Stay protected with Windows Security – Microsoft Support

Windows · https://cleversupport.ca/docs/windows/stay-protected-with-windows-security-microsoft-support/

Security Windows 10 Windows 11

Windows 10 and 11 include Windows Security, which provides the latest antivirus protection. Your device will be actively protected from the moment you start Windows. Windows Security continually scans for malware (**mal**icious soft**ware**), viruses, and security threats. In addition to this real-time protection, updates are downloaded automatically to help keep your device safe and protect it from threats.

Tip: If you're a Microsoft 365 Family or Personal subscriber you get Microsoft Defender, our advanced security software for Windows, Mac, iOS, and Android, as part of your subscription. Learn more at Getting started with Microsoft Defender.

[The Windows Security App in Windows 11]

Windows 10 or 11 in S mode

Some features will be a little different if you're running Windows 10 or 11 in S mode. Because this mode is streamlined for tighter security, the Virus & threat protection area has fewer options. But don't worry—the built-in security of this mode automatically prevents viruses and other threats from running on your device, and you'll receive security updates automatically. For more info, see Windows 10 or 11 in S mode FAQ.

Important security info

- Windows Security is built-in to Windows and includes an antivirus program called Microsoft Defender Antivirus. (In early versions of Windows 10, Windows Security is called Windows Defender Security Center).

- If you have another antivirus app installed and turned on, Microsoft Defender Antivirus will turn off automatically. If you uninstall the other app, Microsoft Defender Antivirus will turn back on automatically.
- If you're having problems receiving Windows Security updates, see Fix Windows Update errors and the Windows Update FAQ.
- For info on how to uninstall an app, see Repair or remove an app in Windows.
- To change your user account to an admin account, see Create a local user or administrator account in Windows.

Understand and customize Windows Security features

Windows Security is your home to manage the tools that protect your device and your data:

- Virus & threat protection - Monitor threats to your device, run scans, and get updates to help detect the latest threats. (Some of these options are unavailable if you're running Windows 10 in S mode.)
- Account protection - Access sign-in options and account settings, including Windows Hello and dynamic lock.
- Firewall & network protection - Manage firewall settings and monitor what's happening with your networks and internet connections.
- App & browser control - Update settings for Microsoft Defender SmartScreen to help protect your device against potentially dangerous apps, files, sites, and downloads. You'll have exploit protection and you can customize protection settings for your devices.
- Device security - Review built-in security options to help protect your device from attacks by malicious software.
- Device performance & health - View status info about your device's performance health, and keep your device clean and up to date with the latest version of Windows.
- Family options - Keep track of your kids' online activity and the devices in your household.

To customize how your device is protected with these Windows Security features select **Start** > **Settings** > **Update & Security** > **Windows Security** or select the button below.

Open Windows Security settings

Status icons indicate your level of safety:

- **Green** means there aren’t any recommended actions right now.
- **Yellow** means there is a safety recommendation for you.
- **Red** is a warning that something needs your immediate attention.

Run a malware scan manually

If you're worried about a specific file or folder on your local device, you can right-click the file or folder in File Explorer, then select **Scan with Microsoft Defender**.

Tip: On Windows 11 you may have to select **Show more options** after you right-click to see the option to scan the file or folder.

If you suspect there's malware or a virus on your device, you should immediately run a quick scan.

Run a quick scan in Windows Security

Note: Because of streamlined security, this isn't available if you're running Windows 10 or 11 in S mode.

1. Select **Start** > **Settings** > **Update & Security** > **Windows Security** and then **Virus & threat protection**.
   Open Windows Security settings
2. Under **Current threats**, select **Quick scan** (or in early versions of Windows 10, under **Threat history**, select **Scan now**).

If the scan doesn't find any issues, but you're still concerned, you may want to check your device more thoroughly.

Run an advanced scan in Windows Security

1. Select **Start** > **Settings** > **Update & Security** > **Windows Security** and then **Virus & threat protection**.
2. Under **Current threats**, select **Scan options** (or in early versions of Windows 10, under **Threat history**, select **Run a new advanced scan**).

3. Select one of the scan options:
    - **Full scan** (check all files and programs currently on your device)
    - **Custom scan** (scan specific files or folders)
    - **Microsoft Defender Offline scan** (restarts your computer and runs a deep scan before Windows loads to catch especially sneaky malware). Learn more about Microsoft Defender Offline
4. Select **Scan now**.

Learn more about running an advanced scan

Schedule your own scan

Even though Windows Security is regularly scanning your device to keep it safe, you can also set when and how often the scans occur.

Note: Because of streamlined security, this isn't available if you're running Windows 10 or 11 in S mode.

Schedule a scan

1. Select the **Start** button, type **schedule tasks** in the **Search** box, and in the list of results, select **Task Scheduler**.
2. In the left pane, select the arrow (>) next to **Task Scheduler Library** to expand it, do the same with **Microsoft** > **Windows**, and then scroll down and select the **Windows Defender** folder.
3. In the top-center pane, select **Windows Defender Scheduled Scan.** (Point to the choices to see the full names.)
4. In the **Actions** pane on the right, scroll down and then select **Properties**.
5. In the window that opens, select the **Triggers** tab, and then select **New**.
6. Set your preferred time and frequency, and then select **OK**.
7. Review the schedule and select **OK**.

Turn Microsoft Defender Antivirus real-time protection on or off

Sometimes you may need to briefly stop running real-time protection. While real-time protection is off, files you open or download won't be scanned for threats. However, real-time protection will soon turn on automatically again to protect your device.

Turn real-time protection off temporarily

Note: Because of streamlined security, this isn't available if you're running Windows 10 or 11 in S mode.

1. Select **Start** > **Settings** > **Update & Security** > **Windows Security** and then **Virus & threat protection** > **Manage settings**. (In early versions of Windows 10, select **Virus & threat protection** > **Virus & threat protection settings**.)
   Open Windows Security settings
2. Switch the **Real-time protection** setting to **Off** and choose **Yes** to verify.