



Hey Cortana

How can I help you today..?

We had a discussion on personal voice assistants at the last meeting. First up was Microsoft's Cortana, which ships with Windows 8, 8.1 and 10.

Cortana is a personal voice assistant that speaks to you in answer to your questions. Ask Cortana just about anything and 'she'll' give you the answer. Ex: Cortana – What is the temperature in Tokyo? You will know what to pack within seconds.

How far is it to the moon? She knows. Cortana uses the data base of Bing. Microsoft's excellent search engine and converts the data into voice. Cortana has two main voices in English, male and female. If you have another language, or languages, on your computer, Cortana will have additional choices. In my notebook I have English and Japanese installed. There are two English speaking and 4 Japanese speaking assistants.

To access Cortana click on the 'circle' next to the Windows icon on the Taskbar. If you don't see the 'circle' then click on the Win icon, scroll down to the C's and click on Cortana. Once it's open, right click, select Cortana and show Cortana icon.

Click on the microphone icon to ask your questions, or just type it in the search box.

Useful for many reasons, you can set reminders, schedule events on your calendar and have Cortana

read them. Search for Apps, documents or web content.

The next one is a bit different, My Friend Cayla. Cayla is an entertainment and educational doll designed for the younger-lady set. It can talk and interact with them. Play games, share photos and read stories.

The maker of Cayla recommends using the doll with a Bluetooth capable Apple or Android smart device and runs on three AAA batteries.

Your kid doesn't like the name Cayla? Change it using the built-in app.

Like the other famous doll, Cayla has clothing accessories available for the 18-inch doll.

When on-line, connected via Bluetooth Cayla can answer almost any question.

Off-line she has thousands of questions about herself.

My Friend Cayla speaks in different languages. The language apps can be found at Google App or Apple App stores.

Cayla comes with kid-safe proprietary software installed, called Violet, that filters offensive or sensitive words or images. Violet also has a feature that allows parents to add additional words or phrases they want to prevent their children from hearing.

The Bluetooth device in Cayla is not secure.

In Feb. 2017 the German Federal Network Agency said the device could be hacked and information gained used against the owners.

Germany has banned the sale of My Friend Cayla accusing it of spying

"This is about protecting the weakest members of society.", said Jochen Homann of the Agency, and recommended that parents who bought My Friend Cayla, destroy it.

Vivid GmbH, the distributor, said it was taking the allegations very seriously and would challenge the ban in court.

I didn't see any evidence that hacking had taken place outside of the FNA labs.

If your access point, Smartphone or router, is secure, you should probably be OK.

While Cortana can also be subject to hackers, if it is behind a secure firewall, the chance of that happening are greatly diminished.

Other personal assistants include: Alexa, Bixby, Echo Dot and Siri, and a few others. All offer vice assistance without needing a computer. All you need is a Wi-Fi router or Bluetooth or Android connection.

These devices can place phone calls for you, order a pizza or play your music request.

Google Home can turn the lights in your house on, or off; set the temperature and power on, or off, other household devices so equipped. These actions can be accessed through your Smartphone while on the road.

Eventually, we won't need a keyboard to execute a command or send a text.



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"Gifts for the future scholar"

There are 2 gifts we give our children: one is roots and the other is wings. ~ Anon.

It's that time of year when the kids leave (or have left) the nest for a new life as a college student. After all the obvious "goodies" what else might your kids/grandkids really appreciate for their new venue? Tech stuff of course...but don't forget a couple "practical" items too... so, here are a half-dozen ideas for you to consider as you reluctantly wave goodbye!



SanDisk Ultra Dual USB Drive

This ingenious gadget is a perfect fit for the college set. Phones and tablets rule the day, and students rely on them more than ever for homework and research. You can connect one end of the Ultra Dual USB Drive to your Android phone or tablet and copy large files like research papers, photos and videos to it. Then you disconnect, snap it into a USB port and copy the material onto your laptop. It's slick ... no app required. Available in 16GB, 32GB and 64GB.

Sorry, no iPhones.



Otterbox Resurgence

Don't leave for college unless you have a protective case for your iPhone 5/5s. Seriously! The Otterbox Resurgence is a smart buy, even at this price, because it's rated for military-grade protection and will withstand

drops from a few feet. The case also provides back-up battery power for an extra charge to full. Comes in various colors.

Portable Wi-Fi hotspot



Wireless internet connectivity is an important tool for college students, so arm them with their own personal wifi hotspot to connect their iPad, laptop or other device to the internet wherever they may be. Check with your cell phone provider for availability and monthly rates.

AtHomePlus Care Packages



They can be used as cool gifts for student care packages, dorm room snacks, college gift ideas, gifts for college students, gift ideas for college girls, care packages for troops, military care package, gift ideas for men, care packages for women, care packages for men, finals care package, gifts for men, and other care package box.

Every item in the AtHome-Plus care package is hand-picked to include snacks that are the perfect treat for your student or service person away from home. All of the items are national name brands, and fun and tasty snack choices for your loved ones.

ECR4Kids Lock and Roll Portable Under-Bed Personal Safe



The low profile, locking, mobile storage container from ECR4Kids is perfect for protecting your valuables with ease and efficiency. It's great for college students who need to lock up their laptop, tablet computer, passport, wallet, and any other valuable items. This storage is also ideal for vacation homes, boats, or RV's. Simply place valuables in the container, lock the lid, and roll it under any standard bed frame. The ECR4Kids Lock and Roll includes a wire-braided security cable to secure to the bed frame or other fixed posts.

The Secret to a Hassle Free Shower



Are you fed up with putting your hand into a slimy plastic bag to find your comb, razor, or even worse your toothbrush? Do you have black mold spots all over your expensive beauty or hair products? Does your wash sponge or scrunchie have a sinister odor because it never dried out from the last time you used it? With the ShowerMade Shower Bag you can be fresh and organized every day.

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The Benefits of the ShowerMade Shower Tote

Heavy duty mesh double stitched and covered seams to make sure there is no ripping or fraying.

3 Different Sizes of Pockets to suit large or small toiletries

Extra long 20" handle to make carrying easier and to hang easily on a hook or faucet. Plus it's so much more hygienic than leaving it on the floor.

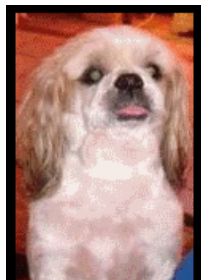
Sturdy design will not flop over even when empty and it easily folds flat to travel.

Quick drying mesh fabric ensures air can circulate so no mold can grow on the bag or it's contents.

That's it, Mom, Dad, Grandpa & Grandpa...don't worry, they will be home at the end of the semester... you will send a plane ticket won't you ??

Remember-: "You see much more of your children after they leave home."—Lucille Ball

**Aloha,
Lou, and in spirit my
BFF, Pooky**



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Decimal Places

As some of you know, I keep the statistics for four Senior bowling leagues. Two leagues with 100 members and two with 120.

I use proprietary software, Bowling League Secretary 2018 ©.

On another report not covered in the BLS I have to enter the same data, sort and categorize all the scores in five different 'divisions'.

I enter these numbers into Excel 2007 on a spreadsheet I had created using the available formulas within the application to get the data in the format I needed.

One of the columns of data has to have data carried out to the second decimal point.

Excel has a built in switch that allows you to set the decimal point on a global basis within the worksheet.

To set this, click the Office button and then click Excel Options, Advanced.

In the Editing Options box, ensure that the Automatically Insert a Decimal Point check box is selected; indicate the number of decimal places you require and then exit by clicking OK.

Now, this is great if you want ALL of your data carried out two places. But, what if you need only one, or two, like in my case?

Well, it requires about the same number of steps to accomplish.

Open Excel and access your worksheet. Select the entire column you want by clicking on the letter(s) about the data.

Once selected, right click and select format cells.

Under Category: highlight Number. You then get a box that lets you set the decimal places. Click OK and you're all set.



Desktop Icons

Many of us have a dizzying array of icons on our display. Some we put there ourselves, some were put there by installing software and some we just don't know how, or why, they showed up. To add to the confusion if you change the resolution, for any reason, they become skewed and out of order making them even harder to find.

You may know that you can sort them in different patterns by right clicking on an open area and then select Sort by. You can put them in order by name, size, type and date

After time you may, as I have, noticed that the wallpaper is getting blocked and hard to discern.

Well, Microsoft has a solution for that, too.

Right-click in an open area and hover your mouse cursor on View. You'll then get a dialog box that lets you set the size, there are three choices. In this same box you can auto arrange, turn on, or off, the icons all together.

If you change the size, the effect is instantaneous. You can change it back by reversing the selection so no need to have to re-boot.

Pres. Lou used to (and may still) pin ALL his icons on the Taskbar and have a 'clean' desktop.

I tried his method once, just once. With my failing eyesight it was just too difficult to find the one I wanted to click on. So, I reverted back to small icons.

Experiment and re-size according to the size of your display and your personal preference.