5 security misconceptions that put Windows at risk

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Windows has built-in computer security systems, but if you do not understand basic security issues and click on links and install malware, it will bring higher risks to your computer. Below are 5 security misconceptions you need to avoid to limit cases that affect your computer.

No need to update old Windows versions if you are careful

Reality : Continuing to use an unpatched operating system leaves your computer vulnerable to Zero-day attacks.

People often believe that older Windows is safe as long as they browse the web safely and avoid downloading suspicious files. However, computers stop receiving important security patches when support ends. This means new vulnerabilities will slip through, and computers can be at risk without even opening an infected attachment.

Attacks often target unpatched vulnerabilities, and they may not even require user interaction.

Only ".exe" files are dangerous

Reality : Malware hidden inside documents, scripts and compressed files

Malware can hide in exe files, but it would be a mistake and dangerous to assume that's the only way it can spread. Attacks these days can appear inside seemingly normal documents. These include Microsoft Office files, PDFs, and spreadsheets that have embedded scripts or macros that run malicious code as soon as you open them.

Compressed files can also be used to carry malware. And the hidden malware will be executed after unzipping. These types of malware can be disguised as files with double extensions e.g. invoice.pdf.exe.

To be safe, a good rule of thumb is to disable macros unless absolutely necessary. You should also display all file extensions, and finally, remember to be careful with compressed file attachments.

Using a standard user account is the same as using an Admin account.

Reality : Limiting privilege is the most powerful invisible defense

What you may not realize is that all programs running under an Admin account have elevated privileges. This means that malware running on an Admin account can have elevated privileges and be able to make deep changes to your system without your permission.

On the other hand, the scope of malware on user accounts is limited. It will mostly be limited to personal files without the ability to install permanent rootkits or overwrite important system components. This ensures that small infections do not turn into full-scale attacks.

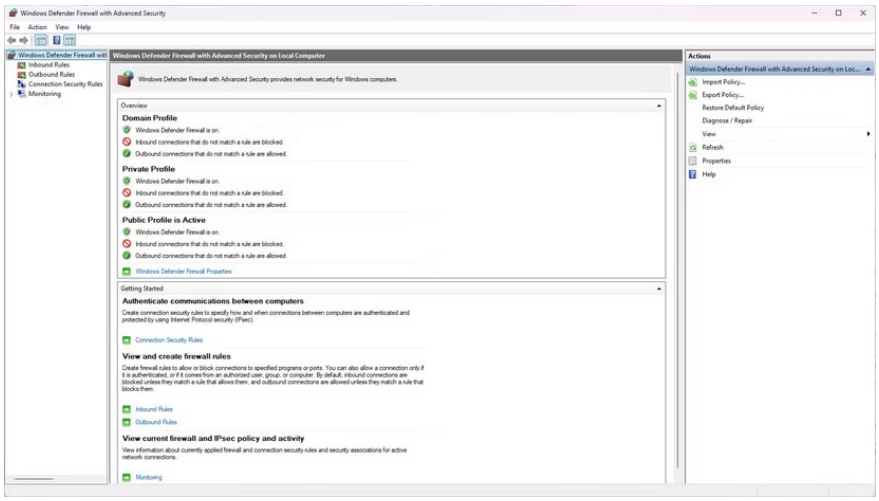
Windows User Account Control (UAC) is another often overlooked safeguard. If configured correctly, all system-level changes will require administrator credentials. This alone gives you the leeway and power to grant or deny access. Not only will you reduce your privileges by using a standard account, but you'll also be able to limit the damage.

Focus only on the router firewall, ignore the Windows firewall

Reality : Both are important

Routers have built-in firewalls that block unwanted connections before they reach your computer. However, they don't monitor what's on your network. Each computer takes action if a threat gets past the router.

This is where the Windows firewall on your computer comes in. By controlling incoming and outgoing traffic on your local machine, the Windows firewall can prevent malware from communicating with command and control servers outside your network, minimizing the spread to other devices. The Windows firewall also applies separate security profiles based on the origin of the connection, tightening the rules on public Wi-Fi networks. The Windows firewall and your router firewall complement each other, and disabling either one will leave a security gap.



Just use Windows Defender

Reality : It is advisable to combine multiple security methods.

Although Windows Defender Windows 11 has been upgraded quite a lot, if it is the only line of defense, the computer can still be attacked in many ways.

This tool focuses only on fighting suspicious behavior and known malware, but cannot replace sandboxing tools, browser-based phishing filters, or system-wide utility backups.

You should combine Windows' built-in defenses with good browsing habits, two-factor authentication (2FA) for key accounts,.

Security is often about more than just one app being able to do everything.