

Security Software-What do I need?

For Windows, the basic security software requirements are a **firewall**, an **antivirus** and some **anti-malware**. All of these must be functioning correctly and kept updated.

These components are available either free of charge or paid-for.

As an alternative to having several individual components, some people buy a single Security Suite which usually combines all of the above.

NB With Security Suites do beware of signing up for **automatic renewals**, especially with Norton/Symantec and McAfee. The automatic renewal cost is often twice the price of a new purchase and the payment can be deducted from your bank account well before the renewal date!

Microsoft also supplies updates to Windows Update. These updates should be installed when notification is received.

On the subject of **antivirus**, it should be noted that Microsoft has admitted that its own Microsoft Security Essentials (MSE) is less effective than many third party applications.

<http://lifehacker.com/microsoft-admits-that-third-party-antivirus-is-more-effective-1441135677/all>

<http://www.howtogeek.com/173291/goodbye-microsoft-security-essentials-microsoft-now-recommends-you-use-a-third-party-antivirus/>

MSE has been renamed as Windows Defender on W8.

My personal security software suggestions are listed below but please do your own research for alternatives.

FREE software:

Firewall: The Windows own built-in one is good. In addition, all routers have a hardware firewall.

Antivirus: Avast Free is highly rated in independent tests.

Anti-malware: Malwarebytes Free (or preferably the paid-for Premium version) and SuperAntiSpyware Free installed together.

PAID-FOR software:

Security Suite: ESET Smart Security or Kaspersky Internet Security

Antivirus: ESET NOD32 antivirus or Kaspersky Anti-Virus

The above are highly rated in independent performance tests.

Anti-Malware: The Premium version of Malwarebytes is superior because it provides additional real-time protection against the likes of CryptoLocker.

NB Good procedures and housekeeping are also required.

Keep all software *regularly updated*, including **Windows Updates** and don't forget to *backup all personal data* which you cannot afford to lose!

Free or Paid-for?

A question that keeps cropping up is, "Should I pay for security software or should I just use the free versions?"

As Rick Maybury points out below, there is little difference in performance between the best free antivirus software and the paid-for versions. With the paid-for versions you are basically paying for the benefit of customer support.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/advice/10404755/Should-I-get-free-anti-virus-software.html#disqus_thread