4 Windows Security Features That Can Make Your Computer Less Secure

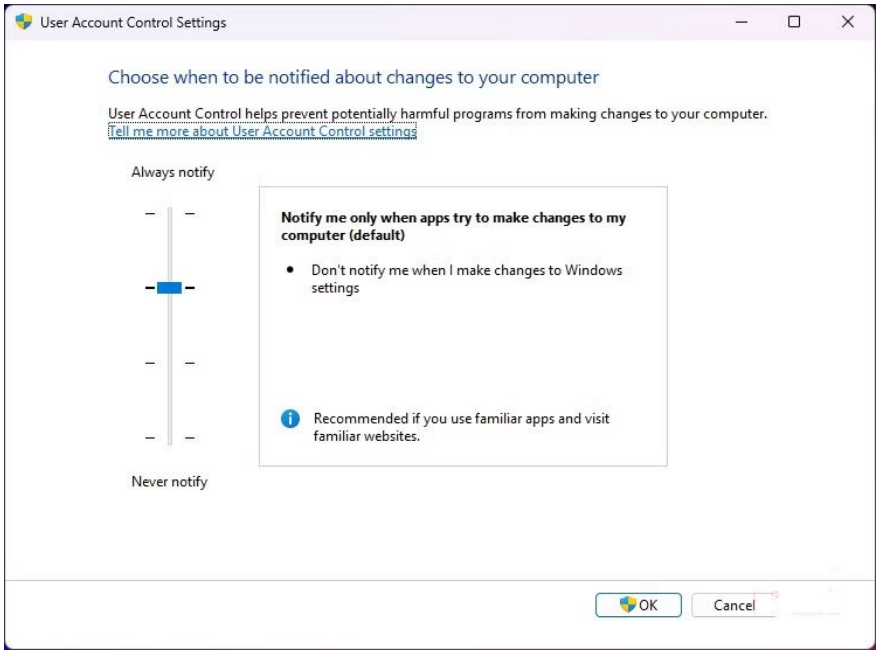
There are some security features that, although they address specific bugs, can themselves pose security risks.

Security is the most important aspect of any operating system. It can mean the difference between privacy and data breaches. For this reason, many people use antivirus programs or update some of their built-in security settings to improve their security. However, Windows 11 comes with a suite of built-in security features that help make your computer less vulnerable to breaches or exploits.

However, there are some security features that, although they address specific bugs, can themselves pose a security risk. This may be due to the way they are implemented or how they interact with each other. Some of these features are better left disabled.

User Account Control (UAC) prompt

Pop-ups constantly instruct users to ignore real risks

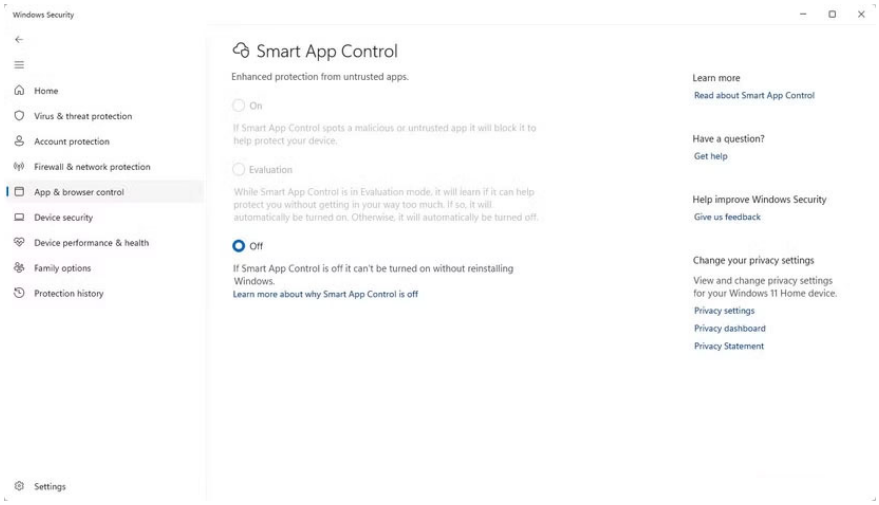


User Account Control (UAC) is a common feature in Windows. This core security feature prevents unauthorized changes to your computer. The idea behind this feature is that any application running on your computer should have the minimum privileges to perform its function.

But here's the thing. You get UAC prompts for pretty much everything. Even officially signed Microsoft software, like the Visual Studio installer , will trigger UAC. Over time, these conditions cause requests to be automatically approved. With this condition, it's very likely that users will approve malicious requests, because the process has become a mechanical action.

Smart App Control

Too many false alarms make everything meaningless



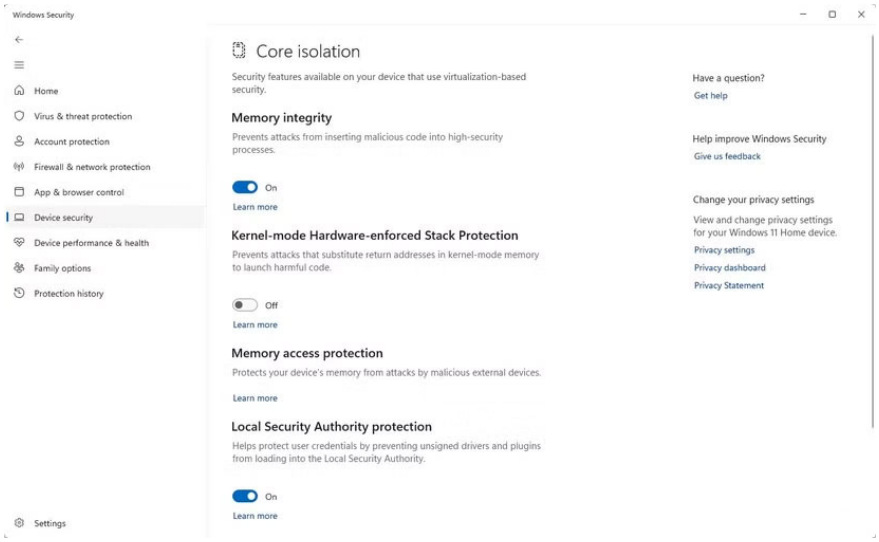
Windows SmartScreen was the previous mechanism; in Windows 11, it was replaced with Smart App Control. This feature only allows apps to run if they are considered 'likely safe.'

Unlike macOS' Gatekeeper, which has an bypass option, the only way to run an unrecognized app on Windows is to disable Smart App Control.

Making matters worse, re-enabling Smart App Control can require a Windows reset or reinstall in some cases. This is odd, since it was easier to turn the old SmartScreen filter off and back on. The difficulty of turning a feature back on is an incentive to turn it off, making it a redundant security feature.

Virtualization-Based Security

Enterprise protections slow down everyday Windows usage

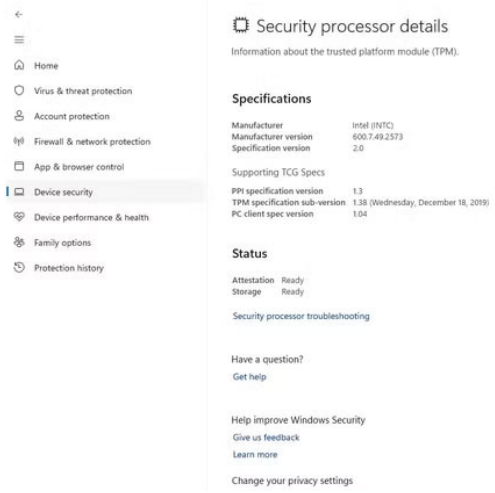


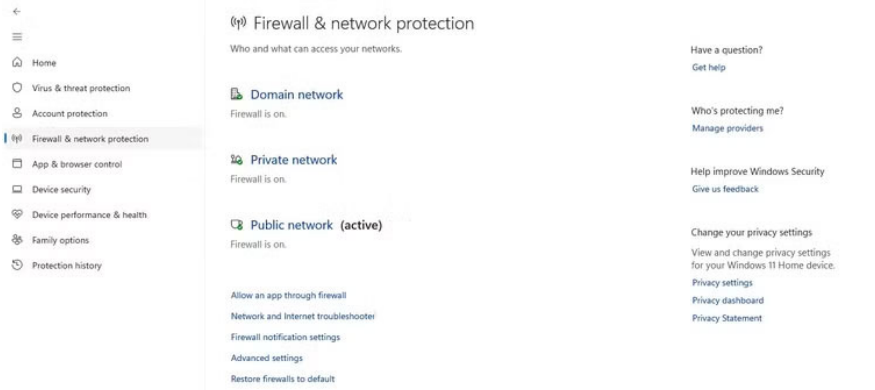
Credential Guard and Virtualization-Based Security (VBS) are two separate security features, but they are closely related. They are perfect for enterprise Active Directory setups , and both work to protect sensitive information even if a computer is compromised. While effective, they are resource-intensive and can cause significant spikes in CPU and memory usage.

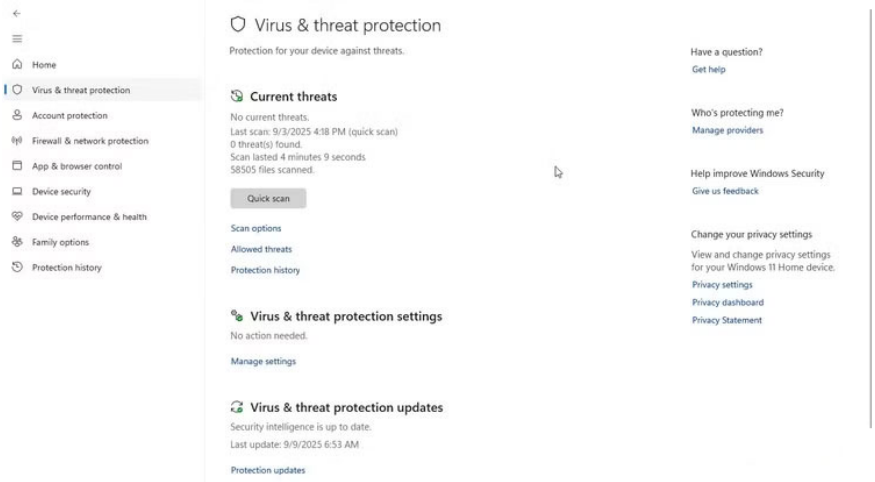
On newer builds of Windows 11, they are enabled by default. While they are effective in keeping your computer secure, there are still reasons to disable them. PC Gamer has reported that many games suffer from severe frame rate drops when VBS is enabled.

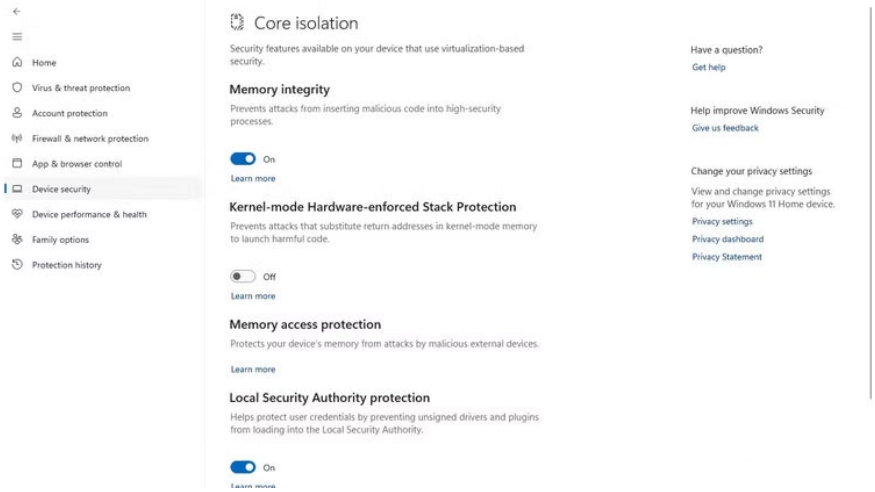
Windows Security Notifications

The Blurred Line Between Microsoft's Warning and Upsell




Home
Virus & threat protection
Account protection
Firewall & network protection
App & browser control
Device security
Device performance & health
Family options
Protection history
Firewall & network protection
Who and what can access your networks.
Domain network
Firewall is on.
Private network
Firewall is on.
Public network (active)
Firewall is on.
Allow an app through firewall
Network and Internet troubleshooter
Firewall notification settings
Advanced settings
Restore firewalls to default
Have a question?
Get help
Who's protecting me?
Manage providers
Help improve Windows Security
Give us feedback
Change your privacy settings
View and change privacy settings for your Windows 11 Home device.
Privacy settings
Privacy dashboard
Privacy Statement


Home
Virus & threat protection
Account protection
Firewall & network protection
App & browser control
Device security
Device performance & health
Family options
Protection history
Virus & threat protection
Protection for your device against threats.
Current threats
No current threats.
Last scan: 9/3/2025 4:18 PM (quick scan)
0 threat(s) found.
Scan lasted 4 minutes 9 seconds
58505 files scanned.
Quick scan
Scan options
Allowed threats
Protection history
Virus & threat protection settings
No action needed.
Manage settings
Virus & threat protection updates
Security intelligence is up to date.
Last update: 9/9/2025 6:53 AM
Protection updates
Have a question?
Get help
Who's protecting me?
Manage providers
Help improve Windows Security
Give us feedback
Change your privacy settings
View and change privacy settings for your Windows 11 Home device.
Privacy settings
Privacy dashboard
Privacy Statement


Home
Virus & threat protection
Account protection
Firewall & network protection
App & browser control
Device security
Device performance & health
Family options
Protection history
Core isolation
Security features available on your device that use virtualization-based security.
Memory integrity
Prevents attacks from inserting malicious code into high-security processes.
On
Learn more
Kernel-mode Hardware-enforced Stack Protection
Prevents attacks that substitute return addresses in kernel-mode memory to launch harmful code.
Off
Learn more
Memory access protection
Protects your device's memory from attacks by malicious external devices.
Learn more
Local Security Authority protection
Helps protect user credentials by preventing unsigned drivers and plugins from loading into the Local Security Authority.
On
Have a question?
Get help
Help improve Windows Security
Give us feedback
Change your privacy settings
View and change privacy settings for your Windows 11 Home device.
Privacy settings
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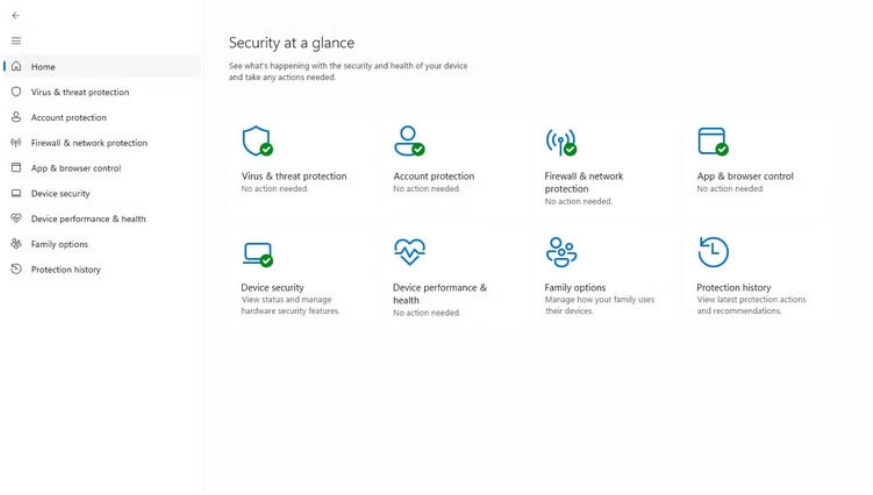
Privacy Statement



Notifications are essential on any device. They often convey important information that helps you stay alert and, in some cases, aware of threats. Microsoft Defender Antivirus provides some of the expected notifications. However, what was surprising was that not all of the notifications were security warnings.

Some notifications simply advertise a product. For example, the same notification area that shows malware has been blocked also displays 'Set up OneDrive.' This product promotion reduces the sense of urgency. You may also experience duplicate notifications.

So Defender notifications can overlap with system update reminders. This just overloads the Action Center and can lead users to disable all Defender notifications. Ultimately, this implementation error makes the computer less secure than it needs to be.