

Separate appliances give you a choice to make. Doing everything on one device takes that choice away. But you can divide things on purpose to get it back.

A few years ago I used one computer for everything. Art, internet, gaming, and YouTube.



But there was a problem. This eventually devolved into just YouTube and Gaming all day every day. I wasn't getting anything done.



Then I realized something. Computers can do *anything!* ... and that's kind of the problem. It didn't used to be this way. In the 1990's you had to choose different objects for different activities. This gave you a choice. A choice we don't tend to have now. Even the old computers were more like internet appliances, because they sucked at everything else. And you tended to see the computer itself because it wasn't hidden under a desk. It was in front

of you. Just another object in the room.

What do you feel like doing today?



... and so you naturally traveled to different parts of a room to do different things. But most importantly, you chose your activity *before* you did it. Because you had to. This choice meant that you weren't just falling into the same habit over and over.

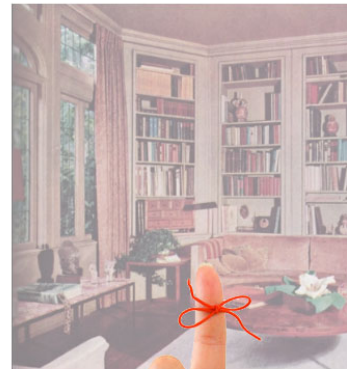


But when one computer does everything, you habitually sit in the *same place* so you end up doing the *same thing*. Because in your mind it feels like *one activity*.

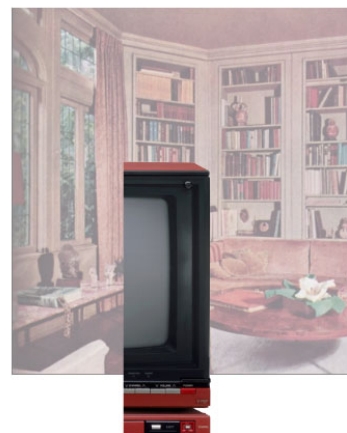


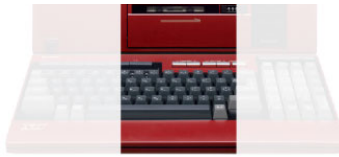


But I'm not lazy while I'm at work. I do different things in different places. Because *habits are tied to places.*



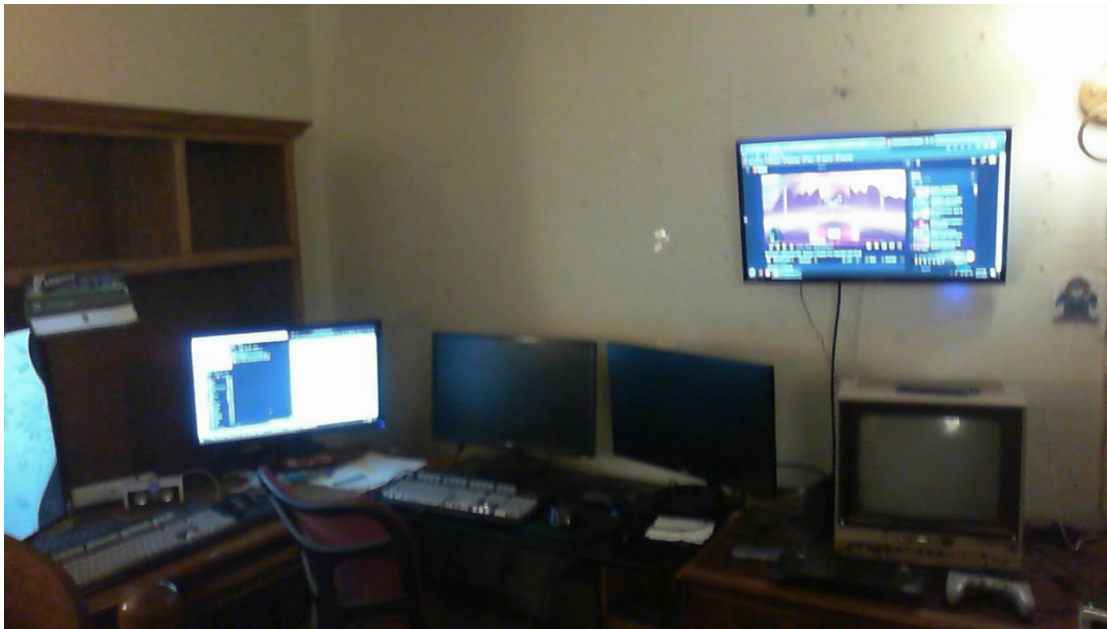
So if a computer can do anything, what if I intentionally choose a different computer for each activity? Divide my hobbies apart between different objects and put those objects in different places?





It just so happened I already had a *ton* of computers lying around. Partly because I'm a sucker for gadgets. But they also just sort of... accumulated over the years. Some were hand-me-downs from friends and family, some were impulse buys, some were old computers I used long ago.

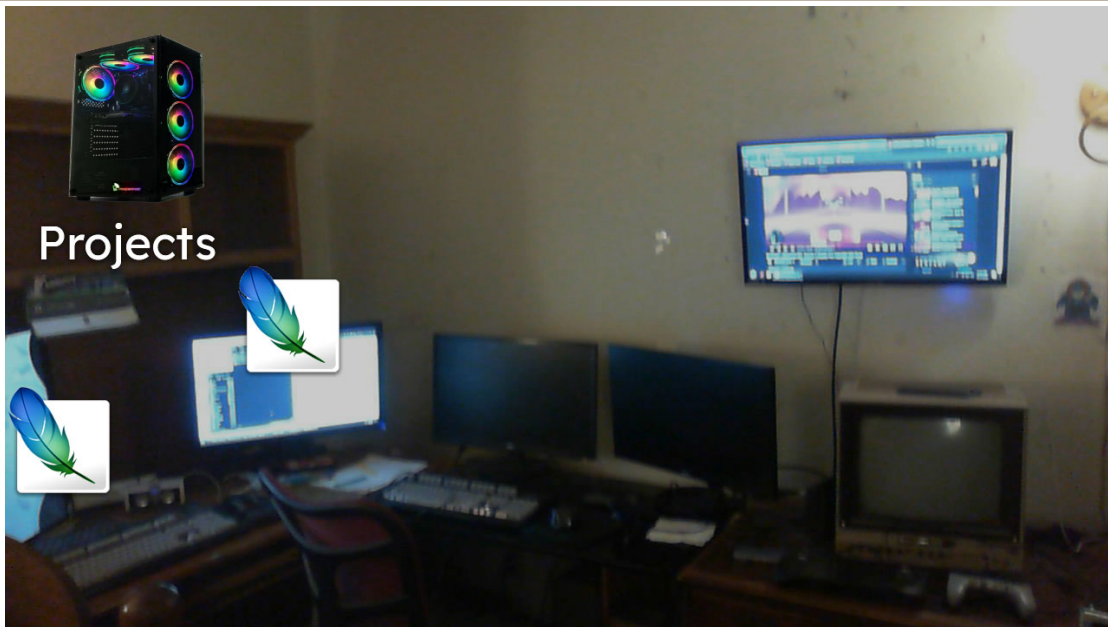
So that's what I did. Behold my glorious mess! No really. There's a method to all this madness. It doesn't even use all that much electricity, aside from the monitors. But I only turn on the screens I'm currently using.



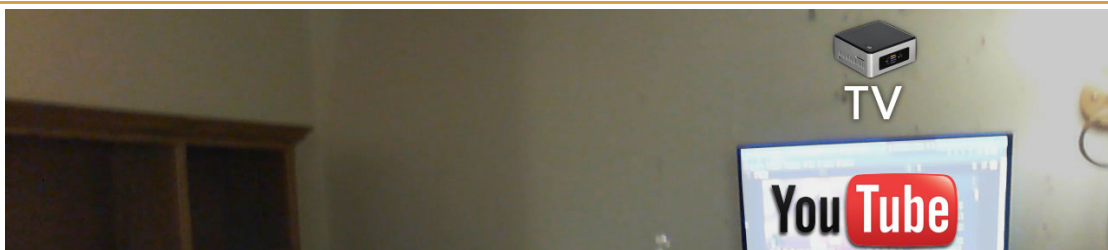
For browsing internet stuff, I use a windows tablet hooked to an external monitor. It's a Microsoft Surface Pro 2 from 2016, so it's powerful enough to browse the web comfortably. And because it's a portable device it uses very little power.

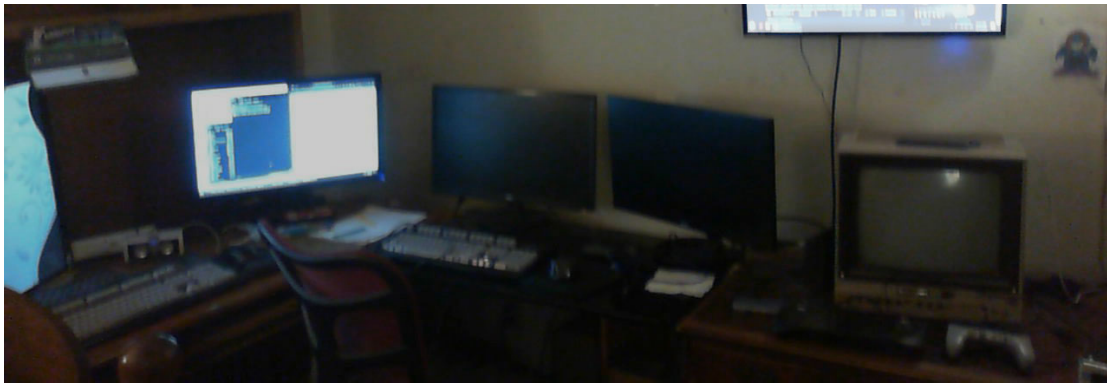


For making projects, I use a relatively powerful PC. Needless to say this uses the most electricity out of everything.

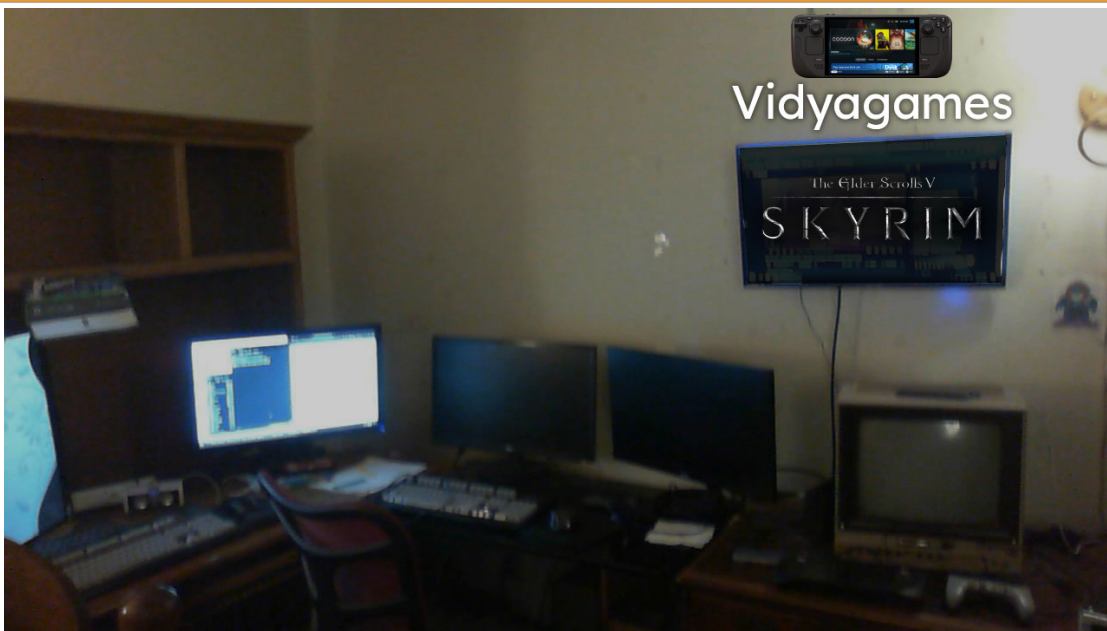


For watching YouTube I use a little low-power Intel NUC. It does nothing else. And this computer runs on just 8 watts of power so I can run it 24/7 for the cost of like, a couple bucks a month.





And what about games? I mostly use my Nintendo Switch and a Steam Deck. Again, portable devices that use relatively little power. They all use the same screen as my YouTube computer, so I keep all my bad habits in one place.

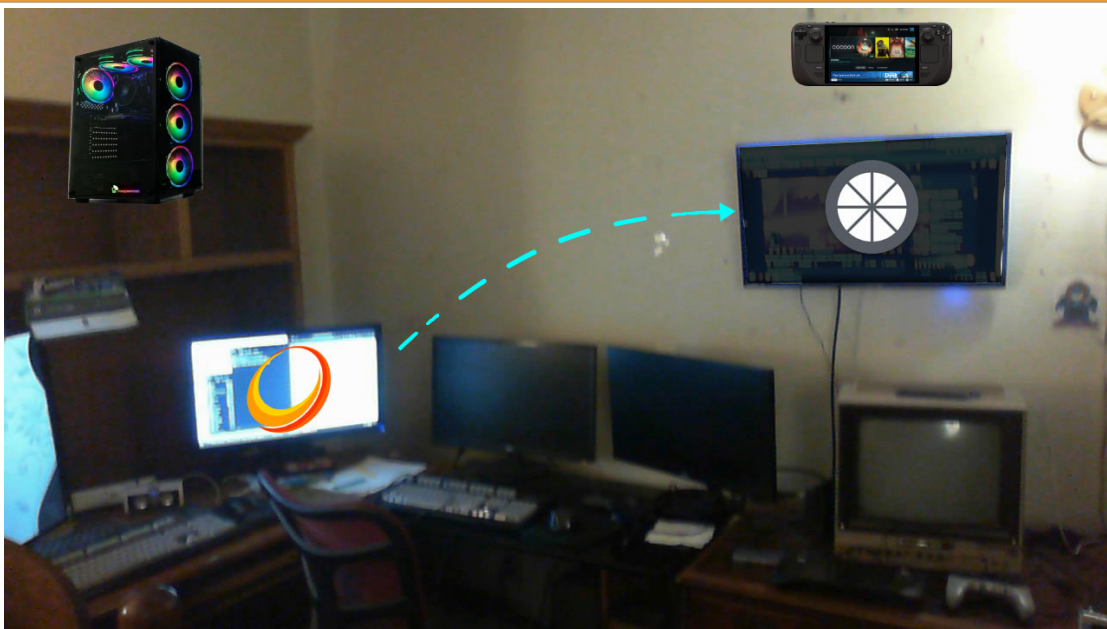


... unless I want to play **Fallout 4**. I refuse to play Bethesda games without mods. But I need a mod manager for that. Which means I need Windows and a half-decent PC.



But I don't want to accidentally get into the habit of gaming on my project computer, so instead I stream the game from that computer to the "gaming" screen across the room and then play the game there. I know this seems stupid, but there's a reason. It keeps my gaming habits tied to the "gaming screen". So I'm never tempted to play games when I sit down at my project computer.

Sending: <https://github.com/LizardByte/Sunshine>
Receiving: <https://moonlight-stream.org/>



And this setup actually works! I've been doing things this way for years now. But the secret ingredient is *not* having multiple computers... it's having *multiple chairs*. My habits get associated with the physical position and location of my body. Sitting down at the gaming place puts me in a gaming state of mind. Sitting at the project place puts me in a different state of mind.

