

Malware and you: What is it? How can you avoid and deal with it?

Anyone can be targeted by malware. If you have a computer, smartphone or tablet connected to the internet, it will probably be you.



Internet Safety
Starts with **you.**



Malware – often also called a virus or spyware – is the term used for files written and distributed with the aim of doing harm to computers and mobile devices, most commonly to enable crimes such as fraud, identity theft or extortion. Some can even enable criminals to spy on you via your webcam.

Malware-enabled crime is so commonplace, there aren't any statistics on it. But you can be sure that if you have a computer or mobile device connected to the internet, you will be targeted. *It's your responsibility to make sure that you don't become a victim.*



Top tips to protect your devices from malware

- Always have the best internet security software/apps you can afford loaded and running on your internet-connected devices. Buy or download them only from reputable sources.
- Do not open any files attached to an email from an unknown, suspicious or untrustworthy source.
- Do not click on spurious links in emails, texts and posts.
- Always keep application software, apps and operating systems updated when prompted, on your computer and mobile devices.
- Be careful with USB connected devices (e.g. memory sticks, external hard drives, MP3 players) as they are very common carriers of malware.
- Be careful with CDs/DVDs as they can also contain viruses.
- Do not open any files from web-based digital file delivery companies (such as Hightail or Dropbox) that have been uploaded from an unknown, suspicious or untrustworthy source.
- Switch on macro protection in Microsoft Office applications like Word and Excel.
- If you download free software, do so with extreme caution.
- Safeguard your identity – online and offline – to avoid it being stolen by fraudsters to take out payday loans and other transactions in your name.

For more information on malware please visit www.getsafeonline.org and click 'Protecting Yourself'

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Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by a number of government departments, law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

Our advice is free, authoritative, informative, impartial and easy to follow.

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TRADING
STANDARDS
eCrime Team

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WATCH

NCA
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