

# Patrick Crispen's Completely Updated Collection of Truly Useful— and Not So Useful—Websites and Web 2.0 Tools

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## Speedtest.net

<http://speedtest.net/>

Slow connection? Are you getting the bandwidth you paid for? Click the spinning gold star on this Flash-enabled web page to test your download and upload speeds.

## SunSpider JavaScript Benchmark

<http://www.tinyurl.com/jstest>

Web 2.0 web pages taking ages to load? The speed of your web browser's JavaScript engine may be to blame. Made by WebKit, this free benchmark tool measures how fast JavaScript runs in your web browser. Run the test in multiple browsers to find which browser runs the fastest on your computer.

## Xtra Normal

<http://xtranormal.com/>

Create a simple, animated movie for free. Type or record your dialogue and then use Xtra Normal's drag-and-drop interface to change the camera angles, change the actors' accents, and more. Then unleash your creation on an unsuspecting world via email, Facebook, Myspace, Digg, Delicious, Reddit, or StumbleUpon.

## Wolfram Alpha

<http://wolframalpha.com/>

Rather than being a search engine, Wolfram Alpha is a natural language "computational knowledge engine." Enter a question or calculation and Wolfram Alpha will compute the answer. And in the case of algebraic equations, it will even show you the steps.

## Duarte Blog

<http://blog.duarte.com/>

This is the blog for Duarte Design, a Silicon Valley design firm that has made some of the most impressive and famous PowerPoint presentations of all time. This blog is updated once or twice a week and includes examples and deconstructions of the latest trends in presentation design.

## Prezi

<http://prezi.com/>

Tired of PowerPoint? Check out Prezi. This Flash-based online visualization, storytelling, and zooming presentation editor lets you quickly and easily create dynamic presentations. Prezi offers a free "Edu Enjoy" account to educators that lets you make your presentations private and removes the Prezi watermark from those presentations.

## DropBox

<http://dropbox.com/>

The easiest and fastest way to share files between computers as well as to backup your files online, Dropbox is a free program that creates a new "dropbox" folder on your computer. Anything that you put in that folder is automatically backed up to dropbox.com and to the dropbox folder on any other computer on which you have installed the program. Dropbox runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, and iPhone and the free, basic account gives you 2 GB of space.

## Chan!

<http://instantchan.com/>

Chan! Or, if you are feeling adventurous, Chan! Chan!



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### Know Your Meme

<http://knowyourmeme.com/>

From the “Cinnamon Challenge” to the “Failboat,” Know Your Meme documents popular internet catchphrases and concepts that seem to spread like kudzu. Memes whose content may be offensive are noted with a “NSFW” [not safe for work] icon.

### Cheezburger Network

<http://cheezburger.com/sites>

Talking about memes, the folks at Cheezburger Network have created a collection of over 30 funny meme aggregation blogs from the funny “I Can Has Cheezburger” and “FAIL blog” to the more obscure [but equally funny] “GraphJam” and “Emails from Crazy People.” Cheezburger Network is biggest and most enjoyable Internet time sponge since PopCap Games. For more information, check out Wired Magazine’s February 2010 profile of Cheezburger Network at <http://tinyurl.com/cbwired/>

### Moodstream

<http://moodstream.gettyimages.com/>

Created by the folks at Getty Images, Moodstream is a free site that combines images, video footage, and short snippets of audio clips to create a screensaver-type environment within your web browser. You can customize the experience by mood or click on the presets wheel.

### GameTrailers

<http://gametrailers.com/>

Have a PC, PS3, Xbox 360, Wii, PSP, or Nintendo DS? Looking to buy a new game? Check out GameTrailers first. The site’s lengthy video reviews provide an in-depth analysis of the story, design, gameplay, and presentation for every major video game on the market. The site also has a robust collection of user-created gameplay videos.

### Krebs on Security

<http://www.krebsonsecurity.com/>

Written by former Washington Post computer security reporter Brian Krebs, this new blog is a daily must-read for anyone who wants the latest security news and investigative reports without the breathless [and often inaccurate] hyperbole often found in mainstream media reporting.

### TED

<http://ted.com/>

A collection of free videos from the world’s most talented thinkers and doers who have been challenged to give the talk of their lives ... in 18 minutes. You can sort the videos by superlatives [e.g., most jaw-dropping, most informative] or topics [e.g., technology, science].

### Cooking for Engineers

<http://cookingforengineers.com/>

Like to cook, love Alton Brown, and would prefer if your recipes came with detailed instructions, pictures, and maybe even a flowchart? CfE is for you!

### Howcast

<http://howcast.com/>

Finding how-to videos on YouTube is often a hit-or-miss proposition. That’s where Howcast comes in. The site has over 100,000 semi-professional, high quality how-to videos on topics ranging from ‘how to connect your laptop to your television’ to ‘how to drive a stick shift.’ Warning: Some topics may not be safe for work.

### GetHuman

<http://gethuman.com/>

Hate the touch-tone labyrinth most 800 telephone numbers make you go through before you can speak to a real, live human being? This constantly updated website tells you which buttons to push and even what your estimated hold time will be.

