

Anti-Virus, Security Software for a Mac

As a new MAC owner aware of all the scams viruses, intrusions, etc., I was wondering what steps others take to protect their information, software, hardware, etc.? I don't like the idea of relying solely on Apple.

I don't use Anti-virus and I don't know any serious Mac user who does either.

Relax.

David A. Shulman, Florida

I have used MacKeeper for the last five years and I recommend it.

Max Taylor

Macs make up 10% of the computer market and are not often targeted by viruses. PCs make up the other 90%. These numbers might be a bit different from the last time I looked at them, but they're still close. In any case, one doesn't get much out of programming Mac viruses since you can reach more computers with a PC virus.

Macs and PCs don't speak the same language, so a virus that affects a PC won't affect a Mac - UNLESS you're running Windows on your Mac.

Finally, I have heard, but I'm not sure, that it's easier to write a virus for a PC than for a Mac.

Personally, I've never used a virus scan on a Mac - I've had one for 8 years. Never had to.

Maybe when Macs are a larger percent of the market things will change.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Allen Thomas, New York

Macs aren't susceptible to viruses because they are on a Unix platform which requires an admin password to install anything on the computer operating system. They are vulnerable to trojan horses which you may find yourself tempted to download and install.

D.A. "Duke" Drouillard, Nebraska

SoloSez Popular Threads, March 2014

"To infect a Mac, the viruses just need to be written well enough to get around the architecture. Not easy, but completely do-able." Entire article on this topic here.<<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/macs/can-macs-get-viruses2.htm>>

Sincerely,
Dwayne Allen Thomas

I've heard all the rhetoric about Mac's being "safe", but I'm not relying on that. In this day and age you never know when that next attack will come. See the stories on their most recent operating system fiasco... You can't rely on Mac to protect you.

e.g.

<http://readwrite.com/2014/02/25/apple-fixes-mac-ssl-vulnerability#awesm=~oxWDTZqHsAdsiW>

I use Kaspersky. It comes with a cool pop up keyboard to input your passwords on secure sites. I haven't noticed in conflicts in running programs. And it's just not that expensive. Why not do it?

Vonda K Vandaveer, District of Columbia

Yes, but that wasn't a virus. That was an error in the system itself. Having an anti-virus program would not have protected you.

David Shulman

Might also look at Avast.

Non-lawyer chiming in.

Gwynne Monahan

Here's a link to Apple Support:

<<https://discussions.apple.com/thread/2793744?start=0&tstart=0>><<https://discussions.apple.com/thread/2793744?start=0&tstart=0>>

Excerpt:

*There appear to be two versions of MacKeeper floating around: One is the legit version which is, according to the posts here, not effective and unnecessary, and the other is a version of the trojan currently

SoloSez Popular Threads, March 2014

masquerading under several names. In either case, I would not let it near my Mac. Here is the Apple info in case it is the trojan:*

<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4650> <<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4650>>

* FWIW, there are no viruses for Mac. Do not trust such silly marketing techniques. Do not download anything unless you know what it is. And, most of all, don't install anything unless you are 1000% sure of what it is.*

Michael Wright

It isn't true that there are no viruses for Mac.

<http://drtech.bangordailynews.com/2013/04/14/new-products/busting-the-myth-apple-macs-do-get-viruses/>

Lesley Hoenig, Michigan

Lesley, I just realized one of the dangers of lifting posts from other listserves and forgetting to trim. That is a big oops! I only intended to provide the information about MacKeeper and forgot to trim the "FWIW" statement which is not my own. I unintentionally entered into a topic that I wanted to stay out of and that is whether there are any known viruses affecting Macs. I personally don't use any active scanning anti-virus program on any of my Macs and I only use Macs in my practice.

Mike Wright

Same here, Mike. Several developers have told me that anti-virus programs on the mac, in general, cause more trouble with the operating system than they provide benefit. I've been an all Mac shop since 1984, and (knocking wood) haven't had a problem in 20 years. Most of the viruses that Mac virus software picks up are viruses that don't affect Macs.

It's a cost/benefit analysis. Using care when dealing with links and attachments goes a long way.

Mikki Barry

The article doesn't really say anything of value. The site he created and linked to doesn't exist.

I still say that anti-virus programs are not necessary on the Mac.

David Shulman

SoloSez Popular Threads, March 2014

I vote for no anti-virus protection. Potential threats are too unlikely to worry about. Also, I don't have any faith in Mac anti-virus apps. MacKeeper uses such unethical marketing practices that it is hard to believe they provide a legitimate, high-quality product. I also downloaded a demo of a Kaspersky anti-virus app about a year ago, because one of my Macs was running slow (turns out it is just old and has other issues). I tried to delete the app after the demo period but could not, even with the help of their tech support, get rid of the popups that tell me my virus database isn't up to date. Still have the popups show up from time to time. Far more annoying than any Mac virus would likely be.

Adam M. Pizer, New York

Cnet article setting out options:

http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-13727_7-20028455-263.html

Of those listed, generally my top two would be Kaspersky and Sophos. I have experimented with ClamXAV, but not enough to make a recommendation. Trend Micro, not mentioned in the article, is also favored by some.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

The article is also 3 years old, which is a lifetime in computer software.

Again, like most "hardcore" and sophisticated Mac users, I say no additional anti-virus or security software is necessary.

David Shulman

And which link are you talking about? He links to several articles about the topic, that do in fact work. Ie

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/25/mac-virus-apple_n_1625110.html#slide=more189072and
<http://www.techspot.com/news/51689-new-mac-virus-skirts-gatekeeper-initiates-creepy-reverse-shell-connection.html>

Lesley Hoenig

SoloSez Popular Threads, March 2014

For some articles that are not 3 years old:

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/350020/scitech/technology/new-mac-trojan-virus-mines-bitcoinsand>

http://www.arnnet.com.au/article/540093/clear-eyed_guide_mac_os_x_actual_security_risks/

Lesley Hoenig

Neither article says that Mac users should download and install third party anti-virus software. Look, I'm only saying what my experience is in using Macs for 30 years (as did other long time Mac users).

If installing third party anti-virus software makes you happy, then abi gezunt.

David A. Shulman

When people are claiming that there aren't any viruses to worry about with macs, how is it not relevant?

Lesley Hoenig

Completely agreed. They cause more problems than they are worth.

Mikki Barry

I don't even use them on my PC's. I've never ran one on my home PC which gets the most use.

Most malware nowadays are self-inflicted.

Joseph D. Dang
