you were in a different country. Set it to start when your PC starts. You can tell it is working by searching for 'Where am I now?'. Your Google adverts may start playing in a foreign language, which is a great improvement.
7. Null Keyboard app: So you can type without a virtual keyboard popping up. After installing, choose your Null Keyboard from Settings, Keyboards; click on the current virtual one and select your Null one. If you cannot get £ symbol, see tips below.
8. YouTube is probably already on your PC.

What do you want to do?

1. Banking: Download your bank's app from the AppStore or use Google Chrome to visit your bank.
2. Book Reading: Download Kindle.
3. Browsing: Google Chrome or the browser that came with your Android PC.
4. Games: Download from the Google Play Store. For security stick to popular games with lots of good ratings.
5. Document writing: Download Google Docs from the Play Store.
6. Emails: Google Chrome to access your webmail.
7. Files: You can transfer files between a laptop and your Android PC most easily using Google Drive, Email, wetransfer.com etc. Or you can copy files onto a microSD card that slots in.
8. Music: Amazon, Google, Kodi, Sonos or Spotify Music app.
9. PDFs: Adobe reader app.
10. Photo editing: Adobe Photoshop Express or Pixlr.
11. Presentations: Google Slides.
12. Printing: If you can't print using the app for your printer or Google Cloud Print app, consider buying an HP Envy for about £50 from Argos.
13. Scanning: Download the app for your printer.
14. Shopping: use Google Chrome or, for instance, Amazon's app.
15. Social Networking: Via your browser or the Facebook or Twitter apps.
16. Spreadsheets: Google Sheets app.
17. TV: Kodi, Youtube, Google Chrome, iPlayer. Plenty of choice.
18. Video Calls: You probably want to use your smartphone, but you could install WhatsApp.

Tips:

1. Use Alt+Tab keys to cycle through your open Apps. You can close them from here as well.
2. Use the Home key to return to your desktop.
3. Problems? You can restart your Android PC with Ctrl+Alt+Del keys.
4. Can't get a symbol, e.g. £, visit <http://currencies.typeit.org> and use copy and paste.
5. Shortcuts? All the usuals work like ctrl+a, ctrl+c, ctrl+v. Just try your favourite key combinations.
6. Buffering when streaming music or videos? Connect to your router with an Ethernet cable, if necessary using a pair of homeplugs. If you still have a problem, check your broadband speed by visiting www.fast.com. If it is below 10 Mbps, talk to your broadband provider.