



Series 4 – How Do I Access the Internet?

Welcome back to a series of computer related articles brought to you by VistaSol Computer Solutions. Over the coming weeks we are going to be featuring articles based on the theme of 'How do I . . .?'

This week we're continuing our series of articles on the subject of 'How Do I Access the Internet':

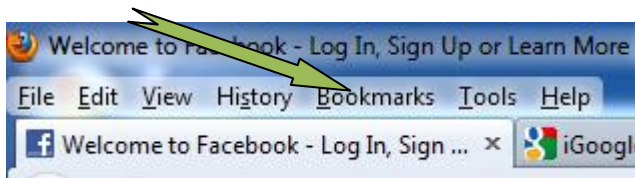
Part 2 – How do I get the most from Firefox?

Hopefully, you will have read my article last week, and you are now happy with the look and feel of your new found browser! More importantly, I hope your experience of accessing the internet has now reached new heights.

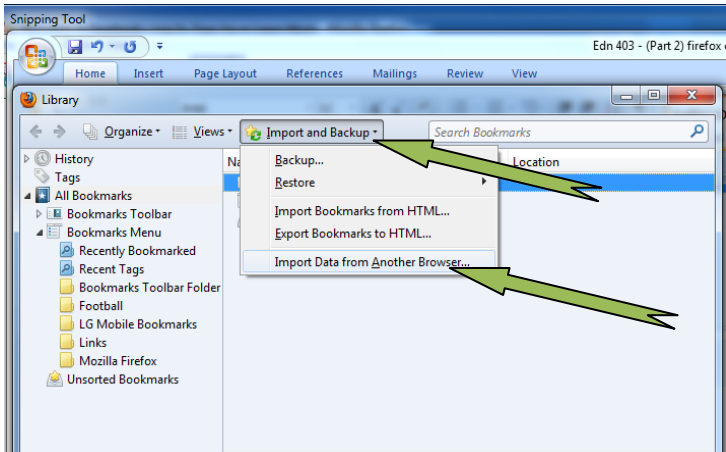
Time to get under the Bonnet!

When you first start up Firefox you may be asking yourself "Hang on a minute, where have my favourites gone, and where's my Home Page %@*&*@ \$"? Or words to that effect! Sorry about that, but for some reason Firefox have omitted this automated configuration from the installation process – but don't go back to IE yet, all is not lost . . .

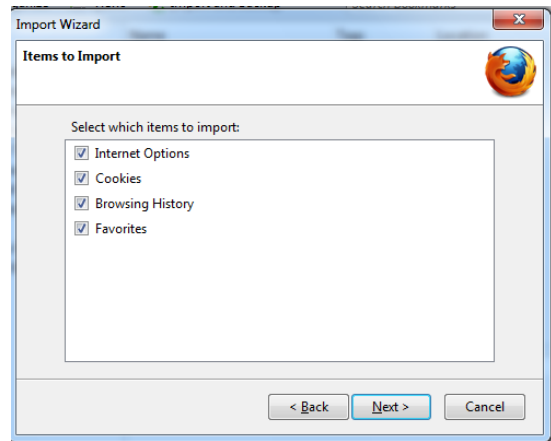
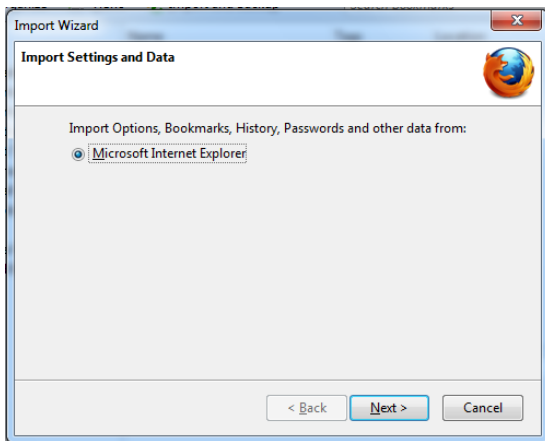
One of the (few) drawbacks of Firefox is that they've dropped the automated import of 'favourites' from IE during the installation. However, don't despair because you can still import them after you have completed the installation of Firefox.



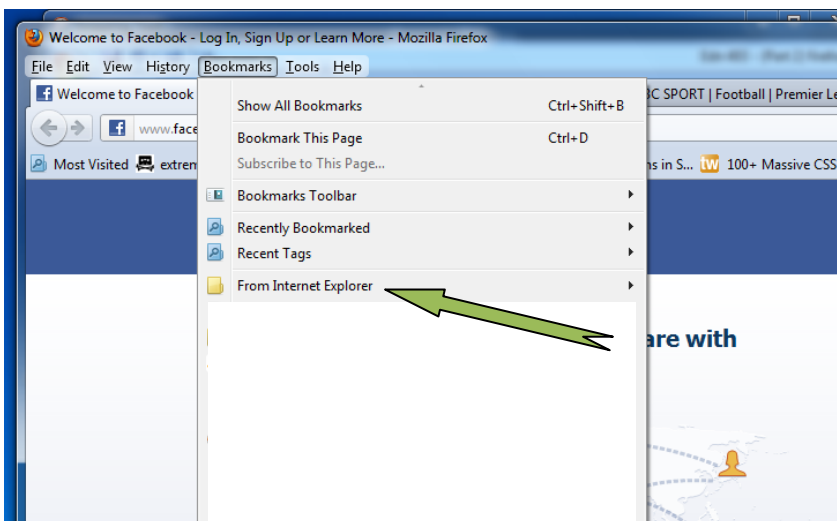
Start up Firefox, then click on the 'Bookmarks' menu, and click on the first option 'Show All Bookmarks'. A new window will open, select 'Import and Backup' from the top menu, then select the option for 'Import Data from Another Browser'.



Select the browser you would like to import from (in most cases, this will be IE). Click on the 'Next' button, choose what you would like to import, then click on 'Next' again. Click on Finish to close this window.



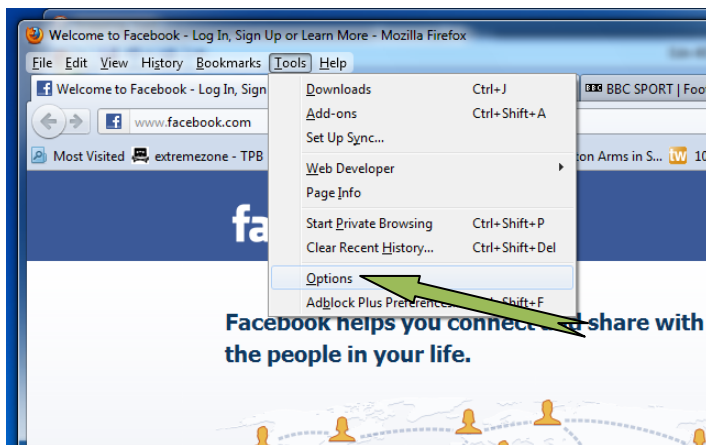
Firefox will now import your old 'favourites'. Your new 'favourites' ('Bookmarks') can now be accessed from the 'Bookmarks' menu; they will be listed in a folder called 'From Internet Explorer'.



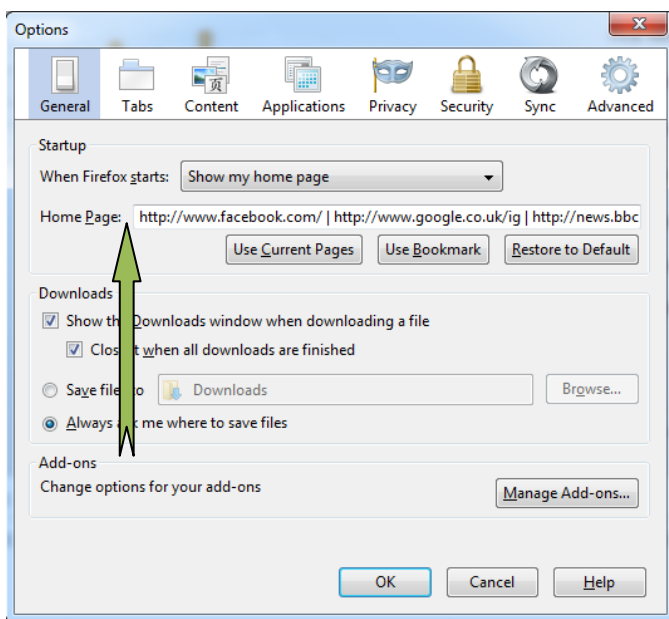
The Home Page

Regarding your Home Page, this can be imported when you install Firefox. During the installation, Firefox will ask if you want to 'Set Firefox as your homepage', or import your home page from IE – make sure you change the default reply to 'Import your home page from IE'. All well and good, I hear you say. But I installed that last week . . . %@*&*@ \$!

If you missed this option during an earlier installation, don't worry, you can always change the Home Page from within Firefox by clicking on 'Tools' in the top menu, then select 'Options'.



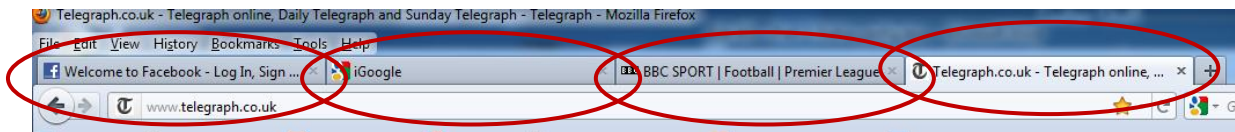
In the new window, look for the Home Page address (about a third of the way down this window). Delete whatever address may already be shown (adjacent to the words Home Page), and then type in the address of your preferred Home Page e.g. <http://uk.msn.com/>, or <http://www.google.co.uk/> etc. Click on OK and the next time you start Firefox it will take you to your Home Page.



TABS

Firefox was one of the first browsers to introduce the concept of 'tabbed' browsing. If you're not familiar with this concept; 'tabs' are a means of having multiple web sites open in the same browser window – you can have as many, or as few as you like, or even just stick to one – your choice.

Take my Firefox set up for instance. I have four Home Pages: Facebook, Google, The Telegraph on-line and BBC Sports. In this way, I can fire up Firefox and have immediate access to my most commonly used web sites, without having to search through Bookmarks or Google. I just simply click on each of the 'tabs' and have instant access to any one of these web sites. How do I do that? Simple!



You'll need to know where a certain special character '|' is on the keyboard, but after that it's a doddle. The special character '|' can be found between the left 'shift' key and 'z' – you should see a '\' with a '|' above it. Holding down the left 'shift' key and pressing the '\' will give you this necessary special character. So now, armed with this new found information we can set about creating multiple 'Home Pages'.

Before you begin, think about which web sites you want to include as your Home Pages and jot down their addresses (if you're not sure, you can always search for the pages in Firefox and then make a note of the addresses). Now click on the 'Tools' menu option, followed by 'Options'. In the Options Window delete the address currently listed as your Home Page (unless you plan on keeping this one), then type in your new addresses (in the order you want them to appear) – this is where the special character comes in. Type the first address followed by a space, the special character | and another space, continue this process for each of your other preferred Home Pages – see the examples below:

<http://www.google.co.uk> | <http://www.bbc.co.uk> | <http://www.facebook.com> |
<http://uk.msn.com> | <http://uk.yahoo.com> | <http://www.vistasol.co.uk>.

Have fun with this, but bear in mind, if you are using a dial-up internet connection, the load time for Firefox will be considerably slower.

That's about all I've got space for in this article, but over the coming weeks we'll investigate Firefox further, and discover how to get even more from your nice new shiny Browser.