4 Windows Features That Don't Exist If You Don't Use PowerShell

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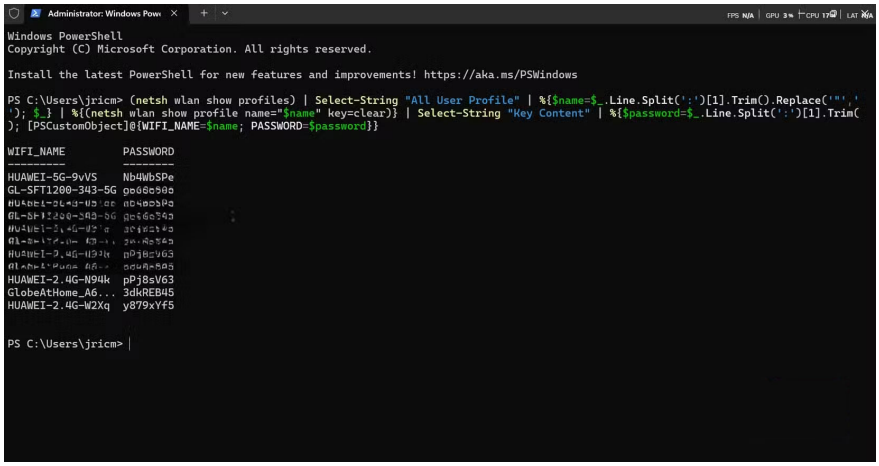
Windows computers can do much more than Microsoft's graphical interface lets you do. Behind the familiar point-and-click experience is PowerShell , a powerful command-line tool that unlocks features that are completely absent from Windows' usual menus and settings. While Microsoft has spent decades perfecting Windows' visual interface, some of its most useful tools are still only accessible via the command line.

Many of these options are not obscure developer features or complex system administration tools. In fact, Windows does not provide a graphical way to perform these features/tasks, even though the basic functionality is built into the operating system. Microsoft made these intentional design choices to keep the interface clean and user-friendly. If every PowerShell feature had a graphical equivalent, Windows would become incredibly complex, with too many tools cluttering the experience.

Instead, these features are limited to the command line interface, leaving millions of people unaware of their existence.

Show Wi-Fi password from computer

Instantly display saved wireless networks



Have you ever needed to share your Wi-Fi password with a guest but forgot it? Windows computers actually store every Wi-Fi password you've ever used, but Microsoft doesn't provide an easy way to view them through the regular interface. Sure, you can search the Control Panel to find the password for the network you're currently connected to, but what about all the other networks you've connected to over the years?

Luckily, Windows provides us with the **netsh wlan show profiles** command , which will list all the saved wireless network profiles on the computer. With just a few more commands passed through the pipeline, we can easily view all the Wi-Fi passwords stored on the computer. This command may seem complicated at first, but once you understand the pipeline, cmdlets, and parameters, it becomes incredibly simple. Here is the command:

```
(netsh wlan show profiles) | Select-String "All User Profile" | %{$name=$_.Line.S
```

This command lists all of your Wi-Fi profiles, then pulls the password for each profile. Within seconds, you'll see a neat list showing the network name along with its password. Many people have used this command countless times when setting up new devices or helping friends connect to networks they've forgotten.

Find duplicate files that are taking up storage space

Save space by deleting duplicate files

Many of us have a cluttered Downloads folder. Yours probably does too, until you discover this next PowerShell feature. Windows doesn't have a built-in way to find duplicate files through the regular interface, which means most people accumulate multiple copies of the same documents, images, and videos without realizing it.

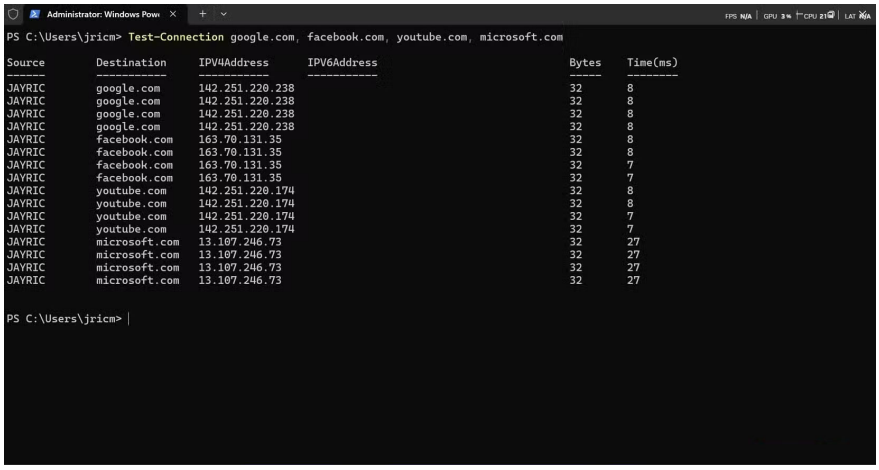
PowerShell can solve this problem with a single pipeline command:

```
Get-ChildItem -File | Group-Object Length | Where-Object {$*.Count -gt 1} | ForEa
```

This command calculates a unique hash value for the contents of each file, which means it will catch true duplicates even if they have different names. Run this command regularly in your Downloads folder, and you'll be amazed at how much space you can reclaim by deleting duplicate files.

Test Internet connection to multiple websites at once

Pinpoints slow-down issues more accurately than a speed test



When your Internet connection is slow or unreliable, most people instinctively run a speed test. But those tests only tell you how well you're connected to one server. What if the problem lies with specific websites or services? Windows doesn't have a built-in GUI tool for testing connections to multiple websites at once, but PowerShell makes it incredibly easy.

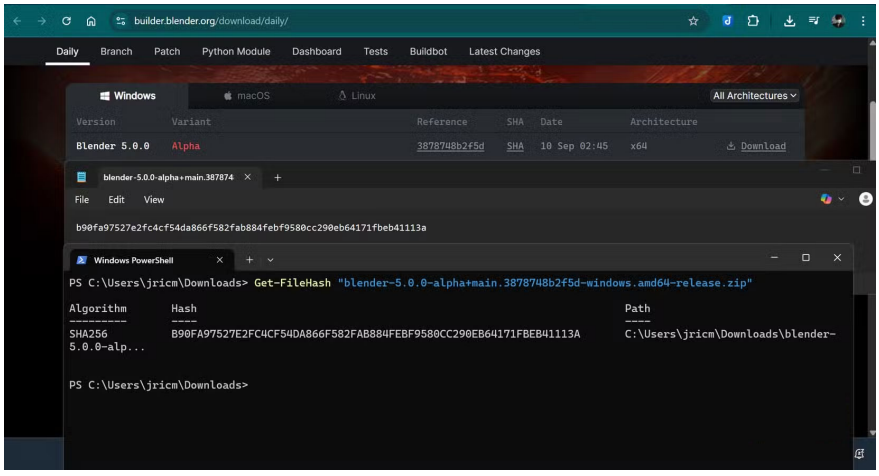
The simple Test-Connection command can test multiple destinations in a single operation:

```
Test-Connection google.com, facebook.com, youtube.com, microsoft.com
```

This command will ping four websites at once and display the response time for each. You'll instantly know if a particular service is having problems or if your Internet connection is generally slow. Use this command whenever your Internet feels sluggish, as it will give you a better idea of ??what's really going on.

Check if downloaded files are valid and safe

Protect yourself by checking file hashes



Many of us like to download executable files outside of the Microsoft Store. To ensure that our downloads are safe, we need a way to verify that the files came directly from the developer. Many legitimate software vendors publish hashes along with their downloads. These are unique fingerprints that can change even if just one bit of the file is different. Sadly, Windows doesn't provide any GUI tools to verify file hashes.

However, Windows has a **Get-FileHash** command , which allows us to see the file hash of the download (replace "filename.exe" with the actual file name):

```
Get-FileHash "filename.exe"
```

This command returns a SHA256 hash that you can compare to the official hash provided by the software publisher. If they match, you know the file is exactly what the publisher intended. If they don't match, there may have been a problem with the download or the file has been tampered with.

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