

mattsaul.com web tools

Version 1.10

New for 2023: AI Libber

Write ad copy and headlines like a pro with the help of GPT3 AI.

<https://grandrapids.co/ailibber>

Search Suggestions

Coding questions:

Add stackoverflow to your query, for example, php date stackoverflow

General questions:

Add Reddit to your search, for example, best free video editing software reddit This keeps Google from just giving you results that gamed the algorithm the best. You can replace Reddit with any specific site you think will have more info on the subject. Note that this works better when you have created a Reddit account because the layout of the comments is better.

Can't spell, like me:

Add qualifying words, for example Nietzsche philosopher

Learning

You can learn a lot of tech and other things online, especially tech things. YouTube is your friend for this.

LinkedIn Learning (you may be able to get it free through your library)

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning-login/go/share>

Udemy (when courses go on sale)

<https://www.udemy.com>

Affordable and Free Software

Ninite - free

Great way to get essential free software on your computer including Chrome, Firefox, Zoom, Discord, WinAmp, Audacity, Paint.NET, etc.. some of the software below can be downloaded using Ninite

Windows

<https://ninite.com>

Affinity Designer - \$55 (but can sometimes be found cheaper on sale)

This is a great alternative to Illustrator that handles a lot of common vector formats like SVG and PDF. I mainly use it for doing edits on vector clipart and exporting it to bitmapped images but the program can do an incredible amount of stuff.

Windows / Mac

<https://affinity.serif.com>

Affinity Photo - \$55 (but can sometimes be found cheaper on sale)

This is a great Photoshop alternative for people who don't want to be on the Adobe Creative Cloud subscription treadmill. I mainly use it for removing dust and scratches from scanned photos and cutting subjects out of backgrounds. It is very powerful for what you pay.

Windows / Mac

<https://affinity.serif.com/en-us/photo>

Affinity Publisher - \$55 (but can sometimes be found cheaper on sale)

This program I use for resumes. It gives you more granular control of your layout than Microsoft Publisher but is not as complicated as InDesign. It also comes in handy editing PDF's, something I didn't have the capability to do before this.

Windows / Mac

<https://affinity.serif.com/en-us/publisher>

AstroGrep - free

Search for strings within files. Handy for when you aren't sure where in your website a certain shopping cart button was.

Windows

<http://astrogrep.sourceforge.net>

Audacity - free

Great basic audio editing software, now opens and saves to MP3.

Windows

<https://www.audacityteam.org>

Blender - free

Free 3D rendering software. I haven't used this much but hear it's professional grade, definitely something you should look into if you like to do any 3D editing and animation.

Windows / Mac / Linux

<https://www.blender.org>

Chrome Remote Desktop

Free remote desktop solution as long as you are willing to use the Chrome browser.

<https://remotedesktop.google.com>

FFmpeg Batch AV Converter - free

Video and audio file conversion, this is a easy to learn user interface over FFMPEG that allows you to convert a lot of video and audio files. For example you can pull thumbnails from a video or convert video to audio.

Windows

<https://ffmpeg-batch.sourceforge.io>

Handbrake - free

Video conversion and encoding. I use it for making web streamable versions of video output from iMovie. It can also read unencrypted DVD's.

Windows / Mac / Linux

<https://handbrake.fr>

LibreOffice - free

Microsoft Office alternative, word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation program.

Windows / Mac / Linux

<https://www.libreoffice.org>

TreeSheets - free

Spreadsheet featuring more options to organize information.

Windows / Mac / Linux

<https://strlen.com/treesheets>

Notepad++ - free

Text/code editor with many advanced features.

Windows

<https://notepad-plus-plus.org>

paint.net - free

Good free paint program that is great for basic image editing and cropping.

Windows

<https://www.getpaint.net>

Postman - free

Program that allows you to test REST and other requests before actually implementing them in code.

Windows / web

<https://www.postman.com/downloads>

PuTTY - free

SSH into your website with this handy tool.

Windows / Linux (source code)

<https://www.putty.org>

Visual Studio Code - free

Just getting into this, the new gold standard code editor that supports a variety of languages. My use case is mainly PHP but have done a little React Native with it.

Windows / Mac / Linux

<https://code.visualstudio.com>

WAMP or Docker - free

These are the two options I've used to host local versions of my clients' websites. WAMP is good for legacy code because it lets you run multiple versions of PHP. Docker is better if you need more modern setups like with node.js.

WAMP

Windows

<https://www.wampserver.com/en>

Docker

Windows / Mac / Linux

<https://www.docker.com>

Online Web Development Tools

Google Pagespeed Insights

See how fast your site pulls up along with other important SEO information. It allows you to take a deep dive into which assets are slowing your site down.

<https://pagespeed.web.dev>

Gtmetrix

Another speed test site with a nice readout of your page's file size.

<https://gtmetrix.com>

E-Mail Deliverability Tester

Why the heck are the e-mails you send out getting caught in SPAM filters? Find out with this tool.

<https://www.mail-tester.com>

Mailchimp

Free e-mail newsletters until you reach 2,000 contacts.

<https://mailchimp.com>

MXToolbox

Look up domains and check for being SPAM blocked

<https://mxtoolbox.com>

SendGrid – free for limited number of emails

Send out lost password e-mails from your apps that will actually get past the SPAM filters.

<https://sendgrid.com>

Redirect Check

Check how many times a URL redirects and see info on each one.

<http://redirectcheck.com/index.php>

Broken Links Check

Great tool for things you may have missed. I found some broken links just now.

<https://www.brokenlinkcheck.com>

Facebook Crawler

For checking how your website details and thumbnail image will be shown on Facebook.

<https://developers.facebook.com/tools/debug>

Browser Stats

E-Mail browser stats to anyone. Great for troubleshooting browser issues.

<https://supportdetails.com>

Malware Scan

Scan your website for all-too-common malware.

<https://sitecheck.sucuri.net>

WhyNoPadlock

Diagnose SSL certificate problems.

<https://www.whynopadlock.com>

CloudFlare

Get free Denial of Service Attack protection and SSL certificate.

<https://www.cloudflare.com>

Startpage

Google search without the customization for your location and account info.

<https://startpage.com>

speedof.me

Internet speed test, may not work on mobile.

<https://speedof.me>

Pexels

Free royalty-free stock images and video.

<https://www.pexels.com>

Image Compressor

Compress JPEG images better than Photoshop.

<https://imagecompressor.com>

Geofence Man

Draw points on a map and export their latitude and longitude coordinates.

<http://gorecki.co/geofence-man>

WordPress Plugins

Duplicator - free

Back up WordPress installs and move them between hosts

<https://wordpress.org/plugins/duplicator>

The SEO Framework - free

Great Yoast alternative for all things SEO and allows you to specify the thumbnail images displayed when posting to Facebook.

<https://wordpress.org/plugins/autodescription>

Handy Windows Keyboard Shortcuts

(in browser) CTRL - SHFT - T

Restore most recently closed tab

START - V

View multiple items in your clipboard to select with a mouse

START - Q

Lets you search your computer

START - D

Show Windows desktop.

START (then let go of it and type anything)

Searches for applications on your computer in the start bar

SHFT - ENTER

Line feed (instead of carriage return which ENTER does). This shortcut gives you a new line without committing the way a carriage return does. For example when you want to start a new line on a list without it adding another bullet. In HTML it will give you a line break
 tag instead of a <p> paragraph tag. It also comes in handy in Facebook chat, SHIFT-ENTER will let you start a new line without submitting the message.

Click inside a folder and press any key: This will get you to the file name beginning with the letter you pressed.

Product Hunting

Ben's Bargains

Find bargains on a wide variety of products as well as in stock COVID related products. You can register for free and get deal alerts when products come in stock.

<https://bensbargains.com>

Chrome Extensions

Simple Gmail Notes

Helps tame your Gmail inbox by letting you annotate emails which show up at the top of the e-mail thread

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/simple-gmail-notes/jfjkcblkjohminidbpendlodpfacgmlm?hl=en>

Notes on Notes

There are as many ways to take notes as there are people on earth but here are a few tips.

Have an area on top for non changing things like logins and passwords and another area for more current stuff and have a separator like ----- that you can quickly search for to get to the right section.

Put a special character around an important subject so you can find it easily. For example above your twitter account login put ~Twitter which you can search for easily. It can be any special character it doesn't have to be a tilde.

Put keywords above things you want to come back to. For example a link you paste down about a new treatment you might label health so when you do a search for a health keyword it comes up.

In searching an old Ebay listing trick is putting *like* in your notes. For example above the URL to React.js you could put *like Angular.js* This way when you search for something related it will come up.

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