



# My Favourite Browser Plugin(s)

A MUUG Presentation  
(c) 2025 Trevor E. Cordes



# About Trevor Cordes

- UNIX-head since 1992 (SunOS > AIX > RH > Fedora)
- Fedora, PHP & Perl fan (wanna fight?)
- MUUG Vice-President
- STUG Past-President (defunct Atari ST club)
- Owner, TecnoPolis Enterprises
  - Celebrating 25 years in business

# What Are Web Browser Plugins?

- Web Browsers let you “surf the net”
- Plugins augment your browser’s abilities
- Also called: extensions, add-ons
- Written by third parties
- Usually free (or shareware-esque)
- Firefox has 40,150 plugins right now

# Which Browsers?

- For Linux users the big browsers are:
- Firefox, Chrome (and forks)
- WebExtensions API allows plugins to work on both
- Not universal
- Most “popular” plugins work with both

# Mobile Phones

- Mobile phone browsers are different, limited
- Firefox only has 1900 extensions for mobile
- That's 95% less than desktop
- Many are pared down
- Geared to mobile
- Still very useful

# How To Install Plugins

- Find the hamburger menu / settings option
- Add-ons / extensions
- Browse / search and click!
- Voila

# Security?

- **Warnings:**
- **“This add-on can read all your data on website Foo”**
- **Stick to “Recommended Extensions”?**
- **Or very popular ones?**
- **A bad extension would be very bad: steal all your website passwords**

# My Indispensables

- **Desktop:**
  - Adblock Plus (ABP)
  - NoScript
- **Mobile:**
  - Video Background Play Fix
  - Dark Reader
  - uBlock Origin
  - NoScript



# NoScript

- For advanced users with extreme patience
- Stop sites from running Javascript from the tracking & ad sites
- e.g. doubleclick.net, google-analytics.com
- Gain visibility into all the Javascript sites are pulling in
- Default-allow vs deny
- demo

# NoScript Imperfect

- Newer versions have added default-trusted sites
- Bribery?
- Silently merged with existing rules
- Evil
- Delete

# Dark Reader

- Great for nighttime readers/phones
- Change any site from black text on white background to the opposite
- Combine with eye-comfort / red mode on phones

# Video Background Play Fix

- Great on phones
- Stops Youtube from pausing when changing windows or apps
- Beats paying borg \$\$/month for the same feature

# uBlock Origin

- Simple no-nonsense, install-and-go ad blocker
- Low overhead for mobile
- Never see a cross-site ad again

# Adblock Plus

- ABP
- Similar to uBlock
- Probably shouldn't run both
- Insanely complex advanced features
- Good for tinkerers/hackers

# ABP Easy Block

- Don't like the annoying thing your favorite site puts in the middle of the page?
- e.g. Same-site or self-hosted ads
- Block entire structures (tags) from a page
- ABP icon: block element
- Move the mouse around
- ebay.ca home page demo

# ABP Under The Hood

- What is ABP doing to the HTML?
- Adds `display:none` to the element or its CSS class or HTML id
- Usually
- `shadow-root`



# ABP Big Tech Strikes Back

- Try ebay.ca auction page Similar Items
- Easy way doesn't work
- demo
- Right-click: Inspect element
- Random class names for nested divs!
- Rule is specific to the random class!
- Will change on future hits

# ABP Return of the Nerd-i

- Inspect
- Find a better, parent tag to block
- Find non-random classes or ids
- x-atf-left-bottom-river
- Click ABP icon: advanced: my filter list: xpath
- ebay.ca##div[class\*="x-atf-left-bottom-river"]
- Inspect: display:none but still showing?

# ABP A New Hope

- Javascript is doing something inside
- Overriding the display:none?
- If only we could stop the JS from running on the inner elements...

# ABP JS Freeze

- **ABP can stop a JS script/event from running on a particular element class/id!**

# ABP Elicits...

Me at that moment:



# ABP Kill That Script!

- ABP freeze-element
- Inspect to find an event or script
- demo
- disable previous rule first
- id placement101875!
- ebay.ca#\$#freeze-element #placement101875 subtree
- Voila!

# ABP Summation

- As Bobby Flay says once he's made an exotic gourmet dish using unobtainable ingredients and his mad skillz:

**“It’s just that simple!”**

- Lots of trial and error
- Try lots of ids and classes
- Ignore randos; Keep JS in mind

# ABP Fun

- What happens if you disable the div rule
- Whilst enabling the freeze rule
- ?



# ABP Question For The Audience

- If a parent div is `display:none`
- How are children elements breaking through and being shown?
- Why does it seem to require JS?