It seems the future of tech is mobile - even wearable. Tablets, phablets, smartphones, watches, arm bands and bracelets, shoes and other clothing, even contact lenses and glasses - all able to communicate wirelessly with the internet and with other devices. So many options to choose from. So many new features to learn and use. In this month’s newsletter, we hope to provide you a few insights into the powerful features our mobile devices have.

I remember a cartoon program when I was a child - the Jetsons. In it, they had a robot as a personal maid, their cars flew, they talked face-to-face via their computers. That was all science fiction then. Now most of those things are common, every day functions in our lives. Check out the new Amazon Echo - a personal assistant. Flying cars may arrive soon.

CNN - The race is on for flying car start ups

And, of course, we can communicate face-to-face with Google Hangouts, Skype, FaceTime, or a host of other software applications. Computing power is now moving into the “cloud” - a term used for server farms located elsewhere physically, but accessible to all through the internet. The pace of technology innovation keeps speeding up, with amazing new ideas and designs.

As these changes occur, we need to ask, “How will this impact how we educate our students? How can we improve what we do as teachers using new technologies? How can students be better engaged? How can we help them find their life’s passion? How can we help them with deep learning? What experiences do we want them to engage in?”

Some of the basic ideas our current education system was founded upon are changing. When our education system was first implemented over a hundred and fifty years ago, it was based in two premises:

1) Access to knowledge is scarce, and schools and educated teachers were the means for students to access and learn knowledge.

2) The USA’s need at that particular time was to create a workforce that could work in the factories.

Both have changed. Technology has made access to knowledge freely available to anyone who has an internet connection. One fifth of the world’s population owns a smartphone - so they have access anytime, anywhere.

The U.S. economy is now more information-based than factory-based. The need is for people who can access knowledge, and create new inventions or creatively use information in new, meaningful ways. The need is for people who can work as productive, creative team members.

How will these shifts change the way we educate our young? It’s an important question to consider. Will they need to learn keyboarding in a world where you can dictate text to your equipment? The same question could be asked of many other skills we currently teach. How will the current technologies allow us to individualize learning according to the interests, passions, and skills of each learner? How will education need to change in order to remain viable and productive?

I would love to hear your candid thoughts on this. Feel free to email them to Nathan.Smith@usu.edu.
How can I take a call to my iPhone on my iPad?

http://www.imore.com/how-to-call-relay-make-take-calls-iphone-on-ipad

Continuity calling is the new way to better utilize your Apple products. If you have an iPhone and an iPad, you can now relay calls from your phone to your iPad. This can be a very handy tool when you are working on your iPad when you receive a call and can’t seem to find that iPhone you misplaced between the couch cushions. You can also make calls from your iPad. This service is free and only uses your already existing carrier and contract with your iPhone. There are only a few requirements and a couple of steps you have to take in order to get this service.

Requirements for both your iPhone and iPad:
1. Running iOS 8 or later.
2. Connected to the same Wi-Fi network.
3. Logged into the same Apple ID (iCloud account).

This service can be disabled or enabled so as to only work when you want it to.

To enable it:
1. Launch the Settings app on your iPhone.
2. Tap on FaceTime.
3. Turn on the option for iPhone Cellular Calls if it isn’t enabled already.
4. Repeat the same steps on your iPad as well.
5. The same process can be used to disable this feature.

How to make calls
1. From the Contacts app on your iPad find the contact you’d like to call.
2. Tap the Phone icon next to the number you’d like to call.

Receive SMS/MMS messages on your Mac

Often the times when you are working on your computer is not the best time to be pulling out your phone and answering messages. You might be in a class, training, or trying to finish a project in a crunch. But in the fast-paced world we live in being able to communicate quickly is essential for high productivity.

Apple has now made it possible for you to receive those messages right to your Mac. This service is completely free and your iPhone and Mac don’t even need to be on the same Wi-Fi network.

Requirements for iPhone and Mac:
1. Running iOS 8 or later, and OS X Yosemite or later.
2. Connected to the internet.
3. Logged into the same Apple ID (iCloud account).

How to make it work:
1. Launch the Settings app on your iPhone.
2. Tap on Messages.
3. Tap on Text Message Forwarding.
4. Turn on the option for your Mac.
5. Wait for your Mac to pop up an authorization code.
6. Enter the authorization code on your iPhone.

If you don’t want this service anymore you can simply turn it off using the same steps.

Nuke your phone number from iMessage forever...

Apple just released a new tool that will allow you to unregister your phone number from iMessage. You enter your phone number and it will cut all ties with the messaging application for good.

The tool is meant for people who have switched to an Android or other non-Apple device and are unable to get SMS or text messages. Usually this happens when the SIM has been transferred to a non-Apple phone.

If you are having this issue, just follow this link...

https://selfsolve.apple.com/deregister-imessage

YouTube: 50 Siri Commands

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtwVQhEXCcc
What Can Siri Do For You?
by Nathan Smith, Utah State University

Siri is a powerful assistant on your mobile iOS devices. Have you ever wondered just what Siri could do for you? You can ask Siri, “What can you do?” and get the screen above. Then click any of the > at the right, and you’ll see a list of possibles.

You’ll notice I didn’t say he or she when referring to Siri, because you can set it for a male or female voice. Just go into your settings App, choose General, Siri, and then Voice Gender. If you’re iDevice is plugged into power, you can enable “Hey, Siri” and it will listen to you constantly. All you need to is say, “Hey, Siri” and Siri will respond.

I thought I’d share with you some of the things you can have Siri do for you. The following list comes from http://osxdaily.com/2013/02/05/list-siri-commands/

**Finding Contacts**
Show Jason Russell
Find people named Park
Who is Michael Manning?

**Relationships**
My mom is Susan Park
Michael Manning is my brother
Call my brother at work

**Calendars**
**Adding Events**
Set up a meeting at 9
Set up a meeting with Michael at 9
Meet with Lisa at noon
Set up a meeting about hiring tomorrow at 9am
New appointment with Susan Park Friday at 3
Schedule a planning meeting at 8:30 today in the boardroom

**Changing events**
Move my 3pm meeting to 4:30
Reschedule my appointment with Dr. Manning to next Monday at 9am
Add Lisa to my meeting with Jason
Cancel the budget review meeting

**Asking about events**
What does the rest of my day look like?
What’s on my calendar for Friday?
When is my next appointment?
When am I meeting with Michael?
Where is my next meeting?

**Alarms**
**Setting Alarms**
Wake me up tomorrow at 7am
Set an alarm for 6:30am
Wake me up in 8 hours
Change my 6:30 alarm to 6:45
Turn off my 6:30 alarm
Delete my 7:30 alarm

**Checking the Clock**
What time is it?
What time is it in Berlin?
What is today’s date?
What’s the date this Saturday?

**Email**
**Sending Messages**
Email Lisa about the trip
Email Jennifer about the change in plans
New email to Susan Park
Mail Dad about the rent check
Email Dr. Manning and say I got the forms, thanks
Mail Lisa and Jason about the party and say I had a great time

**Checking Messages**
Check email
Any new email from Michael today?
Show new mail about the lease
Show the email from Lisa yesterday

**Responding to Messages**
Reply Dear Susan sorry about the late payment
Call him at work

**Friends**
**Checking Up on Friends**
Where’s Jason?
Where is my sister?
Is my wife at home?
Where are all my friends?
Who is here?
Who is near me?

**Maps**
**Directions**
How do I get home?
Show 1 Infinite Loop Cupertino California
Directions to my dad’s work

**Local Businesses**
Find coffee near me
Where is Starbucks?
Find some burger joints in Baltimore
Find a gas station within walking distance
Good Mexican restaurants around here

**Messages**
**Sending Texts**
Tell Susan I’ll be right there
Send a message to Jason Russell
Send a message to Lisa saying how about tomorrow
Tell Jennifer the show was great
Send a message to Susan on her mobile saying I’ll be late
Send a message to 408 555 1212
Text Jason and Lisa where are you?

**Reading Texts**
Read my new messages
Read it again

**Maps & Directions**
Give me directions to Best Buy in Seattle, Washington
Directions to Moms house
Show directions to Bobs Taco Shed in Transit
Where is Apple Store in Phoenix
Address Book

**Querying Contacts**
What’s Michael’s address?
What is Susan Park’s phone number?
When is my wife’s birthday?
Show Jennifer’s home email address
Replying to Texts

Reply that’s great news
Tell him I’ll be there in 10 minutes
Call her

Music

Playback

Play The Light of the Sun
Play Trouble
Play Taking Back Sunday shuffled
Play Alicia Keys
Play some blues
Play my party mix
Shuffle my roadtrip playlist
Play
Pause
Skip

Notes

Creating and finding notes

Note that I spent $12 on lunch
Note: check out that new Alicia Keys album
Find my restaurant note
Create a reading list note
Add Tom Sawyer to my reading list note

Phone

Phone calls

Call Jason
Call Jennifer Wright mobile
Call Susan on her work phone
Call 408 555 1212
Call home
FaceTime Lisa

Reminders

Requesting reminders

Remind me to call mom
Remind me to call my mom when I get home
Remember to take an umbrella
Remind me to take my medicine at 6am tomorrow
Remind me to pick up flowers when I leave here
Remind me when I leave to call Jason
Remind me to finish the report by 6

Stocks

Checking Stocks

What’s Apple’s stock price?
What is Apple’s PE ratio?
What did Yahoo close at today?
How is the Nikkei doing?
How are the markets doing?
What is the Dow at?

Weather

Checking the Forecast

What’s the weather for today?
What’s the weather for tomorrow?
Will it rain in Cupertino this week?
Check next week’s forecast for Burlington
What’s the forecast for this evening?
How’s the weather in Tampa right now?
How hot will it be in Palm Springs this weekend?
What’s the high for Anchorage on Thursday?
What’s the temperature outside?
How windy is it out there?
When is sunrise in Paris?

Websearch

Looking up information

Search the web for Bora Bora
Search for vegetarian pasta recipes
Search the web for best cable plans
Google the war of 1812
Search Wikipedia for Abraham Lincoln
Search for news about the World Cup
Bing Alicia Keys

Using Wolfram Alpha

How many calories in a bagel?
What is an 18% tip on $86.74 for four people?
Who’s buried in Grant’s tomb?
How long do dogs live?
What is the Gossamer Condor?
What’s the square root of 128?
How many dollars is €45?
What was the Best Picture of 1983?
How many days until Christmas?
How far away is the Sun?
When is the next solar eclipse?
Show me the Orion constellation
What’s the population of Jamaica?
How high is Mt. Everest?
How deep is the Atlantic ocean?
What’s the price of gasoline in Chicago?

Launch an App

Launch (name of App)

Of course, Siri can do much more than the list above. The list is just a sampling of the structuring of commands you can use with it. However, I think the list will give you a good idea of some of the things that Siri can do for you.

Try, “what is the integral of 3x squared plus 1x +2?”
or, “Tell me a story.”
or, “mirror, mirror on the wall. Who is the fairest of them all?” Enjoy!

Does your iPad or iPhone go to sleep too fast?

Do you get frustrated because your iDevice turns off too fast while you’re reading or otherwise not interacting with it? And you have to enter your passcode (if you set one) to get back to where you were? There is a setting for that which you can change.

Open the Settings app, General, Autolock. You can change it to 2, 5, 10, or 15 minutes - or never.

Are you a thumb typer?

You can split the Apple on-screen keyboard. Place both thumbs in the middle of the keyboard and pull the keyboard apart. To go back to the standard way, just push them back together again.

A couple of other tips you might find useful: If you need a letter with a diacritical mark such as å, é, ñ, etc., then press and hold on that keyboard letter a moment, and a list will pop up, and you can slide your finger up to the letter you need.

Swipe your finger up the comma key, or press and hold it, to get a single quote (‘). Do the same on the period key to get a double quote (“). Press and hold the dollar sign to get other currency symbols. Press and hold / to get \. Are you using an external keyboard for your iPad? Check out these additional keyboard shortcuts...

Using Dictation on Your Macintosh and iOS Devices - Speak and it types!

If you have one of the more recent Macintoshes or iOS devices, Apple has really improved the speech to text functions. With Dictation, you can use your voice instead of typing text. No setup or special training is required.

On your Macintosh, go to System Preferences, choose Dictation and Speech, and set your settings as shown in the illustration above...

Since my iMac does not have a function key, I've changed the shortcut to enabling speech dictation by pressing my command key twice. You can select from other options, such as pressing the function key twice if you're using this on a laptop. Be sure to download the 1.2 GB enhanced dictation option - it's worth it. If your computer or display doesn't have a built-in microphone, you can connect an external microphone to use Dictation. You can choose the microphone you want to use by clicking the down arrow underneath the microphone image in the dialog box. Now you're all set to use speech dictation.

On your iOS device, if you're keyboard shows a microphone symbol next to the space bar you're ready to dictate. If it doesn't, either your device is too old to support it, or you need to update your iOS. - version six or later.

Use these steps on your Mac to start dictating:

1. Click a text field or document window where you want to start typing.
2. Press the fn (Function) key twice (or Command key in my case), or choose Edit > Start Dictation.
3. Dictate (speak) what you want your Mac to type.
4. When finished, click Done or press the fn key again.

The input meter indicates how loud your voice is. If it's too quiet, try moving closer to your microphone or speaking louder.

Use these steps on your iOS device to start dictating:

1. Click a text field or document window where you want to start typing.
2. When the Apple keyboard appears on screen, press the microphone key next to the space bar and the keyboard will change to a sine wave with the word “Done” underneath.
3. Dictate (speak) what you want your iOS device to type.

If the input meter does not fill when you speak, check that your microphone and sound input are set up correctly.

If the input meter fills more than half of the microphone icon, there might be too much background noise, and Dictation might be less accurate.

If the input meter barely fills when you speak, try moving closer to the microphone or speaking louder.

Your Macintosh listens for up to 30 seconds at a time. If you need to dictate longer sentences, enable the option for Enhanced Dictation.

Enhanced Dictation

With Enhanced Dictation, text appears as you speak. This allows you to dictate continuously. Enhanced Dictation automatically stops listening when you switch to another window, press the Fn key again, or click Done.

Enhanced Dictation in OS X Mavericks and Yosemite also let you dictate without an active Internet connection. To use Dictation when you're offline, enable Enhanced Dictation in the Dictation & Speech pane of System Preferences while you are still connected to the Internet.

The first time you turn on Enhanced Dictation, your Mac downloads content that allows Dictation to work offline.

The amount of free disk space required to download this content varies depending on the language you're using.

After the additional software downloads, you can use Dictation even when an Internet connection isn't available, which is a real benefit!

Dictation requires an Internet connection in Mountain Lion

If you're using OS X Mountain Lion, you need to be connected to the Internet in order to use Dictation. If your Internet connection is slow, it could cause delays between when you speak a word and when the word appears in a text field. If you're at a business or school and you have a proxy server on your network, Dictation might not be able to connect to the Internet. Have your network administrator refer to “Well known TCP and UDP ports used by Apple software products” to learn which network ports Dictation uses.

Dictation learns the characteristics of your voice and adapts to your accent. For best results, select your dialect from the Language menu in the Dictation pane of System Preferences. Note that some languages (such as English) have multiple options available to choose from. The more you use Dictation, the better it understands you.

What can you dictate besides words?

You not only can speak words and have them typed for you, but you can also speak punctuation and other commands. Dictation understands basic text-related commands such as “all caps,” “new paragraph,” and “new line.”

When you say “period,” “comma,” “question mark,” or “exclamation point,” Dictation adds that punctuation in the current text field. When speaking a calendar date (like “January 30, 1983”) you do not have to say “comma”. The comma is automatically detected and entered for you.

You can also insert emoticons into a text field by saying “smiley face” or “frowny face”.

Let me share a list of dictation commands you can use. This list is for dictation on a Macintosh, but almost all of them work on iOS devices as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Say this Punctuation</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apostrophe</td>
<td>'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open bracket</td>
<td>[</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close bracket</td>
<td>]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open parenthesis</td>
<td>(</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close parenthesis</td>
<td>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open brace</td>
<td>{</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close brace</td>
<td>}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iOS 8 Tips and Tricks

by Joe Bainbridge, USU Student

With iOS 8 recently released, there are a number of new settings and adjustments that should be taken advantage of. Here are a few that may help you get the most out of the new Apple iOS 8:

Quickly add photos and videos to your messages: While in a message, tap the photo icon and a small menu comes up with options to select from your Photo Library, or snap a photo or video to insert into your message. However, if you press and hold the camera icon you get a small radial dial that gives an option to quickly snap a photo or video that can be inserted into your message.

Quickly add audio to your messages: While in a message, you can tap and hold the microphone icon in the bottom right and record audio to quickly insert into your message.

A quick respond notification banner: When a notification banner of a message appears at the top of the screen you can now pull it down and it will give you an option to quickly respond to the message! There’s no need to go into the messaging app and respond anymore.

Access frequent contacts: When you double tap the Home button, your most recent/frequent contacts appear at the top of the screen. You can tap on one of the names and iOS 8 will give you options to interact with that contact.

Do Not Disturb: If you are ever invited to a group conversation and you decide you don’t want to be a part of it, or you don’t want your phone to “ding” or vibrate every time someone sends a message, well there is an answer. In the group message, tap the “Details” at the top right and you can select the option “Leave this Conversation” or you can toggle the “Do Not Disturb” button.

Scrolling through the App Store: Now when you search for an app on the App Store you can scroll through the results continuously rather than having to swipe through each app.

New photo editing tools: iOS 8 has added many new features to editing your photos within it’s built in app, Photos. You can make more adjustments to lighting, cropping, colors and much more.

Battery Percentage: iOS 8 has included a great feature to help you maximize your battery usage. If you go to Settings > General > Usage > Battery Usage, you can see how much battery usage each individual app is using. This can be helpful to know which app is the most battery intensive!

Notes: iOS 8 now finally includes an enhanced Notes app! You can now format text and insert images and videos.

Lock screen is now intuitive: With the release of iOS 8, we can now interact with our notifications to emails. You can now delete, mark as unread, and delete without unlocking the device.

Auto – Erase text messages: If you go to Settings > Messages > Keep Messages you can select how long you would like to keep the history of your messages on your device.

Grayscale and Invert Colors: iOS 8 has given us enhanced visual settings. Navigate to the following: Settings > Accessibility, within this menu there are options to toggle Grayscale or Invert Colors, or both. This can serve useful if you’re in a low light environment, or just want to have fun.

Searching Photos: iOS 8 has added the feature to search within Photos. Within Photos, a magnifying glass is located in the top right corner of the screen. From there you can search by location and date to help you find specific photos!

Adjustable Today View: The “Today” view can now be edited. Swipe down from the top of the screen and select “Today” and scroll to the bottom of the screen and select “Edit.” From there you can adjust the way you want your “Today” screen to appear. This can be very helpful when you’re getting an overview of the day and want only want to see the relevant information.

Deleting albums: Within the Music app we are now able to delete (move back to iCloud) albums from our library. If you find a song or album you don’t want on your device, you can swipe to the left and tap “Delete.” This will send that album or song back to iCloud.

This is, in no way, a comprehensive list of tips and tricks for iOS 8, but I hope some of these give a little bit of the insight into Apple’s new iOS 8. There are many more tips and trick out there to be discovered!
Dictating Text on Android

Did you know that you can dictate text to your Android device? In any text field where you keyboard appears, you can press the microphone button and begin speaking.

You can also insert punctuation by speaking it. For example, if you say, “Hello comma my name is Andre period” your Android device will type “Hello, my name is Andre.”

Here are the handful of voice dictation commands that work on Android:

**Punctuation:** Period (.), comma (,), question mark (?), exclamation or exclamation point (!)

**Line spacing:** Enter or new line, new paragraph

That’s about the limit for Android, however, unless you use a third party Android keyboard that includes dictation. For example, the Swype keyboard includes Dragon Dictation features.

iPhones and iPads have a larger command set for dictation, and we have included a listing of those in the iOS Device tips and tricks.

Voice dictation is much faster and easier than typing on a small keyboard. Give it a try!

Android Voices

by Rob Wilkins, USU Student

How Voices Connects You and Google: Voice allows an individual to activate and access their phone essentially hands free. The list of features and commands possible are plentiful. However, from what I’ve noticed Apple’s Siri still has the upper hand in being more advanced. Android will catch up though. Technology is constantly being developed and improved in an attempted to better our styles of life.

Voices works the same way as any other voice recognition software. After a command is detected it will search the device and the internet for your answer. Literally you have your personal life and the rest of the world with you while remaining hands free.

Following is just a sample of commands that can be picked up by Voices. These examples can be rearranged to form any other command as well.

(The list of commands was taken from: [http://www.itworld.com/article/2829894/mobile/speak-up-150-ways-to-make-android-voice-search-work-for-you.html](http://www.itworld.com/article/2829894/mobile/speak-up-150-ways-to-make-android-voice-search-work-for-you.html))

**Personal Information:**

• “What’s my flight status?”
• “Is my flight on time?”
• “When will my package arrive?”
• “Show me my purchases”
• “Show me my reservations”
• “Where’s my hotel?”

**Access your Information:**

• “Show me my latest email”
• “Show me email from Saul Hudson”
• “Show me emails about spring break”
• “Show me my photos from London”
• “Show me my photos of sunsets”

Swype Keyboard

The Swype keyboard from Nuance is a $1 alternative to the built-in keyboard. You can type by swyping your words (click on either image above to watch a video demonstration), and it is a fast, accurate way of inputting text. It also includes Dragon dictation.
“Show me pictures I took at concerts”
“Show me my documents on taxes”
“Show me my spreadsheets on income”
“Show me my screenshot files”

**Organization:**

“Where’s the closest bowling alley?”
“Where’s a museum around here?”
“What’s a good Thai place near me?”

**Phone and Messaging:**

“You can send a simple note to yourself by saying “Note to self” and then whatever it is that you want to remember. Voice Search will compose an email to you using the default Gmail account on your device with transcribed text of your message and an audio attachment of your voice. You can also instruct it to save the message to Google Keep or any other compatible note-taking service, if you prefer.”

**Getting answers:**

“Who did the+ The Deep Dark Knight Rise?”
“Where did Jerry Seinfeld go to college?”
“Where was Jimmy Fallon born?”
“How much is Tom Cruise worth?”
“When did John Lennon die?”
“What was Marilyn Monroe’s real name?”
“What movies has Scarlett Johansson been in?”
“How tall is Scarlett Johansson?”
“How old is Scarlett Johansson?”

**Getting calculations and conversions:**

“What’s 5812 times 247?”
“What’s 19.4 percent of 240.37?”
“What’s 14 inches in millimeters?”
“What’s 12 in hexadecimal?”
“What’s 78 U.S. dollars in Euros?”
“Show me a graph of sin x”

**Getting around your phone:**

“Open Calendar app”
“Open cnn.com”
“Search Amazon for a Bluetooth headset”
“Get me the Nova Launcher app”
“Post to Google+ -- ‘I just wanna dance, dance, dance’”
“Tweet that I like cheese’”

**Getting entertainment:**

“Listen to The Beatles”
“Listen to ‘I Am the Walrus’”
“Play me songs from Abbey Road”
“What’s this song?” (Or just activate Voice Search and say nothing; if music is playing, it’ll automatically detect it and identify the tune.)
“What channel is ‘The Big Bang Theory’ on?”
“Play Life of Pi”
“Show me a video of fireworks”
“When does Anchorman 2 come out?”
“Showtimes for Elysium”
“Do a barrel roll” (Hey, it’s very entertaining.)

**Reminders, Alarms, and Appointments:**

“Remind me to buy biscuits this Saturday”
“Wake me up at 7 a.m. tomorrow”
“Wake me up in 30 minutes”
“Set an alarm for 3 hours from now”
“Haircut tomorrow at 2”
“Schedule a meeting tomorrow morning with Roger”
“Schedule an appointment to see the doctor on Monday at noon”
“Remind me to call Angelina when I get to LAX”
“Remind me to take out the trash when I get home”
“Remind me to break the fax machine when I get to work”

**The “Note to self” command:**

“As you can see, Voices is a powerful feature for an Android device. It basically becomes a personal assistant. Hopefully, this list will provide you a clearer idea of just what it can do, although this list is by no means a complete list of questions and commands you can use.”
Customizing your Android Operating System

by Rob Wilkins, USU Student

Have you ever noticed that your brand new Android phone comes preloaded with a lot of “stuff”? Or have you ever not been totally happy with the layout of your phone? I am an Android device user and pre-loaded apps and not having total control over my phone drives me crazy! After doing research I’ve learned that it’s possible to change an Android device’s operating system (called a ROM)! This allows you to build a “custom phone”.

Why would I want to do that? Or what does that mean exactly? Well, third party developers and motivated individuals actually take the android ROM when it becomes open source and “tweak” it. This has led to many projects resulting in hundreds of custom android based operating systems. A lot of these individual developers focus on battery life optimization by keeping things simple. They also try to take out all the useless apps and background processes to clean things up. They also completely change the look of the phone! Potentially, one of these new ROMs could suit your liking better! Even in a more extreme context, if you know JAVA or C# computer programming you could actually be one of these developers and build a phone ROM just for you! However, don’t let something technical like programming skills deter you away. I’ve never programmed a ROM myself and I’ve found many new and fun ROMs already out there to suit my liking.

Now I need to start off by mentioning a disclaimer. This process is advanced and has the potential of “bricking” your phone. So, I am NOT responsible for any kind of damage you do to your android device. This common practice is not harmful to your device if done correctly; it’s just a precise process. The term “bricked phone” is used when the software on the phone doesn’t set up right and the phone is only good for a paper weight… This could be heart wrenching for someone attempting this on a $500+ phone. There is a difference between a “hard brick” and a “soft brick” though. Hard bricked phones are unrecoverable while soft bricked phones can be fixed. It’ll take time and research to figure it out but your phone while in this state isn’t necessarily “gone”. I have personally done this process on every phone I’ve owned (each $400+). A few attempts have soft bricked my phone many times. However, my phone has never been in any major trouble. These experiences have actually allowed me to better understand my phone.

If all that sounds like too much for you, you actually don’t have to go as far as stripping the phone clean of its software and installing a new ROM. The first step to all this is “Rooting” your phone. All rooting means is “unlocking” the device. This allows you to dive deeper into the phone as an administrator. In this state you can change/bypass restrictions your carrier or manufacture have setup, overclock your processor, and even potentially use your phone with different carriers. One particularly advantageous practice I’ve seen with rooted phones is imbedding security software into the ROM. This means, even if a thief tries to factory reset your phone it will reinstall the security software with the factory reset as well!

In closing, my intentions here were just to introduce and possibly arouse and interest in the ideas here; rather than give a guide on how to root. However, I will leave you with a direction to travel if you’re interested. XDA Developers is an online database where developers and ROM seekers gather. It is there, on their forums, you could best find your answers and “how to” guides. Search for ideas to do and ROMs to try and experience a whole new side to Android.

XDA Forums line: http://forum.xda-developers.com/
Cortana is listening to you...

Windows phones now have a Siri-like personal assistant - Cortana, named after the artificial intelligence character in the Halo games.

Cortana’s Notebook – To open Cortana’s Notebook, press the Search button and then tap in the upper right corner of the screen. There you'll find all of your interests, reminders, people in your inner circle, and more.

Cortana is listening – To say something to Cortana, press the Search button and then tap the microphone button. Or press and hold the Search button to have Cortana listen immediately, no matter what else you’re doing.

Say what? – Not sure what to say? Press and hold the Search button, and then say, “What can I say?” for some ideas.

Do not disturb – Need some “me” time? Go to Cortana’s Notebook, and then tap Quiet hours to customize how Cortana can handle your incoming calls, notifications, and more.

Stay up to date – Get real-time updates for some of your interests (like stock prices or sports scores). In Cortana’s Notebook, tap Interests, and then look for interests that have alerts.

Apps

Click on any YouTube image below to watch a video demonstration of the app. URLs link to the app for Android and/or iOS!

**ScreenChomp**
White board, screen recording + audio recording app that you can share with students.

**TeamViewer**

**Homestyler Interior Design**

**CamCard**

**Cabin - Private Networking**

**Augment**

**Layar - Augmented Reality**

**Word Lens (Translation)**
Are you searching for seasonal resources to help you teach? The Teachers Corner has a lot of Christmas activities and worksheets. It also has ideas for bulletin boards.

http://www.theteacherscorner.net/monthly-resources/december.php

When you arrive at the site, you’ll see links to many December events like Christmas, New Year’s Eve, Holidays around the World, and more. Click on December writing prompts and for each day you’ll see significant events. Each event also links to a PDF file. Some have recipes that can be done in class, and others have activities or reference materials.

Unique Teaching Resources

Unique Teaching Resources has a ton of Christmas writing prompts. It also has specific events that happened on specific December days to allow for some great activities and writing prompts. When you open the home page it starts with a bulleted list of what you will find on the website. As you scroll through you will find cute printable papers and a handful of winter writing prompts.


December Writing Prompts

The TeacherVision website has many seasonal resources. It is filled with Christmas lesson plans, activities, printables, etc. You name it - this website has it. And the best part is they are all free. I wanted to find an activity that connected art and Christmas. I found a whole section on that. I clicked on the link - Santa’s workshop. There I found a printable for practicing division skills with a cute Christmas theme.


These are only a few of the many resources that teachers can find for the season. Each website has many resources for teachers.

Christmas Fonts


1001 Free Fonts has quite a collection of seasonal fonts that you can download for free. The fonts are in TrueType format, and will work on both PC and Macintosh computers. The images below are just a sampling of what you’ll find there...
Looking for Christmas Crafts Online? Try Pinterest...

http://www.pinterest.com

Of any site, Pinterest probably has the largest collection of links to arts and crafts ideas. Try searching for “christmas crafts for kids” or “christmas crafts for kids at school.” “Christmas make and bake” or “seasonal crafts christmas” also bring up a lot of good ideas. Try “seasonal crafts christmas kids” too.

“christmas lesson plans” and adding a grade level - “christmas lesson plans 4th grade” also bring up a number of links to teaching ideas.

If you haven’t tried Pinterest, because you’ve heard it’s all about fingernails and hair styles, then you’re missing out on a lot of great resources. I use it extensively with my advanced Photoshop and Graphic Design course I teach at Utah State University. There is an extensive collection of images with links to science, history, art, lesson plans, technology, and much more.

Browse some, and I think you’ll want to start your own Pinterest boards.

Christmas Teaching Resources for K-12 from TeacherVision


At the link above, you’ll find Christmas lesson plans, activities, printables, and skill builders. There are free worksheets, bulletin board ideas, printable art activities, literature units, and more! Your students will also enjoy Christmas games that you will find educational as well.

Content headings include slideshows, printables, lesson plans, quizzes, science and Christmas connected, literature and Christmas connected, art and Christmas connected, math and Christmas connected, reading, language arts and Christmas connected, food and recipes, social studies and Christmas connected, winter resources and activities, and more December holidays.

Celebrate Winter Holidays with Scholastic Teacher

http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/holidays/

Learn more about Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa with holiday articles, online activities, curriculum connections, printable activities and crafts, and more. A teacher’s guide is available, as well as holiday clipart.

http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/holidays/christmas/

Other December Dates To Enjoy...

December 1: Eat a Red Apple Day, Rosa Parks Day
December 2: National Fritters Day
December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities
December 4: National Cookie Day
December 6: Mitten Tree Day, St. Nicholas Day
December 7: National Cotton Candy Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (1941)
December 8: National Brownie Day
December 10: Human Rights Day
December 11: National Noodle Ring Day, UNICEF Anniversary
December 12: Poinsettia Day
December 13: National Cocoa Day
December 15: Bill of Rights Day
December 16: Hanukkah Begins at Sundown, National Chocolate Covered Anything Day
December 17: National Maple Syrup Day
December 18: Wear a Plunger On Your Head Day
December 19: Oatmeal Muffin Day
December 20: Games Day
December 21: First Day of Winter, National Flashlight Day, Humbug Day
December 23: Roots Day
December 24: Christmas Eve, National Egg Nog Day
December 25: Christmas Day, National Pumpkin Pie Day
December 26: Boxing Day, Kwanzaa begins, National Whiners Day
December 27: Visit the Zoo Day
December 28: Card Playing Day, National Chocolate Day
December 31: New Years Eve
On October 11th, UCET participated in Edcamp Utah, bringing together over 125 educators from across the state for a day of sharing and learning. If you’ve never heard of an Edcamp it is an unique one day conference in which the agenda is planned during the first hour. Rather than an expert presenting on a given topic, the sessions are designed to be an open discussion with all contributing to the learning. We had over 35 sessions during the event and all were led by participants - what a great way to get hands-on!

One highlight of Edcamp Utah was an incredible opening keynote by Tami Pyfer, the Governor’s Liaison for Education. Tami’s message about the real state of education in Utah got our teachers excited to share the great things they are doing in their classrooms. One teacher commented, “I loved the Tami Pyfer! I had a rough week at school and felt that her presentation cheered my soul and gave me courage and determination to continue.”

If you would like to read the session notes from any of the conference please visit: GOO.GL/X6QDXQ

UCET would like to thank all the sponsors for Edcamp Utah:

- INSTRUCTURE
- ARDUSAT
- UEN
- SKYPE IN THE CLASSROOM
- UCET
- NEIL ARMSTRONG ACADEMY
- GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT

A special thanks goes out Robin Farnsworth and Tyler Howe from Neil Armstrong Academy - these two really got the ball rolling and made sure every detail was perfect! Also a big shout out to the members of the organizing crew: Kristin Johnson, Jayanne Unander, Shauna Vincent, Dani Kauerz Sloan, and others. Without them we wouldn’t have had an Edcamp!

WHAT TEACHERS SAID ABOUT EDCAMP UTAH

“Edcamp is what professional development should be about. Teachers coming together to discuss individual challenges and interests, while sharing resources or possible solutions based on real needs, interests, and experiences. Participating in Edcamp Utah was one of the most authentic professional development experiences I have had in years.” Jeremy Smith

“I had no idea what to expect at this event. I was pleasantly surprised as so many teachers were very willing to share their experiences with different technology. I felt like the sharing of the collective knowledge regarding technology was very valuable.” Jean Robinson

“I really enjoyed the open format of each session. Everyone’s ideas were heard and addressed within each session, regardless of current level of understanding.” Kathryn Morrison

“I have been hungering for a collaborative experience like this. Edcamp Utah met my expectations and beyond.” Sharon Moore
Battery Life on Your Mobile Devices
by Jordan Haws, USU Student

Electrical devices are great things, particularly smart phones. However, there's always that terrible moment when you realize that your phone is about to die, and have no place to charge it! Charging and battery life will always be a part of owning a smartphone, but here are great ways to help your charge last longer:

• One thing is vibrations. Did you realize that it takes more juice to make an entire phone vibrate rather than just a little speaker membrane? Well, it's the truth! Honestly, vibrate is a very convenient mode, but turning it on ring, or especially just silent will help conserve power!

• Another big thing is your screen. The first and foremost is how long your screen stays on after you stop using it, called timeout. If you think about it, phones are checked often, and even more often, you don't actually do anything, you're just checking. So, a shorter timeout time even from 1 minute down to 30 sec uses half time being on!

• In connection with your screen is brightness levels. It's nice to have it on auto, but that is honestly usually more than needed, so changing manually is a great option! Also darker wallpapers can help.

• Now, there is a lot to be said about batteries and charging. However, when it comes down to it, virtually all Apple and Android phones use Lithium Ion batteries. What does this mean? It means that the batteries do not have a 'memory' of needing to be fully charged. Quite frankly, these batteries operate best if not run down completely, and frequent charging is a good thing!

• Another big thing is turning off things you don't need. For example, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, or GPS capabilities when you don't need them. This is particularly helpful when you are in areas that have weaker connections, or when it needs to search for signals. If you turn these off, then your phone is constantly searching for signals, so it saves a surprising amount of energy! Airplane mode is a very useful way to easy turn some of these off.

• Apps can also have a big pull on battery life. Some run in the background, where you can't see them working. Some like to auto check or update as frequently as every 15 minutes. This can add up quickly. It's just deciding what you don't need. If you have apps you don't use anymore, deleting them insures that they won't eat up any power. But, more often, you can just check the setting of the individual apps, or in settings to regulate updates. On example is syncing with Google accounts, or having your phone auto check your email.

• Notifications can also be turned down or even stopped to improve battery life. When a notification goes off, the screen lights up, it might vibrate, and then you might check it. None of those are bad things, but if you have a notification go off once every 15 minutes, it will eat away battery life quickly.

• If you have and Android, you can access info on what eats your battery up, and make decisions accordingly. It can be found if Settings, under Battery. However, Android or otherwise, there are a wide variety of apps that can be downloaded and can give you input on your particular device.

• Last but not least, don't leave apps up and running.

Amazon Echo - Personal Assistant Extraordinaire!
http://amazon.com/echo
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkOCEAtKhiC

From Amazon's website: “Amazon Echo is designed around your voice. It’s always on—just ask for information, music, news, weather, and more. Echo begins working as soon as it hears you say the wake word, “Alexa.” It’s also an expertly tuned speaker that can fill any room with immersive sound.

Tucked under Echo’s light ring is an array of seven microphones. These sensors use beam-forming technology to hear you from any direction. With enhanced noise cancellation, Echo can hear you ask a question even while it’s playing music.

Echo’s brain is in the cloud, running on Amazon Web Services so it continually learns and adds more functionality over time. The more you use Echo, the more it adapts to your speech patterns, vocabulary, and personal preferences.

Echo has been fine-tuned to deliver crisp vocals with dynamic bass response. Its dual downward-firing speakers produce 360° omni-directional audio to fill the room with immersive sound. Echo provides hands-free voice control for Amazon Music, Prime Music, iHeartRadio, and TuneIn. Plus, Echo is Bluetooth-enabled so you can stream other popular music services like Spotify, iTunes, and Pandora from your phone or tablet.

Echo doesn’t stop working when you’re away from home. With the free companion app on Fire OS and Android, plus desktop and iOS browsers, you can easily manage your alarms, music, shopping lists, and more.”
World Of 7 Billion Student Video Contest Returns

Population Education is thrilled to announce the return of the fourth annual World of 7 Billion student video contest for 2014-2015. This year, high school students from around the globe are being challenged to create a short video (up to 60 seconds) about human population growth that highlights one of the following global concerns:

- The world is in the midst of the sixth mass extinction.
- Most of the world’s suitable farmland is already under cultivation.
- Worldwide, 1 in 10 primary school age children and 1 in 3 secondary age children are not enrolled in school.

All videos must include
a) how population growth impacts the issue,
b) why the issue is important, and c) at least one idea for a sustainable solution.

Four winners will be chosen for each global challenge. The first place winner will receive $1,000; second place winner $500; and honorable mentions $250 each. All students, grades 9-12, worldwide are eligible to participate and win. Click here to view last year’s winning videos.

Entries are due by Thursday, February 19, 2015 (5:00pm Eastern US time). Visit the World of 7 Billion website to enter the contest and download our flyer for more information.

Teachers can utilize World of 7 Billion video contest in the classroom

We’ve created a lesson plan and supplementary resources to help teachers incorporate the video contest into the classroom. With clear objectives, research materials, a step-by-step procedure, and follow-up questions for further analysis, teachers can provide a meaningful experience for their students. The contest fits easily into classes on Social Studies, APHG, Global Studies, Science, APES, Communications, and more. Teachers who have 10 or more students enter the contest will receive a free resource kit.

About Population Education

Population Education, a program of Population Connection, is the only program in the United States with a strong emphasis on curriculum and professional development for K-12 educators that focuses on human population issues. Since 1975, the program has developed age-appropriate curricula to complement students’ science and social science instruction about human population trends and their impacts on natural resources, environmental quality and human well-being.

For more information please visit www.Worldof7Billion.org

For media inquiries please contact Elspeth Dehnert at 202-974-7734 or edehnert@populationconnection.org

Protecting your computer

by Dave Wilkins, USU Student

There are various things that can be harmful to your computer. This includes software, viruses, keyloggers, and files. The list below provides some of the most commonly forms of security breaches:

Trojans – create a backdoor for your computer to be remotely controlled
Virus – program to cause damage to your files
Spyware – program that collects your personal data
Spam – Many copies of the same message
Phishing – Usually a fake version of a website or link of a real website

Each one of these can be malicious in many different ways. They can also be very hard to find. That is why it’s smart to have a security program installed on your computer or device that will search for locations on your computer for these hard to find bugs.

An example of a place that would be hard to find and that most typical users don’t see is the registry of an operating system.

For Windows 7 users, if you click the start button search for “regedit” in the search bar and press enter; the registry editor window will appear. For Windows 8, press the Windows button and type “regedit” and press enter. This is where a lot of registration and information of your computer is stored. Security programs are able to find suspicious files and edits in this location as it would be hard for most typical users to see.

System Restore: Have you ever wished you could have your computer travel back in time after something harmful has happened? With Windows, you can.

Sometimes installing a program or driver can make Windows run slowly or unpredictably. System Restore can return your PC’s system files and programs to a time when everything was working fine, potentially preventing hours of troubleshooting headaches. It won’t affect your documents, pictures, or other data.

For more protection, use System Restore with backup and restore, which is designed to help safeguard email, pictures, documents, and other personal files. Here are some helpful links:


Viruses can only be stored in the hard drive of your computer. If you cannot find a way to remove it, it’s likely you may need to reformat your hard drive. Some viruses can even block the ability to use the System Restore feature.

The website top10antivirussoftware.com has a list of exactly what the domain name states, lists the top 10 best anti-virus software programs available. Some of these programs are free, some have fees.

Free Internet Security programs:

McAfee
KasperSky
BullGuard
Trend Micro
Norton

Phishing - Phishing is a way hackers attempt to steal login details, credit card information, and any other personal information. Phishing can come in many different forms, usually it’s either a website or an email that contains a link to a website. The website listed below shows many different examples of phishing emails:

http://www.it.cornell.edu/security/safety/phishbowl.cfm

Keeping your computer up to date with the latest patches and fixes is a great way to keep it secure. You should have Windows downloading and installing updates periodically as Microsoft will release these updates.

Other suggestions would be to use complex password, backup personal information to a hard drive not connected to the internet, and always use a firewall. Never download anything online that you think that may be from the original manufacture. Downloads from sites that are not credible often times are loaded with spyware and viruses. It’s also recommended to turn your computer off while it’s not in use. Turning your computer off will disable any connections to the internet.

The image below shows an example of a PayPal phishing.