

Bits and Bytes

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club

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What is an add-on? How many add-ons do you have on your computer? What do the add-ons do? Where do you find a list of add-ons? You have control of the add-ons on your computer, so where do you go to see them and manage them? Most add-ons are associated with browsers like Internet Explorer, Mozilla, and Firefox. We're going to look at the add-ons that are designed for Internet Explorer. An add-on is a piece of software or small program that's designed to enhance another piece of software or application. Since they're designed to increase the functionality, capability, or in some cases add features to something else, they usually cannot run independently. Some add-ons are part of the operating system. Others are installed while you're on the Internet. Normally, you'll be asked if you want to install the add-on, then you'll need to give your permission before it can be installed on your computer. Don't confuse the installation of legitimate add-ons with pop-up boxes that try to get you to download and install something. If the web site or program you're using needs to install an add-on to function properly the request should appear in a narrow bar (information bar) near the top of the window. When you click on the bar there'll be options that you can choose. Some of the more common activities that activate the information bar are; installation of an Active X control, website tries to open a pop-up window, website tries to download a file, website tries

to run active content, your security settings are below the recommended level, and your security settings won't allow a specific protocol. Some of the categories of add-ons that you will need to deal with are; Toolbars, Extensions, Search Engines, Accelerators, and InPrivate Filtering. Contrary to what seems to be a common belief, toolbars don't just appear in Internet Explorer. The Google toolbar is probably the most common and, guess what, the person running the mouse agreed to allow the toolbar to be installed. This normally happens when installing a program. On one of the installation screens you'll be given the opportunity to add the Google toolbar. If you don't say no or take a check mark out of a check box, you get the toolbar. The solution is simple, take to time to carefully read each of the installation screens so you don't end up getting something you don't want. The same is true for search engines and browsers. It's not uncommon to be asked if you want to change your default search engine to MSN or Bing, or change your default browser to Chrome. If you already have, or accidentally get a toolbar or browser installed on your computer, it's easy to remove. Go to the control panel and click "Uninstall a program", locate the toolbar or browser on the list, then click Uninstall. Removing a search provider will be covered later. An extension is exactly what the name implies, it's an additional piece of program that's added to a program already on the computer. The majority of these are referred

to as a "Helper". These can't be uninstalled, but they can be disabled. If you uninstall the program the helper is associated with, the helper should also be uninstalled. When it comes to accelerators, there are hundreds. An accelerator works like a link. With just a single click you can go from the web page you're viewing directly to another web page. For example, highlight 1801 Forest Hills Blvd., Bella Vista, AR, 72715, click the accelerator icon and select Map with Bing. You'll see a map showing the location of The Highlands Crossing Center along with a list of businesses located at that address and links to area businesses. So where do you go to see your add-ons? Open Internet Explorer, on the menu bar click Tools and select Manage add-ons. In the left panel you'll see the four types. For Toolbars and Extensions, notice that when you click on one of the extensions in the right panel you can disable but not delete. Under Search Providers you can choose from over 150 sites located in the Add-ons Gallery. You'll need to select one as the default and then list them in the order you desire. If there's a provider on the list you don't want to use, you can use the Delete button to remove it from the list. You'll probably find the accelerators the most useful add-ons. In the left panel click Accelerators, then at the bottom of the page click, Find More Accelerators.... Browse the available accelerators and add the ones that would be most useful based on what you normally do on the Internet. If you add some you end up not using or you find one you like better, accelerators are easy to remove from the list. Just highlight and click the Remove

button at the bottom of the Manage Add-ons window. Tracking Protection provides two privacy features that you can use when you're on the Internet. The first is InPrivate Browsing. This feature prevents Internet Explorer from storing cookies, temporary Internet files, history, and other data associated with your browsing session. Toolbars and extensions are disabled by default. This prevents someone from looking at your computer to see where you've been on the Internet and what you were doing. To start an InPrivate Browsing session, click Tools on the menu bar and select InPrivate Browsing. This will open a new window that displays "InPrivate" on the left side of the address bar. Use this window for your browsing session. When you close the window InPrivate Browsing will be turned off and "InPrivate" will no longer appear on the left side of the address bar. The second feature of Tracking Protection is called InPrivate Filtering. To turn on this feature, click Tools on the menu bar and select InPrivate Filtering. Click Tools again and select InPrivate Filtering Settings. This feature is designed to prevent third-party web sites from collecting information about the sites you visit. It's all about advertising. They're trying to determine what kind of sites you visit and what products you appear to be interested in. A third-party web site is one that provides content (adds, pictures, video, etc.) to the web site you're currently looking at.

The editor of the Bits and Bytes is still looking for suggestions. If you have a topic you would like to see covered in the newsletter, jot it down on a piece of paper and drop it in the red suggestion box (on the table in the back of the room). Any suggestions about the Club can also be placed in the suggestion box.

Having a problem with your computer? Having a problem doing something on the computer? If you're a Club member stop by one of the Open House Help Clinics we have at the John Ruehle Center and see if we can solve your problem. These clinics are from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first Saturday and the third Wednesday of the month. If you're not a Club member you're welcome to join the Club and take advantage of this service.