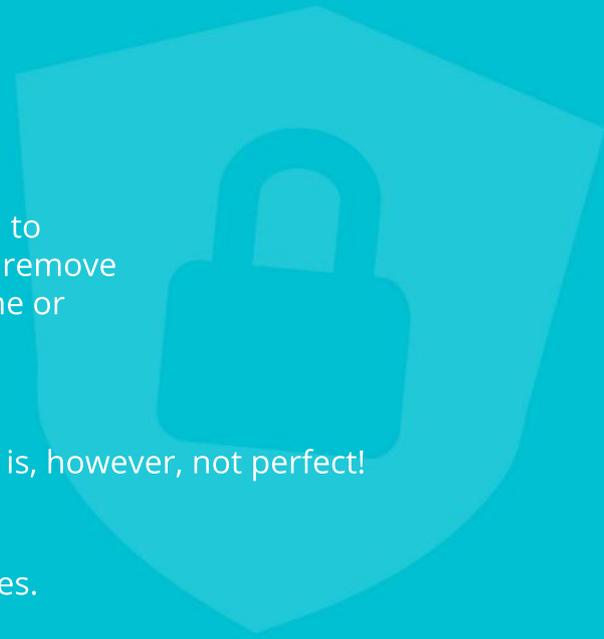


ANTI-VIRUS

Anti-virus software is computer software which is designed to prevent a computer from malicious software, detect it and remove it if identified. Anti-virus software will attempt to quarantine or delete any file it deems to be malicious/suspicious.

 Anti-virus software will alert you to malicious files – it is, however, not perfect!

 Only download files/programmes from trusted sources.



Why do we need Anti-Virus?

Anti-virus software is very important as, in most cases, it is the only line of defence against harmful files/programmes.

Anti-virus software defends users against the likes of viruses, malware and other suspicious files which can be downloaded to their computers. These threats employ numerous techniques which can result in file theft/deletion, the downloading of further malicious material and even destruction of computer hardware in extreme cases.

It is crucial that, to maintain protection, anti-virus software is kept up to date in order to detect and remove new strains of viruses and malware. Most anti-virus software will automatically update as programmes may release updates as often as daily. It is always best to ensure that any anti-virus programme being used is configured to automatically check for these updates.

Anti-virus recommendations

In terms of protecting Windows users, the most readily available anti-virus software is “Windows Defender”. It is free and comes pre-installed on computers running Windows 7, 8 or 10. It should be noted, however, that “Windows Defender” is a rather basic piece of

of anti-virus software which does not offer a complete set of tools. This means that “Windows Defender” may not be able to protect users against all varieties of malicious files.

Users are therefore recommended to use “Windows Defender” alongside another third-party piece of anti-virus software to ensure maximum protection. These third-party options often come in both free and paid tiers, with the latter offering more comprehensive protection to users. Free anti-virus software includes AVG and Avast, whilst Norton and Kaspersky are among those which must be paid for.

Like “Windows Defender”, these third-party offerings are not perfect and can sometimes let suspicious and harmful files/programmes slip through unnoticed. As such, users should always be aware of what is happening on their computers and ensure that they are downloading files/programmes from reliable/trusted sources.

Equally, other operating systems, such as macOS, also have integrated security features to protect from viruses and other malicious software. macOS provides features such as ‘Gatekeeper’, which prevents the accidental execution of malicious software through validating downloaded applications before allowing them to run. Similarly, there are third-party offerings available from all popular vendors previously listed which can be used in conjunction with the pre-installed tools.