

Online Security

Online security is critical for protecting your personal information. Without proper computer security measures, all the data on your Windows PC is at risk.

Here's what you need to do:

- Plug all Windows security holes
- Lock down Internet Explorer
- Establish a multi-layered PC security defense

Windows Security Patches

The [Microsoft Windows Update](#) site provides critical updates, security fixes, software downloads, and other relevant security info.

Simply click the Scan for Updates button. Browse the results list and check off the ones you want to install.

Critical updates will always be in a small group at the top of the results page. Always install those first.

When the download finishes, each update will automatically install itself.

Online Security Tip: - Windows Update will automatically track your security updates. When new patches are online, you'll be directed to the Windows Update page for a new scan.

Note: If you use Microsoft Office products such as Word and Excel, click the top button labeled "Office Update" to install those security updates as well.

Lock down Internet Explorer

Microsoft Internet Explorer needs to be updated regularly to maintain computer security. All existing versions of Internet Explorer have critical vulnerabilities if they aren't patched.

The vulnerabilities can be categorized into these classes:

- Web page or Windows interface spoofing
- ActiveX control vulnerabilities
- Active scripting vulnerabilities
- MIME-type and Content-type misinterpretation
- Buffer overflows

These vulnerabilities could lead to disclosure of local files or data, execution of local programs, download and execution of arbitrary code, or complete takeover of your system.

How to secure Internet Explorer

To configure the Security settings for Internet Explorer:

- Select Internet Options under the Tools menu.
- Select the Security tab
- Click Custom Level for the Internet zone.

Most of the flaws in IE are exploited through Active Scripting or ActiveX Controls.

- Under Scripting, select Prompt for Allow paste operations via script

This increases computer security by preventing content from being exposed from your clipboard.

Note: Active Scripting should not be disabled since it is used by many websites.

ActiveX Controls are not as popular but are potentially more dangerous as they allow greater access to the system.

- Select Prompt for Download signed ActiveX Controls.
- Select Disable for Download unsigned ActiveX Controls.
- Select Disable for Initialize and script ActiveX Controls not marked as safe.

Java applets typically have more capabilities than scripts.

- Under Microsoft VM, select High safety for Java permissions

This puts access barriers around the Java applet and prevents privileged access to your system.

- Under Miscellaneous select Disable for Access to data sources across domains

This protects you from cross-site scripting attacks.

- Also, make sure you have no un-trusted sites in the Trusted or Local Intranet zones. These zones have weaker security settings than the other zones.

Online Security Tip: These security settings for Internet Explorer will also be automatically applied to your other Microsoft applications such as Outlook and Outlook Express.

Create a multi-layered defense

Computer security is all about having multiple lines of defense. After applying the security patches to Windows and fortifying Internet Explorer, you now have a good foundation in place.

Now you need to further increase your online security. Build upon that foundation and create some strong castle walls around your PC.

Here's what you need:

- Spam Filters
- Antivirus Software
- Spyware Removal Software
- Personal Firewall Software
- Online History Clean
- PC Utility Software

Each of these helps to close a security gap; together they provide an interwoven shield of online security.

Online Security Software

Online Security - Spam Filters	Download	Free Trial
Spam Bully - Rated Best Buy: Wired Magazine. Most popular anti-spam solution. Free trial download.	Spam Bully	Yes
Save \$10 on McAfee SpamKiller. Very effective, but doesn't offer a free trial.	McAfee SpamKiller	No
Spam Arrest - Our top-rated spam solution uses a challenge response system. Blocks virus attacks.	Spam Arrest	Yes
MailBlocks - Challenge/response service. Free or paid options. Top rated by PC Magazine. Consolidate multiple accounts.	MailBlocks	Yes
Spam Pal - free spam filter. Works on their site. Labels obvious spam for auto-delete within your email client.	Spam Pal	Yes

Online Security - Antivirus	Download	Free Trial
Trend Micro total security solution - spam filter, firewall, spyware and antivirus protection. Save \$10. Buy it for \$39.95	PC-cillin	No
McAfee VirusScan - Protects against viruses, worms, Trojans, spyware, and web dialers. Protects IM client as well.	McAfee VirusScan	No
Panda Titanium AntiVirus - Automatically detects and eliminates all types of viruses. Small resource usage.	Panda Antivirus	Yes
Kaspersky Labs - #1 rated antivirus solution. Stops 100% of virus attacks in all tests. Restores any infected file.	Kaspersky VirusScan	No
AVG Antivirus - Free version includes anti-virus email scanner, but only basic interface and no tech support.	AVG Antivirus	Yes
Norton AntiVirus 2004 - Not recommended due to	Norton AntiVirus	Yes

weak virus detection engine and non-existent file restore capability.		
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Online Security - Adware	Download	Free Trial
NoAdware - The #1 adware blocker on the Net. Removes all spyware and blocks every popup. 30-day free trial.	No Adware	Yes
StopZilla - Kills pop-up ads, spyware, cleans cookies, internet history eraser - CNET & TuCows top pick.	StopZilla	Yes
PopupNuker - Stops all pop-ups, removes adware, speeds up your PC. Free trial and free scan.	PopupNuker	Yes
Pop-up Stopper - Block all pop-up ads and remove spyware with Pop-Up Stopper Pro version. PC World #1 Pick.	Pop-up Stopper	No
XoftSpy - Complete protection against adware, spyware, keyloggers, and browser hijackers. Free scan and free trial.	XoftSpy	Yes
Lavasoft AdAware is an adware-only market innovator with a free version and free trials of paid versions.	Lavasoft AdAware	Yes

Online Security - Spyware	Download	Free Trial
NoAdware - The #1 adware blocker on the Net. Removes all spyware and blocks every popup. 30-day free trial.	No Adware	Yes
SpyKiller - Free spyware scan and free 30-day trial. Fast & easy tool for removing spyware and adware.	SpyKiller	Yes
XCleaner from XBlock - Removes spyware, adware, and blocks pop-ups. Free scan and free trial.	XCleaner	Yes
SpywareNuker - Hottest spyware product on the market. Free scan and 30-day free trial.	SpywareNuker	Yes
MyNetProtector - Anti-spyware solution removes spyware and adware. Blocks pop-ups. Free scan and free trial.	MyNetProtector	Yes
Spybot Search & Destroy - German programmer with a good free spyware cleaner that's incomplete.	Spybot	Yes

Online Security - Zone Alarm	Download	Free Trial
Secure your Instant Messenger client & your PC from harm.	IM Secure	Yes
Download Zone Alarm Pro for a 30-day free trial.	Zone Alarm Pro: Free Trial	Yes
Try out Zone Alarm Pro. Save \$10 if purchased within 30 days.	Zone Alarm Pro	Yes
Save \$30 on Zone Alarm Pro & Pest Patrol. Great combo deal.	Zone Alarm Pro & Pest Patrol	No
Explore the entire Zone Labs PC security product line.	Zone Labs	Yes
Zone Alarm free download. Doesn't include the Pro features.	Free Zone Alarm	Yes

Online Security - History Clean	Download	Free Trial
History Kill Removes cookies, temporary internet files, and index.dat file. Complete erasure of online activity.	History Kill	Yes
CyberScrub - Dept of Defense certified for complete data erase and history clean. 100% Guaranteed.	CyberScrub	Yes
XCleaner from XBlock - Removes spyware, adware, and blocks pop-ups. Free scan and free trial.	XCleaner	Yes

Online Security - PC Utilities	Download	Free Trial
PC Speed Tweak - Double the speed of your PC and Internet connection	PC Speed Tweak	No
GoToMyPC - Secure remote access solution for home office or business use	GoToMyPC	Yes
Hard Drive Mechanic - Restores any troubled disk or operating system to full functionality	Hard Drive Mechanic	Yes
Survey Platinum - Cool website where you can get paid \$5-\$75 to take consumer surveys and \$150 for focus groups.	Survey Platinum	No

So there you have it - All our top picks and advice for improving your computer security.

Stay safe. Make your selections and start downloading now.