

GUIDANCE

Clearing Browsing History, Cache and Cookies

Sometimes when web browsers aren't displaying correctly or not connecting to web pages like they should, you may need to clear the temporarily saved internet files ("cache"). Alternatively, if you find that personal info automatically completed on sites isn't correct, deleting cookies can help. Even if neither of these problems affect you, periodically cleaning browser data can help protect your privacy and enhance security when you are browsing the internet.

These step-by-step explanations illustrate how to delete the cache and other browsing history such as cookies, history of recent pages, and passwords and form data in the most commonly used browsers. Most browsers exist in several versions which differ in minor details, so what you see on your screen may be slightly different from the descriptions on the following pages.

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Terminology & frequently asked questions

What is “cache”?

The cache is a hardware or software component of your computer that stores data so future requests for that data can be served faster. When web browsers aren't displaying correctly or not connecting to web pages like they should it's likely that the cache has become corrupted and therefore needs to be cleared.

NOTE: If you have saved information such as login details in more than one browser, you will need to clear the cache individually in each browser.

What are “cookies”?

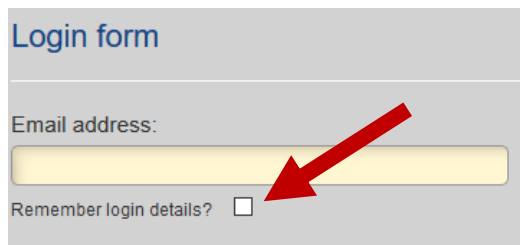
Cookies are small files or databases stored on your computer by websites to save preferences or improve web performance. However, they sometimes lead you to old versions of websites that have since undergone amendments and updates, which means you will not see the current version of a particular site.

What is meant by “history”?

The history is the list of websites you have visited, or, in case of “Download history”, the list of files you have downloaded. It is specific to the browser you use, but not the device. For example, if you use Google Chrome on both your PC and your smartphone, then the history would be synchronised across these devices if you have set them up to do so. However, if you then used a different browser, such as Firefox, none of the webpages you had opened via Google Chrome would appear in the history. This also applies to any “Favourites” or “Bookmarks” you may have saved.

What is “form data”?

Form data is the saved information that you have typed into website forms. There is usually a tick box which, when ticked, retains the information for future use. This can cause issues if the details you have saved on a previous occasion have since changed, for example address information or credit card data.



The image shows a screenshot of a login form titled "Login form". It contains an "Email address:" label above a yellow input field. Below the input field is a checkbox labeled "Remember login details?". A red arrow points from the top right towards the checkbox.

What are “passwords”?

Saved passwords are automatically filled in when you sign in to a website that you have previously visited. **This can cause a problem if you change your password and the website continues to fill in an old invalid password.** To find out what's behind the dots, some browsers and websites now have an eye icon which “unmasks” passwords when clicked on.



What is the difference between a search engine and a browser?

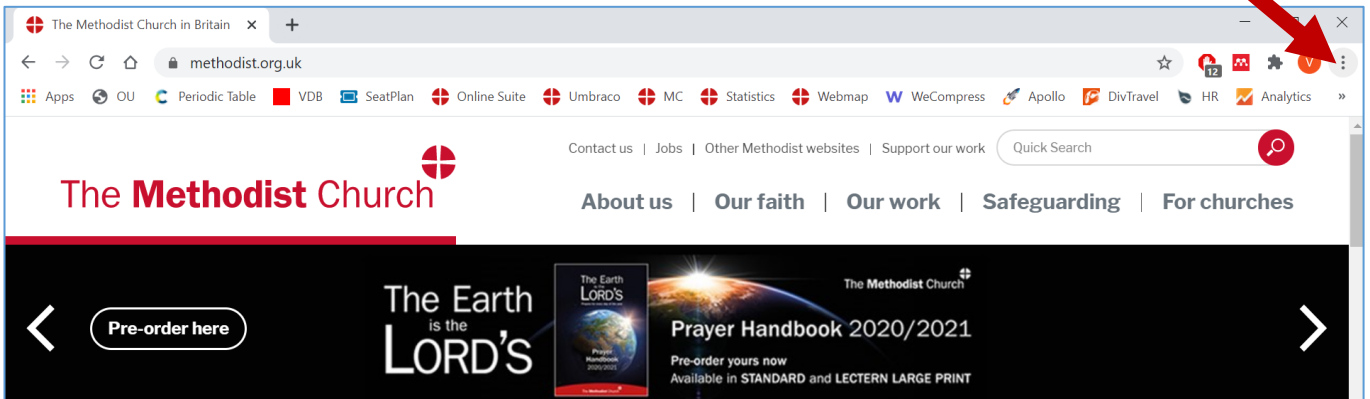
A browser is the programme you use to view web pages. The confusion between browsers and search engines probably comes from the fact that most people have a search engine (such as Google Chrome) as their homepage. The difference is that a browser is a programme used to view web pages, whereas a search engine is a website used to search the web. Therefore, you visit a search engine using a browser. If you don't know which browser you're using, it's probably Microsoft Edge on a PC or Safari on a Mac because these are usually already installed on the machine.



Google Chrome

[Download Google Chrome here](#)

Step 1: Open the **Menu** by clicking the **three vertical dots icon** found in the top right corner of the browser window and select **Settings** form the dropdown menu that appears.



You can use the **Search settings bar** at the top of the page to proceed.

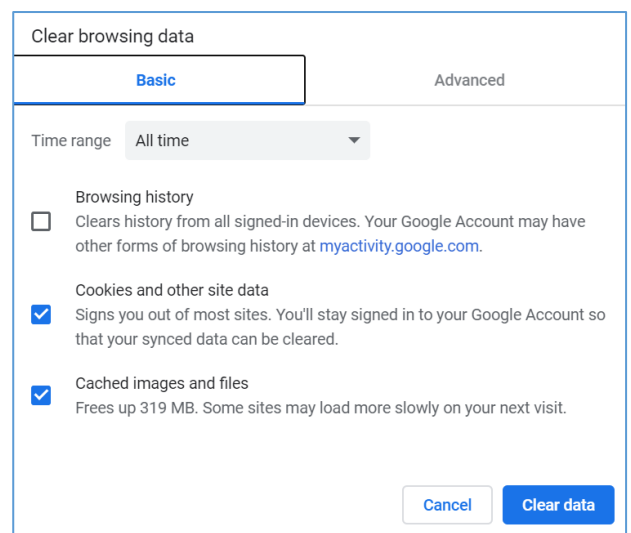
Clearing cache and cookies

Step 2: To **clear browsing data**, go to the **Clear browsing data** heading in the **Privacy and security** section.

Step 3: Tick the boxes for each item you would like to clear. For the purposes of the Methodist Online Suite of Applications, it is advisable to select the following:

- Cookies and other site data
- Cached images and files

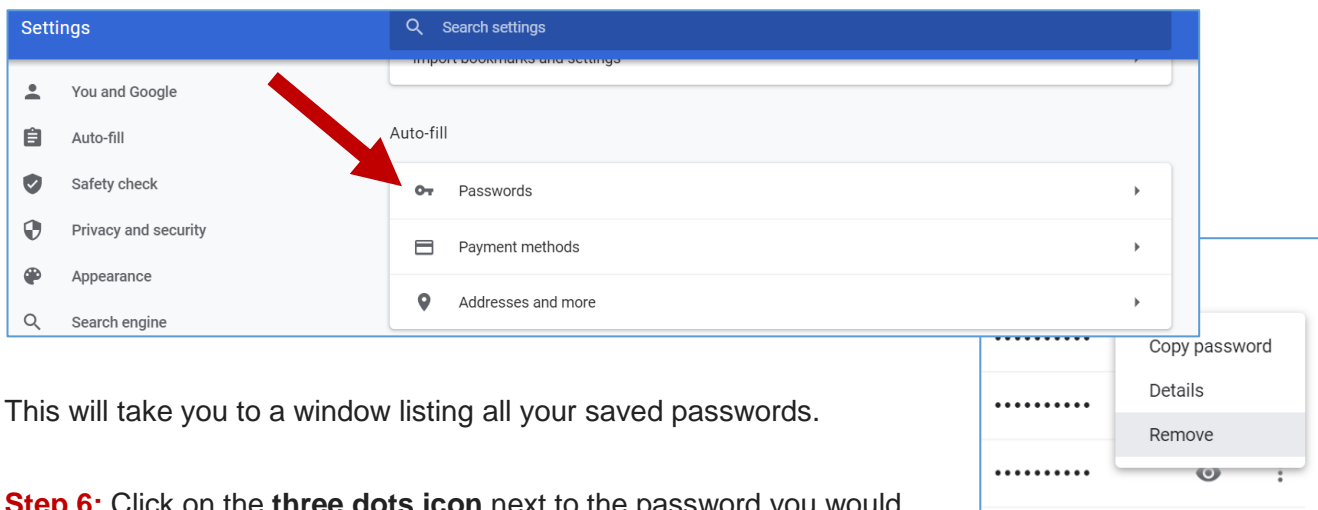
Step 4: Click **Clear data**.



Please see the next page for Managing Site logins, passwords and autocomplete data.

Managing site logins, passwords and autocomplete data

Step 5: To manage your **saved passwords**, go to the **Passwords** heading in the **Auto-fill** section.



This will take you to a window listing all your saved passwords.

Step 6: Click on the **three dots icon** next to the password you would like to delete and select **Remove**.

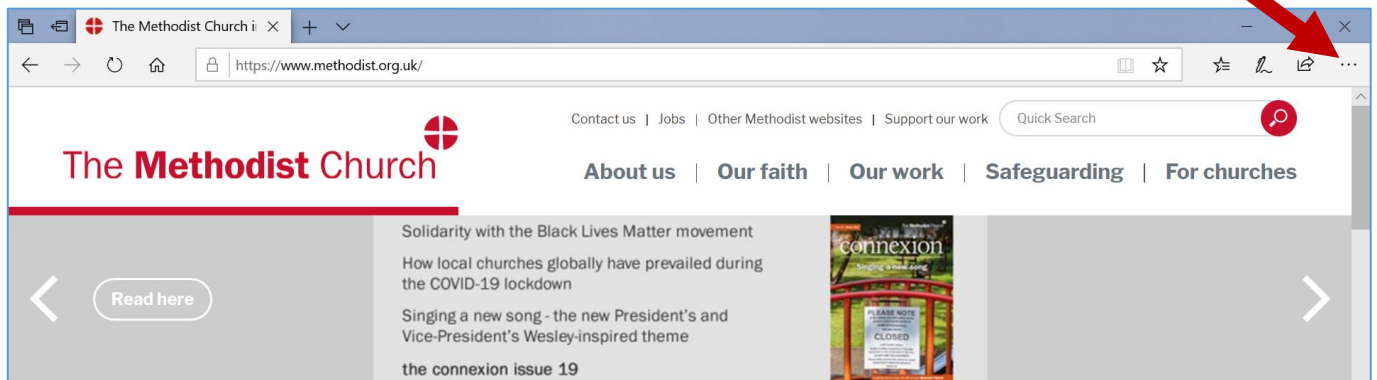
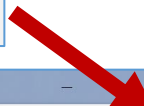


Microsoft Edge

[Download Microsoft Edge here](#)

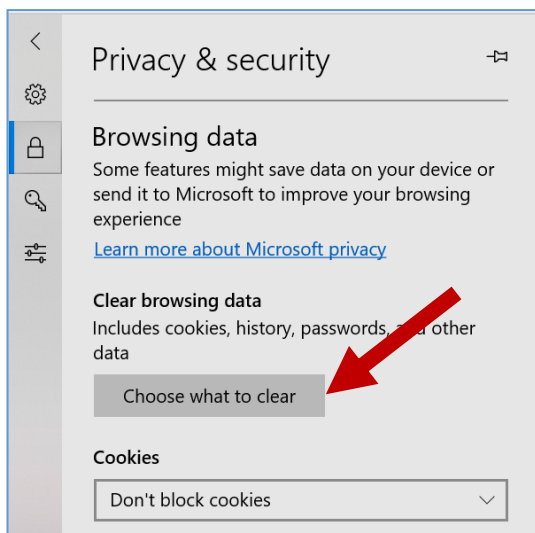
Step 1: Open the **Settings** by clicking the **three horizontal dots icon** found in the top right corner of the browser window.

You can also do this by simultaneously pressing the **Alt + X** buttons.



Clearing cache and cookies

Step 2: Select the **lock icon** from the left-hand side bar. This will take you to the **Privacy & Security** section.



Step 3: Click on **Choose what to clear**. This will take you to the **Clear browsing data** window.

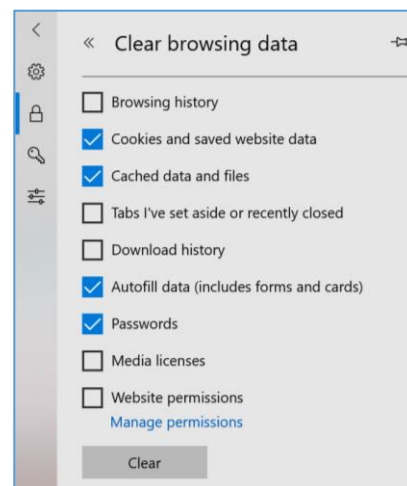
Please see the next page for Step 4.

Step 4: Tick the boxes for each item you would like to clear.

For the purposes of the Methodist Online Suite of Applications, it is advisable to select the following:

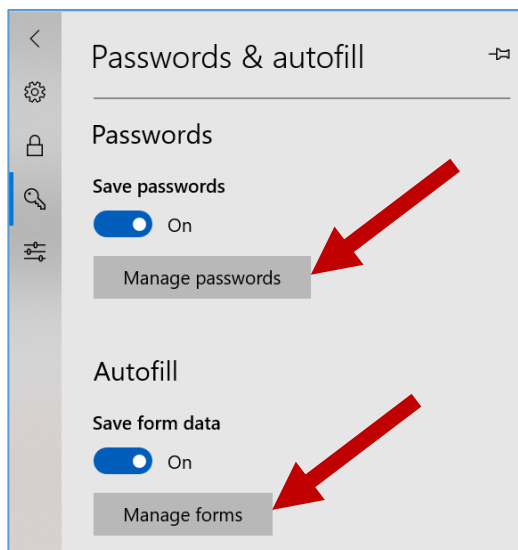
- Cookies and saved website data
- Cached data and files
- Autofill data (includes forms and cards)
- Passwords

Step 5: Click **Clear**.



Managing site logins, passwords and autocomplete data

Step 6: Select the **key icon** from the left-hand side bar. This will take you to the **Passwords & autofill** section.



Step 7: Click **Manage passwords**. From the list of **Saved passwords**, select the one(s) you would like to delete and remove them by clicking the x icon.

Step 8: Click **Manage forms** to check whether any data is saved there and edit or remove as necessary.



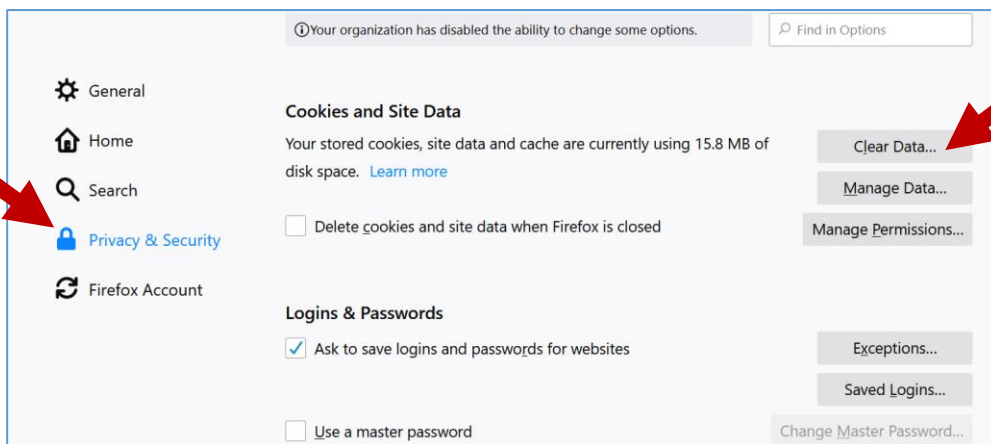
Firefox

[Download Firefox here](#)

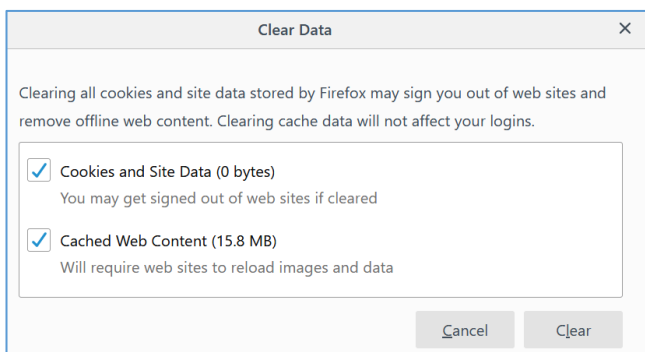
Step 1: Open the **Menu** by clicking the **three horizontal lines icon** found in the top right corner of the browser window and select **Options** from the dropdown menu that appears.



Step 2: Select **Privacy & Security** from the options on the left and scroll to the **Cookies and Site Data** and **Logins & Passwords** sections. Alternatively, you can use the **Options Search bar** at the top.



Clearing cache and cookies

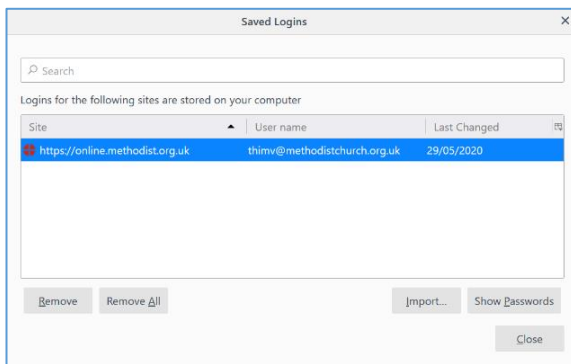
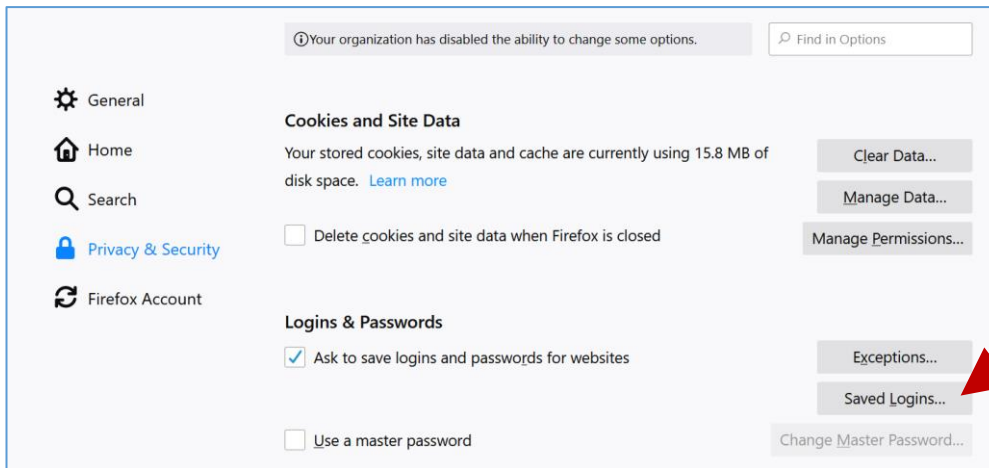


Step 4: Under **Cookies and Site Data**, select **Clear Data**. This will take you to the window on the left.

Make sure **Cookies and Site Data** is selected, then click **Clear**.

Please see the next page for Managing Site logins, passwords and autocomplete data.

Managing site logins, passwords and autocomplete data



Step 5: Under **Logins & Passwords**, select **Saved Logins**.

This will take you to a window where you have the option to remove login details.

Select the login details you want to delete and click **Remove**.

★ **TIP: Shortcut (Firefox)**

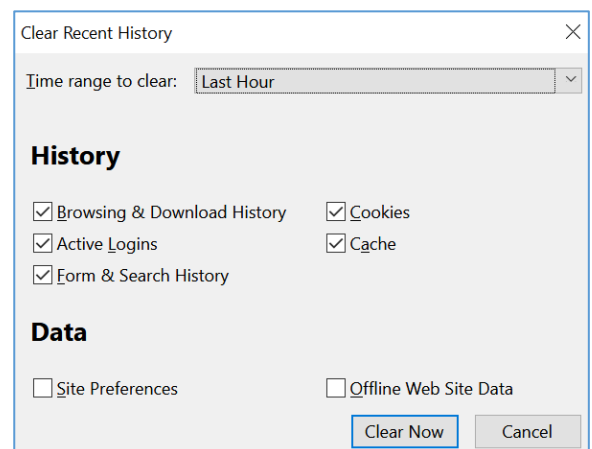
For a quicker way to clear your recent browsing history, simultaneously press the **Ctrl + Shift + Delete** buttons on your keyboard once you have opened Firefox.

This action will take you directly to the **Clear Recent History** window.

For the purposes of the Methodist Online Suite of Applications, it is advisable to select the following:

- Active Logins
- Cookies
- Cache

Click **Clear Now**.

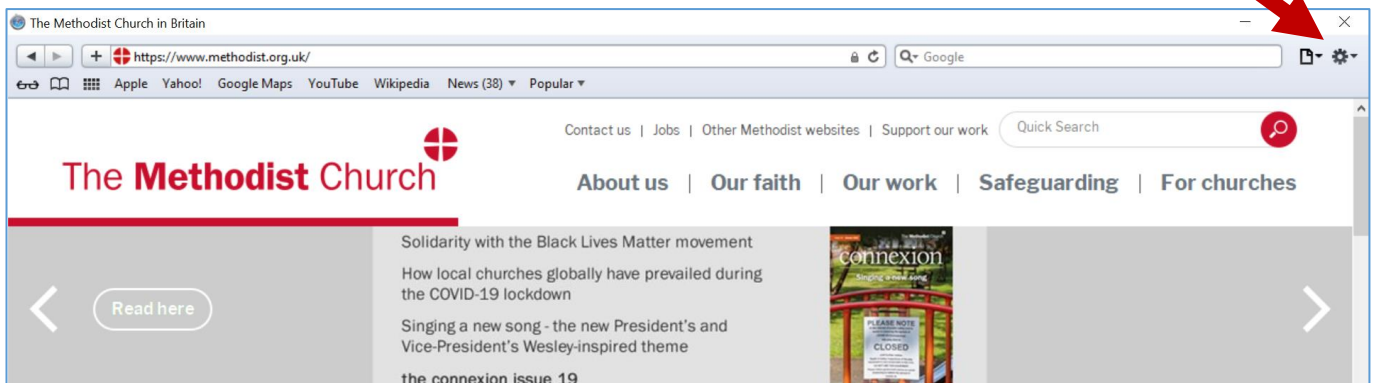




Apple Safari

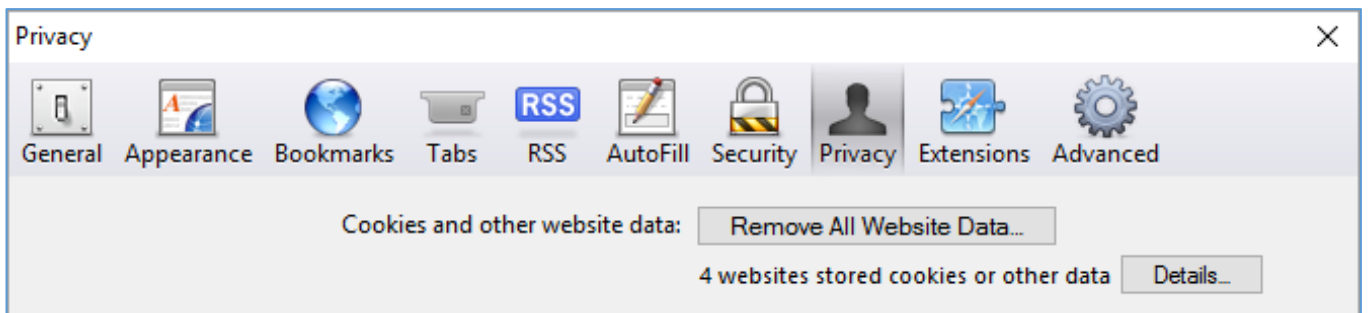
[Download Apple Safari here](#)

Step 1: Open the **Menu** by clicking the gear wheel icon found in the top right corner of the browser window and choose **Preferences** from the dropdown menu that appears.



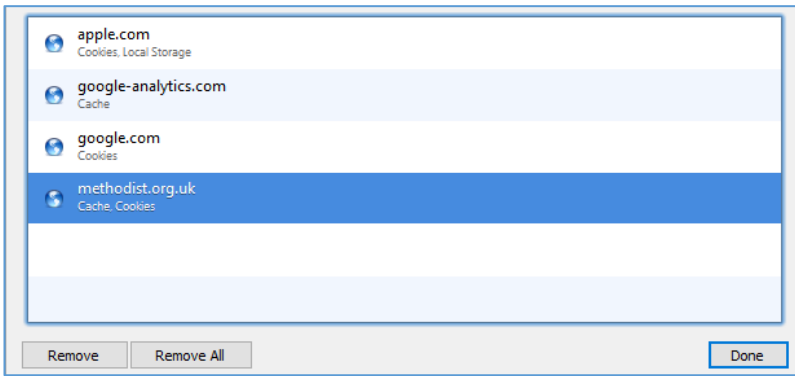
Clearing cache and cookies

Step 2: From the dialogue box which appears, select **Privacy**.



Step 3: You then have two options – either to **Remove All Website Data**, which will remove your entire browsing history and deletes cookies and the browser cache stored by your computer (a warning will come up before you are asked to confirm or cancel that step), or to remove saved data for one or more particular websites only.

Please see the next page for the continuation of Step 3.

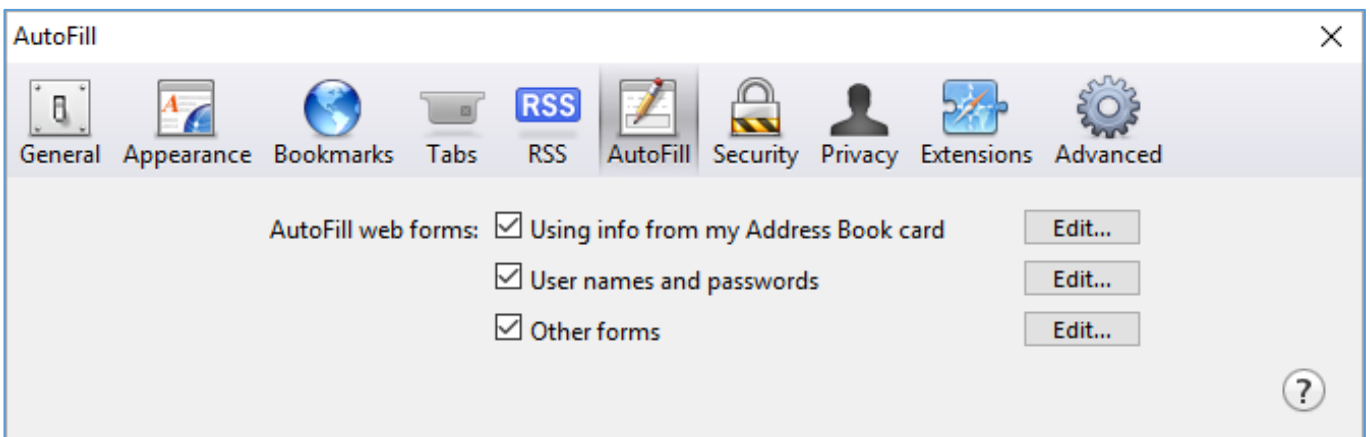


For the purposes of the Methodist Online Suite of Applications, it is advisable to choose to remove the cookies and cache of the Methodist webpages only, which you can do by clicking **Details** and highlighting the relevant site(s).

Step 4: Click **Remove** and exit the window by clicking **Done**.

Managing site logins, passwords and autocomplete data

Step 5: From the dialogue box which appears, select **AutoFill**.



Safari's AutoFill tool sometimes overrides cookies and fills in username and password details on websites. AutoFill might also autocomplete some other information on the site.

Step 3: Under **AutoFill webforms**, tick the boxes for each item you would like to clear. For the purposes of the Methodist Online Suite of Applications, it is advisable to tick the following:

- User names and passwords
- Other forms

Step 4: In the dialog box that appears once you've clicked **Edit**, select the relevant site in the list and click **Remove**.

Please see the next page for Apple mobile devices.



Apple mobile devices

Clearing browser history, tracking cookies and website data on your iPhone:

Step 1: In Safari, tap the **Bookmarks button** in the toolbar.

Step 2: Select the **Bookmarks icon** in the upper left corner. Make sure you've returned to the top-level menu by tapping on any back arrows in the upper left corner.

Step 3: Tap the **History** menu.

Step 4: Tap **Clear** and select how much history you'd like to clear.

Note that cookies and website data will be cleared from the iPhone, and history will be cleared from all iCloud devices.

Clearing the cache on your iPad or iPhone:

Step 1: Go to the **Settings app** and tap **Safari**.

Step 2: You will see options to **Clear History** and **Clear Cookies and Data**.

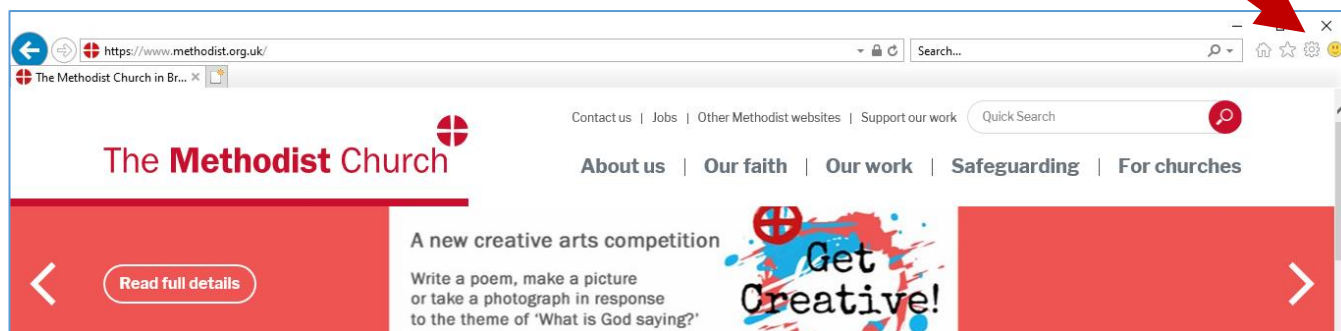
Step 3: Proceed as above.



Internet Explorer (up to version 9)

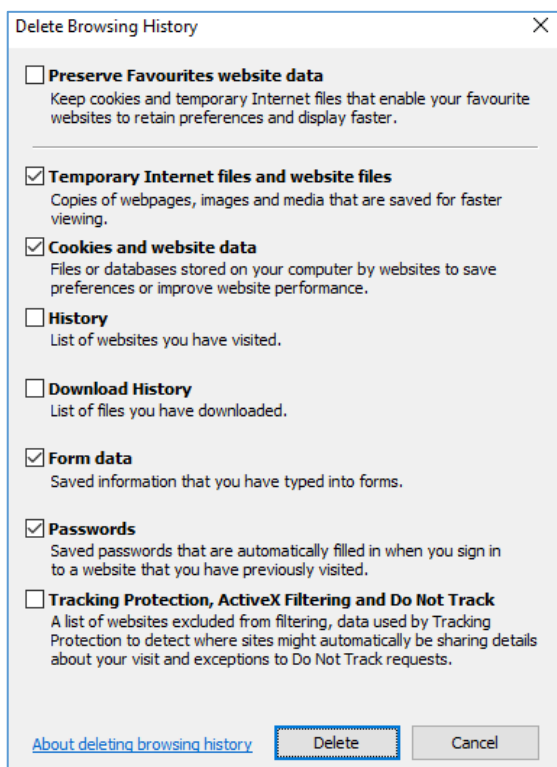
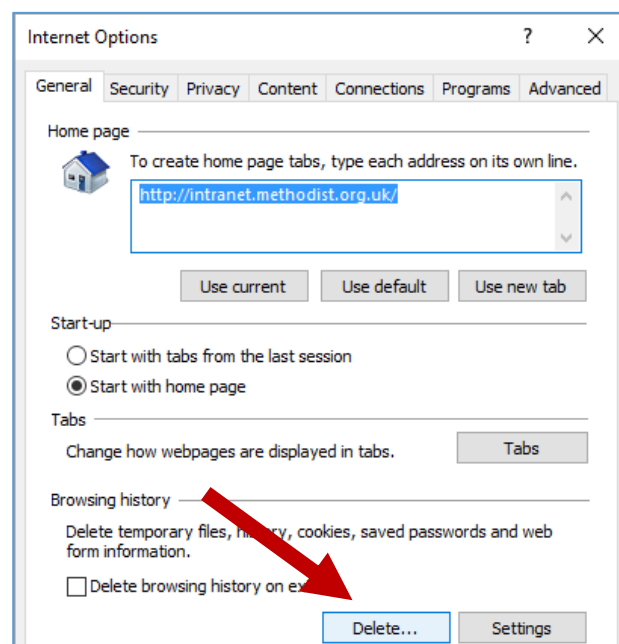
Step 1: Go into the **Tools** menu by clicking the **gear icon** found in the top right corner of the browser window and choose **Internet options** from the dropdown menu that appears.

You can also do this by simultaneously pressing the **Alt + X** buttons.



Step 2: On the **General** tab under **Browsing history**, click **Delete** (see image on the right).

The **Delete Browsing History** window will appear (see image below).



Step 3: Tick the boxes for each item you would like to clear. For the purposes of the Methodist Online Suite of Applications, it is advisable to select the following:

- Temporary Internet file and website files
- Cookies and website data
- Form data
- Passwords

Step 4: Click **Delete**.



Internet Explorer (version 10 and newer)

[Download Internet Explorer here](#)

Step 1: Click the **Tools** via the **gear icon** and choose **Safety**, then **Delete browsing history**.

Then follow **Steps 2-4** as above.

Appendix: Tips for managing information on the internet

★ TIP: Refreshing a page (*all browsers*)



Some changes will only take effect when a website is reloaded. To refresh / reload a webpage, simultaneously press the **Shift + F5 buttons** on your keyboard or click the **Reload icon** of your browser. This saves you from having to close down and reopen your browser.

★ TIP: Usage of reading lists (*all browsers*)



It is recommended that you don't move <https://online.methodist.org.uk> to the reading list of your browser as this will be the version of the site as it was at the time you moved it there, and will therefore not reflect subsequent updates and changes.

★ TIP: Preventing future caching issues (*Internet Explorer*)

To reduce some potential caching issues, it's best to have Internet Explorer set to request the latest version of the page rather than relying on a cached copy. To do this:

1. From the **Tools menu** select **Internet options**.
2. On the **General tab**, under **Browsing history**, click **Settings**.
3. Under **Check for newer versions of stored pages** make sure **Every time I visit the webpage** is selected.
4. Click **OK**.