

COMPUTER GURU

By Don Benjamin

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Google Photos App for Android, Apple, and Windows

Last month I reviewed the Apple Photos app and explained how the photos on iPhones are synchronized with those on iPads and MacBook computers.

This month's article covers Google's Photos app, which is available for **Android and Apple** mobile devices, as well as **Windows and Apple MacBook** computers. In other words—just about everything.

Most Android phones include a photo manager called Gallery, where you store and view the pictures you've taken with your phone's camera. ¹ However, the **Google Photos** app (it's free from the Google Play Store) offers better photo management features **as well as free cloud storage to ensure your photos are backed up** and available on your other devices (like your tablet and computer.)

Google Photos lets you organize your pictures into albums and provides editing and special effect options. It also automatically uploads your photos to its cloud server *and keeps them synchronized*, so if you delete a photo from your phone, it will also delete the photo from your Google Photos cloud file. But you can also opt to remove a photo from your phone and leave it on the Google Photos server. Neat!

Google Photos works with Android and Apple smart phones and tablets, and Windows and Mac computers.

Google Photos can also identify objects in your snapshots and create panoramas by knitting the separate pictures of the adjacent scenes you captured.

But wait—there's more! Google provides free unlimited storage on its cloud servers if you're willing to limit the size of each picture you upload to 16 million pixels (which Google calls "high quality"). That's enough for all but the most discerning photographer (see picture at left). If you want to store your pictures with greater detail ("original quality"), they will count toward the free 15 GB limit on your Google Drive account. You can add more storage for a monthly fee.

Works with Windows PC's and Apple computers. Google Photos also works with your built-in Windows 10 Photos application and with your Apple devices. This makes Google Photos a good alternative to Apple's iCloud Photos, and a "must-have" if you own a mix of Apple, Android, and Windows devices. You'll need a Gmail account to use Google Photos, but it's free. (I don't know how Google makes money giving away storage on their servers, but I suspect that while they lose something on each picture, they make it up in volume. But that's only a guess.)



Why is this guy wearing socks with his sandals? I'm just sayin'...

If you need help setting up Google Photos, stop by the Technology Lab on Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., or Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Say "fromage."

¹ Android smart phones include those from Samsung, Google, LG, and so on. Each of these companies uses its own variation of the Android operating system, so some of the things you'll read here may look different on your own phone.