



Dinsan Francis

Chromebook Guide

For Students



Introduction

Chromebooks are simple and easy to use. They are easy to setup and manage. If you know how to use Google Chrome, the browser, you know most of it already.

Then there are a few things that Chromebooks do differently. This quick guide will help you with those little things, and get started on your school work using your Chromebook!

My name is [Dinsan](#) and I am huge Chromebook fan and love talking about them. I created this guide for students who use Chromebooks in schools.

Let's get started, shall we?



Chrome OS

Chrome OS is the operating system used by Chromebooks. On a PC, the operating system is Windows, and for a MacBook, it is MacOS. Similarly, your Chromebook uses Chrome OS.

If you have used Google Chrome, the browser, you will find this new operating system very familiar. On Chrome OS, you will use the browser, Google Chrome, to get things done. You will also be using apps. If you have one of the newer models, you can also use Android apps.

The Keyboard

You might have noticed this even before switching on your Chromebook. (Oh, by the way, to switch on your Chromebook, you just have to open the lid!) The keyboard is slightly different from other keyboards that you have used.

For starters, there is no Caps Lock key. The Delete key is also missing. Instead of the regular function keys (F1 to F12), your Chromebook has a different set of keys.

Let's review them in detail.

Caps Lock

Chromebooks have a Search key instead of the Caps Lock key. Here is how it looks like:

The Search key launches the apps menu. On newer Chromebooks, you will be able to launch Google Assistant with this key.

What if you really need caps lock? There is a keyboard shortcut. Alt + Search will enable caps lock. Use the same shortcut to disable caps lock. You can also customize what the Search key does. Find more about that here.





Delete

Most of the Chromebooks come without a Delete key. Here is what to do instead:

ALT + Backspace: Delete the next letter (forward delete)

CTRL + Backspace: Delete the previous word

Home and End

You will not see a Home or End key either. Alternate keyboard shortcuts are:

ALT + Up Arrow key: Home











ALT + Down Arrow key: End

Dedicated Browser Keys

For all the keys that they took away, Google has added a bunch of dedicated keys to help us browse the web faster. This is Google's version of function keys F1 to F12, remember?).

The following is a list of dedicated browser keys that you get.

Note: These might vary according to the Chromebook model you have purchased.

-  Go to the previous page in your browser history (F1)
-  Go to the next page in your browser history (F2)
-  Reload your current page (F3)
-  Maximize your window (F4)
-  Switch to your next window (F5)
-  Decrease screen brightness (F6)
-  Increase screen brightness (F7)
-  Mute (F8)
-  Decrease the volume (F9)
-  Increase the volume (F10)



Some Touchpad Tricks

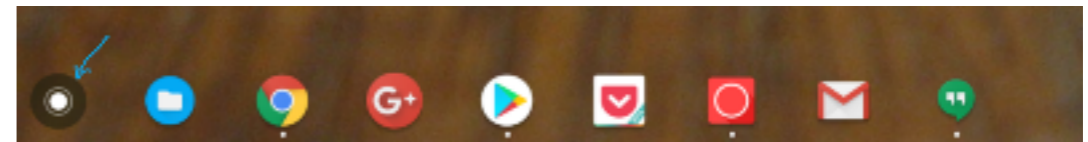
1. Click or tap with two fingers for right click
2. If that's not easy for you, ALT + Click = Right click!
3. Swipe with two fingers to scroll
4. Swipe up or down with three fingers to see all the open windows and apps.
5. Swipe left and right with three fingers to switch between open tabs.

Find more information on this [official help article from Google.](#)

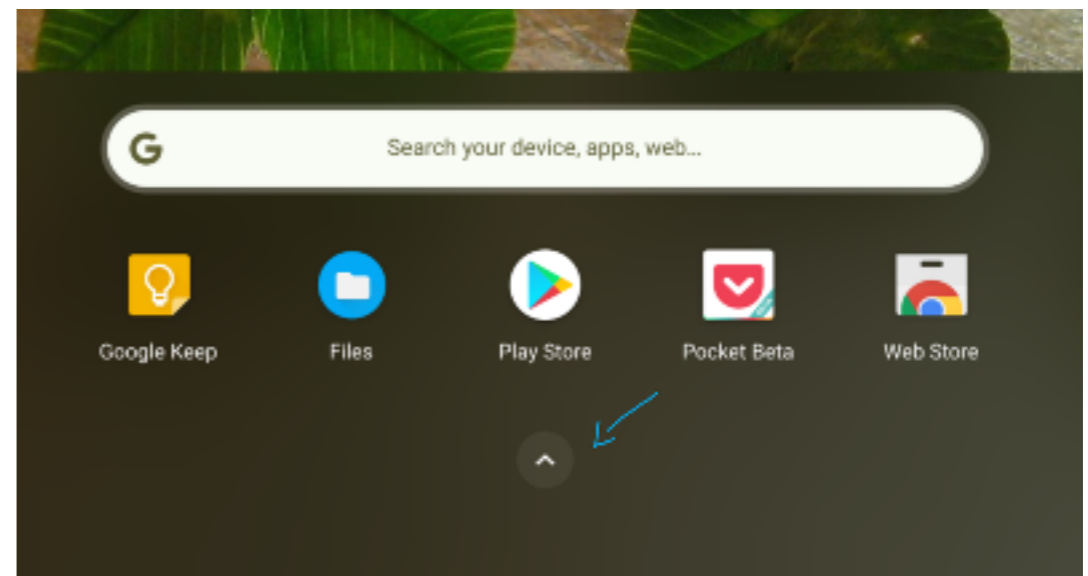


Chrome OS Launcher and Apps Menu

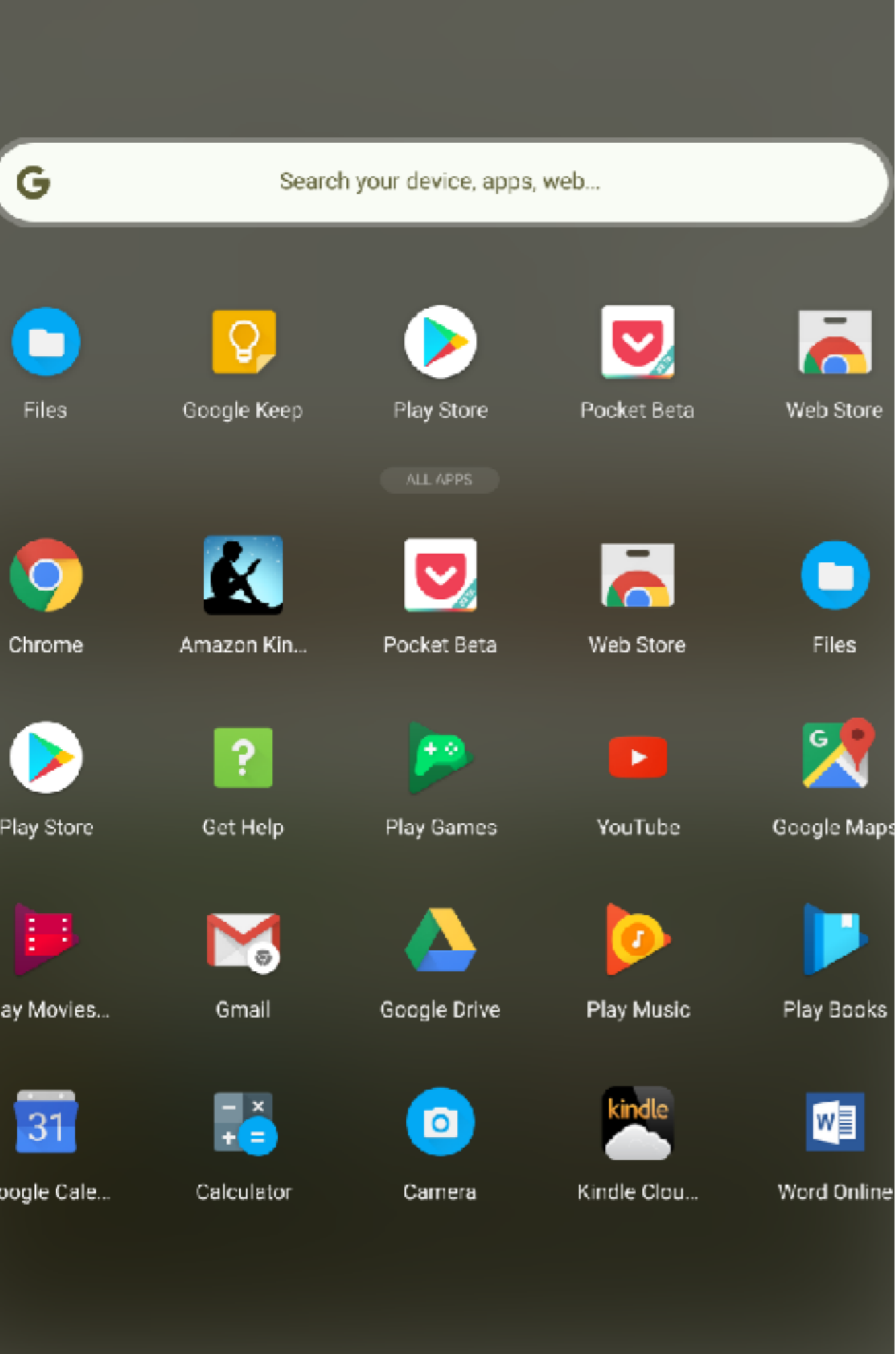
You can open the apps menu by clicking the apps icon on the taskbar or pressing the Search key.



At first, a quarter of the launcher is displayed, with a search box and five recently used apps. To see all apps, click the up arrow.



The all apps menu lists all the apps that you have installed, and a search box. If your Chromebook supports Android apps and you have installed Chrome and Android versions of the same app, you will see a Chrome logo next to the Chrome app icon.



Things You Can Do Using The Search Field

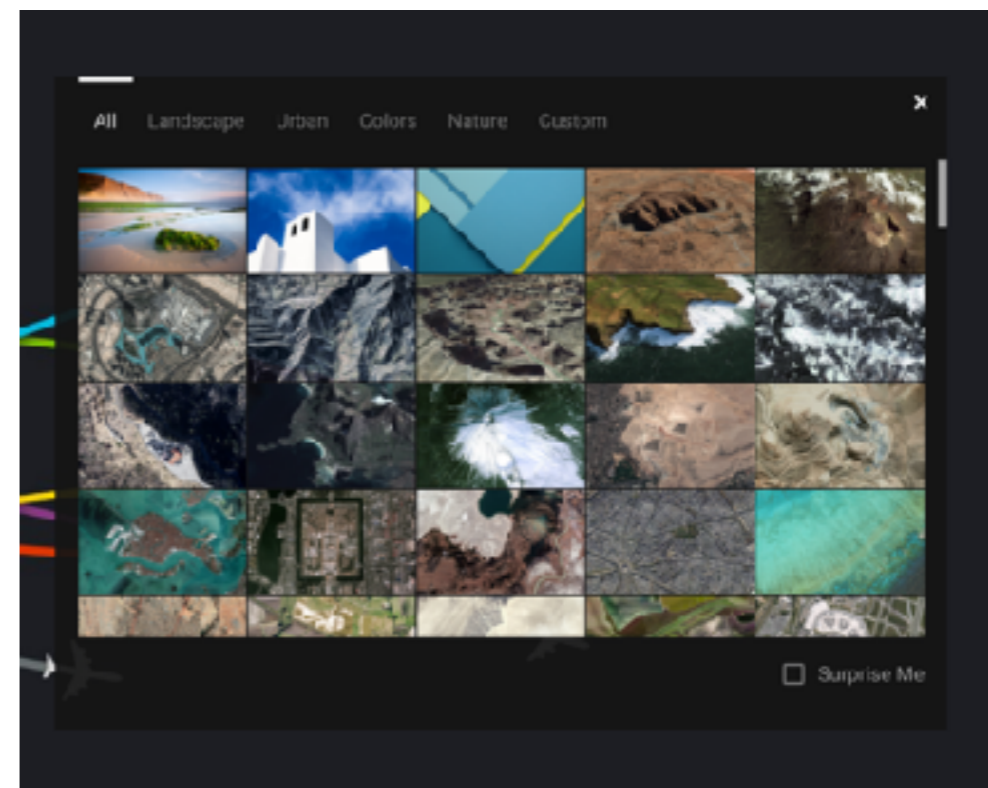
- Launch apps you have installed from Chrome Web Store or Google Play Store: Click the app icon to launch an app. Right click the app icon for more options including, pin the the app to the taskbar, or uninstall.
- Search the web: You don't need to open a new tab, open Google.com and then type in the search query. You are on a Chromebook now! Press the search key once to open the Chrome OS apps menu, type in your query and hit Enter. A new tab will open with your search results.
- Do some basic maths or conversions: Since Google search is integrated to the Chrome OS apps menu, you can do basic maths from the search area of the menu. Try something now. For example, type in $4 * 4 =$ and see what happens!
- Search and install apps and extensions: Search results also show related apps and extensions from the Chrome Web Store. Click the Add to Chrome icon to install the app or extension. If your Chromebook supports Google Play Store, the app suggestions will come from Play Store.



Change Wallpaper

One of the first thing that you do on any new computer or phone? Change the wallpaper and give some personal touch to the device. Here is how to do that on a Chromebook.

Just like your PC or Mac, right click the desktop and choose Set Wallpaper. You can pick wallpapers available there or use your own image. There are plenty of apps that will change your wallpaper automatically and add some eye candy to your Chromebook.






Take Screenshots

Here are the keyboard shortcuts to take screenshots.

CTRL +  takes screenshot of your current window

CTRL + SHIFT +  allows you to take a partial screenshot by selecting the area you want to capture.

Apart from these, you can use Chrome extensions to capture and edit screenshots. If you have a Pixelbook, there are [six different ways to take screenshots!](#)



Screen Lock and Password Protection

To lock the Chrome OS screen, click the profile icon on the taskbar (or any of those icons there on the bottom right corner!) and click the lock symbol.

Or even better, press **SEARCH + L** to lock the screen!

Most of the time, instead of using this method, I tend to close the lid of the Chromebook and walk away. When I open it again, I open the lid and I am ready to go, instantly. But there is one thing that I don't like here. If I keep my Chromebook closed and move away from it, anyone else can open it up and start using it.

I would like to have Chromebook ask for my password when I open the lid again, for a little more security. Here is how to do this:

1. Go to Settings > Screen lock.
2. Enter your Chromebook password to access

Set Up PIN Unlock

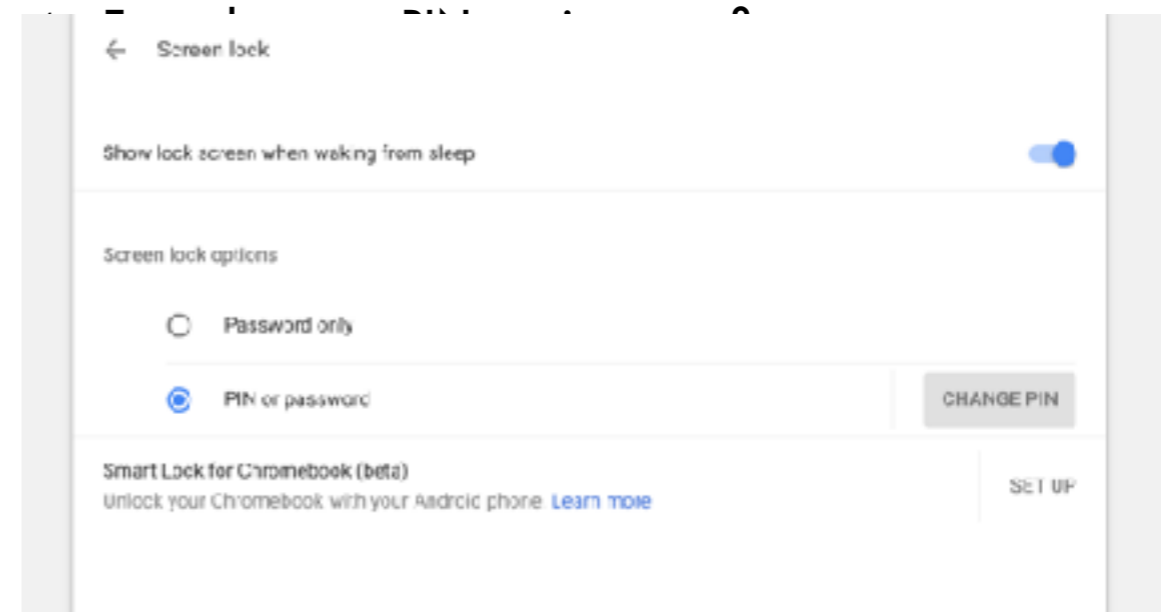
Here is one of my favorite Chromebook features. Unlock device using PIN or a six digit number. Let me first tell you why this is useful.

I use my Google account password to login to my Chromebook. I use a long and complex password to protect my Google account. I don't mind typing that when I switch on my Chromebook for the day. I have enabled the **Show lock screen when waking from sleep** feature for extra security. This means I have to enter my long and difficult Google account password each time I unlock Chromebook screen.

Enter PIN unlock. This helps me unlock my Chromebook easily using a six digit PIN. I will still enter my Google account when I switch on my Chromebook, or when I come back to it after a long interval. However, I don't need to enter the Google account password each time I come back from a coffee break or a snack break.

Here is how to set up PIN Unlock:

1. Go to Settings > Screen lock.
2. Enter your Chromebook password to access these settings.
Under Screen lock options, select PIN or password.
3. Enter a six digit PIN and click **Continue**.



Next time you unlock your Chromebook, enter the PIN to get back to your work quickly.

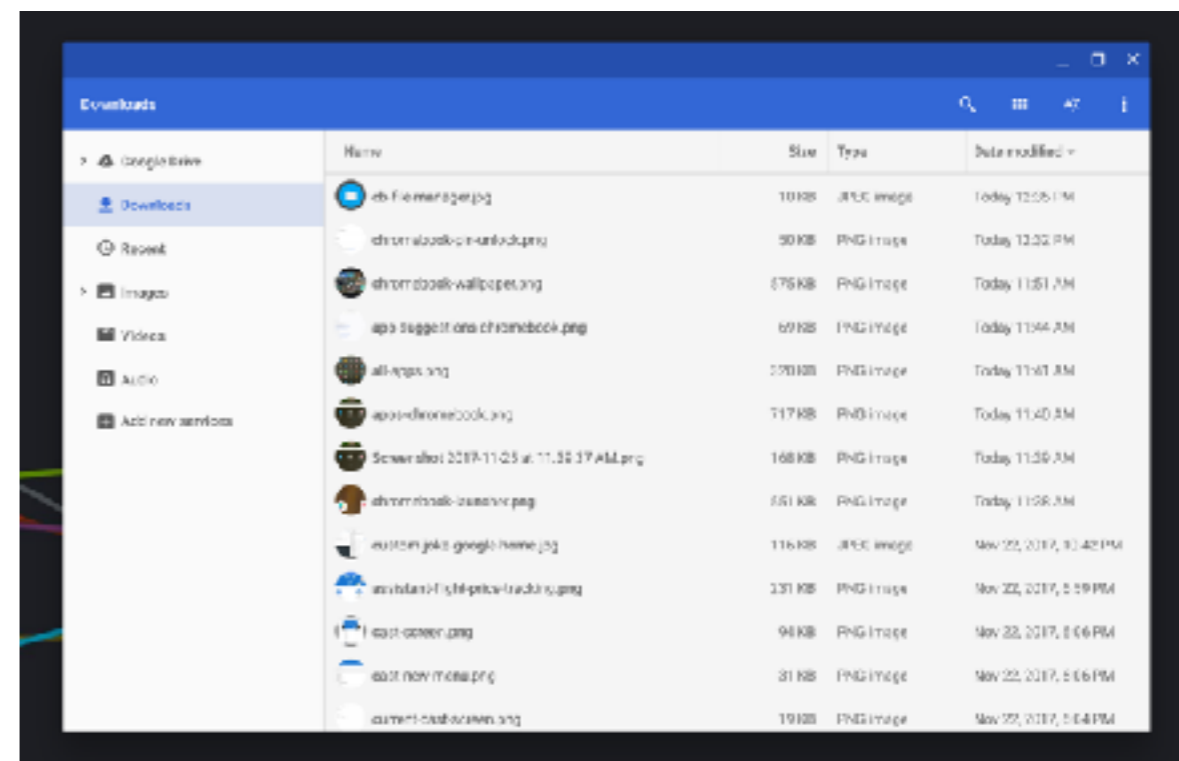


Manage Files

Chromebook's file manager is simply called **Files**. If your Chromebook support Android apps, you can install third party file managers from the Play Store. In this guide, I will show you how to use the built in file manager.

To open the Files app, click the app icon or use the keyboard shortcut **ALT + SHIFT + M**.

Chromebook Files app has two main sections; Downloads and Google Drive. When you plug in a USB drive or a memory card, they also show next to these two sections.





Downloads

The Downloads section or drive contains all the files that stored on your Chromebook. These will be available even when you are not connected to the internet.

- To create new folders or subfolders, click settings icon on the top right corner (three dots) and choose **New folder**. You can also use the keyboard shortcut **CTRL + E**.
- You can view the remaining space on your Chromebook from the same settings menu.
- Right click on any file for additional options like zip, rename and delete etc.
- Use **ALT + BACKSPACE** to delete files or folders.

Note: Contents of the Downloads drive are stored locally on your Chromebook. Anything you save here will be lost during [Powerwash](#) (factory reset). Use cloud or an external storage device to store important data.

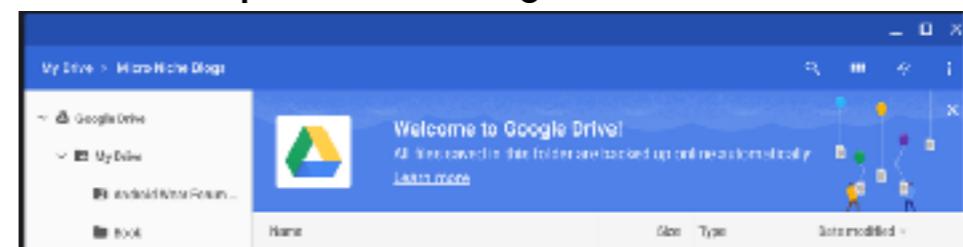


Google Drive

This section displays all your files and folders from Google Drive. These files are stored on Google servers, but you can select a bunch of files and make them available offline too.

To make files available on the Chromebook (to access even when you are offline) check the Available offline against the files of your choice.

Click the settings icon on the top right corner for additional options on Google Drive.



Drag and Drop Between Google Drive and Downloads

You can drag and drop files from the Downloads drive or Google Drive to copy files between them.

- When you drag a file from Downloads drive to Google Drive, the file will be uploaded to your Google Drive.



Google Play Store and Android Apps

Newer Chromebooks come with Android apps support. If you have one of these new devices, you will see the Play Store icon on your toolbar.

Most of the Chromebooks that support Play Stop come with touch screen as well.

You can install Android apps on your Chromebook either using the Play Store app or by going to play.google.com, just like you do for your phone or tablet.

Google is currently working on integrating Android apps with Chrome OS more efficiently.





Using Chromebook When You Are Offline

You will be using Chromebooks with internet most of the time. When you are without an internet connection, you can still do a lot of things with your Chromebook:

- View photos
- Edit Photos
- Watch movies
- Play music
- Read books
- View and edit Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents
- View PDFs
- Play Games

If your Chromebook can run Android apps, there are tons of things you can do with those apps! Find more about using [Chromebooks offline here](#).



Updating Your Chromebook

Software updates are an important and time consuming affair in any operating system that you have used so far. Here is some good news for you; Chrome OS updates automatically in the background. The changes are applied next time you restart your Chromebook. You will see an icon when updates are downloaded and installed.

Note: Automatic updates require Wifi. Chrome OS will not download updates using mobile data or tethering.

How to you check if you are on the latest version?

Go to **Settings > Help > About Chrome OS**. (or directly open `chrome://chrome/` on a new tab). Click Check for and apply updates. This should tell you if your Chromebook is on the latest version of Chrome OS.

You can find the [latest version of Chrome OS here](#).



Thank You!

Thank you for downloading this guide. This was created by Dinsan from [Chrome Story](#) with a lot of help from his friends!

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Images from [unsplash.com](#)

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