



If you're still using Internet Explorer, shame on you. While a fresh install of Firefox could be called "samey" by laymen compared to IE 8, it's not. The main difference is Firefox allows you to add functionality with add-ons created by third parties greatly expanding functionality. Well that and being able to fine tune internal settings, but that's for another post. Here are some of my favorites that enhance my web experience in ways that aren't possible in any other browser.

### Everyday Essentials

[Adblock Plus](#) & [Element Hiding Helper For Adblock Plus](#)

Adblock plus strips out ads from web pages and collapses their containers. You'll forget that cluttered sites even have ads. By far my favorite add-on. You can also white list certain websites. Element hiding helper lets you block any element of a site even if it's not an ad. You strip down a site to just what you want if you're savvy.

[Noscript](#)

The number one way to hack your system through your browser is with cross site scripting and scripts in general. A site that seems harmless as you're browsing could be launching multiple

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malicious scripts against your system invisibly without you even realizing it. Noscript blocks all scripts and flash when you're visiting a domain. You can white list certain domains or pages. A must for a more secure browsing experience.

### [FoxyProxy](#)

FoxyProxy allows you to load specific proxies for certain domains. Want to use your US proxy for a US only service... \*cough\*Hulu\*cough\*? So much better than manually editing your proxy every time you want to use it. Like Ron Popeil said, "set it and forget it!"

### [Greasemonkey](#)

Speaking of scripts, Greasemonkey allows you to load your own and add some serious functionality to your favorite sites. Most scripts can be found on [userscripts.org](http://userscripts.org)

Some of my current favs are:

- Craigsit Locations Filter - Metro Vancouver is a big place, so no I don't want to see your ad from the boonies.
- Hide Google Instant Preview
- Autopagerize - no more clicking on "next page" this script loads them on most sites automatically for you - in one page. (Google)
- Google Extra - add dictionary, Wikipedia, and video results with your Google searches
- IMDB - add Rotten Tomatoes score

### [Ghostery](#)

Blocks tracking cookies and supplies info about the companies and services trying to track your browsing habits.

### [Nosquint](#)

1920 x 1080 is great but trying to read a Wikipedia article can be tough on the eyeballs at the default zoom level. Noquint allows you to set global and site specific zoom levels. If you do a lot of reading on the web, I would call this a must. On a side note, I was so happy the day full page zooming came to Firefox!

### [Tineye Reverse Image Search](#)

Where did this image come from, who is using it? Is someone using your copy written image? [Tineye](#) can tell you. Adding the right click search into Firefox makes this useful service even easier to use.

### [QuickRestart](#)

Restarts your browser and restores all your open tabs.

### [Smart Bookmarks Bar](#)

Removes the text from the bookmarks toolbar, favicons only please. Saves a lot of room on the bookmark bar.

Essential Web Development Add-ons

### [Firebug](#)

Debug and dig through a websites HTML and CSS with in Firebug's GUI. Very helpful for finding bugs and problems with complicated sites.

### [Firesizer](#)

Great for web devs wanting to test various different resolutions without having to actually change your monitor settings or "guesstomating". Firesizer resizes your browser window to set resolution specs.

### Tricksy/Spoof Add-ons

These aren't essential, but can be useful and or fun when needed.

### [Modify Headers](#)

Plenty of room to be trixy with this one. Protip: You can change your forwarded IP to certain web services convincing them you're from another location. Google "X-Forwarded-For"

### [User Agent Switcher](#)

When you visit a website your browser communicates what version and type of browser you're using. This allows you to modify your useragent to I don't know...how about Googlebot? Why would you want to do that? Some websites with weak security allow googlebot and other useragent classes to see protected content to get it indexed, but not a regular user agent. You can change it to whatever you want.