

Can a VPN Fight Malware?

Sure, a VPN can help you maintain your privacy and security online. But can it protect you from malicious programs? Can a VPN keep you safe from malware and viruses like antivirus vendors do?

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Can a VPN protect from malware?

Picture 1 of Can a VPN Fight Malware?

Can you prevent malware from infecting your device if you use a VPN? The short answer is no. VPNs are not designed to directly protect you from malware and viruses in the same way that anti-virus programs usually do. In other words, a VPN doesn't constantly scan and remove malware and won't notify you if it finds malicious programs. They do not provide parental controls, spam filters, identity theft protection, and other security features offered by antivirus programs.

So you should not use a VPN to avoid malware. This is what anti-virus software will take care of. However, a VPN can protect you against other types of cyberattacks.

Take the example of Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) attacks. This involves cybercriminals placing themselves between you and an app to steal valuable data. By encrypting your IP address and Internet traffic, it becomes extremely difficult for the bad guys to perform a Man-in-the-Middle attack. Even if an attacker could intercept your traffic, they would be completely undecrypted and thus unable to commit bad behavior.

Furthermore, a VPN can help you prevent distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks. During a DDoS attack, a malicious actor can take a serious toll, bringing down a server or network by flooding it with spoofed traffic. Something called a botnet is used in such attacks, which is essentially a network of malicious devices. So how does a VPN keep you safe from this type of attack?

This is related to your IP address. By hiding your IP address through a VPN, it will be harder for cybercriminals to find and target your network during a DDoS attack. This is not a guaranteed protection mechanism as an attack can still take place if the cybercriminal knows your IP address before activating the VPN.

Using a VPN also makes it nearly impossible for cybercriminals to discover your real IP address, which can be used to impersonate your online presence or geo-locate, even even your postal code.

VPN is useful, but not an all-around security solution

Picture 2 of Can a VPN Fight Malware?

Without a doubt, you should use a VPN when browsing the web. This technology not only hides your Internet and IP traffic from third parties, but also reduces your chances of falling victim to some cybercrime tactics. But antivirus software is also important in protecting you and your data. Many antivirus programs now offer built-in VPNs, so you can get the most out of both tools without paying for two separate services.

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