



Probably the Most Important Program or App you Use is Your Internet Browser, so Which One is Best ?

by Ross Hendry



What the statistics say

This is a difficult question because each of the top browsers is pretty good. An easier question to answer is, which browser is the most used/popular? In this case it is Google Chrome used by over 50% of UK web surfers according to StatCounter. Their nearest rivals are Apple's Safari (12%) and Microsoft's Internet Explorer (10% although this is being replaced by Edge in Windows 10). These figures are based upon the final quarter of 2015. WC3Schools believe that Internet Explorer is second with 24% but it still puts Chrome a long way in front of the rest. W3Schools put Chrome top with 71.4%, 2nd Firefox – 16.9%, 3rd Internet Explorer – 5.7%, 4th Safari – 3.6%, 5th Opera – 1.2%.

It is quite remarkable that Google Chrome has such a dominant position because when you get a new PC the browser supplied by Microsoft for Windows was Internet Explorer until Windows 10 where they provide Microsoft Edge, their latest browser. This means that users have actively sought Google Chrome as an alternative or chosen it from the "Browser Choice" screens when loading Windows 7 and 8.



Google Chrome

For general all-round use where you want to synchronise your PC Android Telephone and/or Tablet and Mac device such as a MacBook or iPad, Google Chrome is the leader by far. However, it is not very resource efficient, so if you do not have a lot of RAM you should choose another. There are many to choose from.



Mozilla's Firefox

Next in Popularity for the PC is Mozilla's Firefox. Chosen by many IT Professionals Firefox is quick and secure but probably not as easy to use as Google's Chrome, but far faster than Internet Explorer.



Internet Explorer & Edge by Microsoft

Microsoft are retiring Internet Explorer which has been quite slow and in the early days very insecure. After much work it was almost as secure as Chrome and Firefox but always considerably slower. It comes with all versions of Windows currently available, but for Windows 10 Microsoft have their new browser, Edge. This has a fresh new look and is fast, secure and according to Microsoft, very efficient especially in power usage terms. Don't worry - if you don't like it they have included Internet Explorer as well.



Opera

Probably one of the most underrated Browsers is Opera based upon Chromium. The recent release boasts to be the best for portable use, being some 49% more efficient on battery use. It looks like a slightly re-vamped Google

Chrome and will be quite familiar to those of you who use Chrome. I fully intend to use the new version to see how good it is, especially on my laptops and portable devices.



Epic

For pure security and privacy there are many browsers, depending whether it is security or privacy you seek. For Privacy the Epic browser is derived from Chromium and essentially cuts out every feature to ensure maximum privacy. Cookies and trackers are eliminated after each session and all searches are redirected via the firm's own servers. This means they cannot link your searches to your IP address. It comes with top quality built-in advert blocking too. This one is well worth a look if privacy is very important to you.



Safari

Apple's browser is fast and efficient and quite secure, and there is a version that works on Windows. However, Apple removed all its windows download links in 2013 so you will have to search hard on the web if you want to try it. Funny, because in the past it was downloaded to PCs with iTunes updates - that is why those who have I pads or I phones have this on their Windows PCs.



Chromium the source program

I think it is worth briefly mentioning Chromium. This is an open source project that forms the core of Google Chrome, because it is completely open-source. (Definition of Open-Source: an adjective denoting software for which the original source code is made freely available and may be redistributed and modified.)

Many companies use it, but it is unfortunately also associated with many infections and confuses some users looking for Google Chrome into downloading it often with bad results. The Chromium OS open-source is the basis for Google Chrome and both were originally created by Google and released to the market for all to benefit from in around 2008.

In my experience **Google Chrome** is the quickest with the best search results and most of my customers use this or **Mozilla's Firefox**. The next most popular is **Internet Explorer**. I should mention that I do use other browsers. For example if a website does not seem to display properly in Google Chrome, I will try others.

Finally, you can have as many Browsers on your PC or device as you like: one for speed, one for battery efficiency, one for security, etc., just do not run them all at once or your PC/Device will slow right down.

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