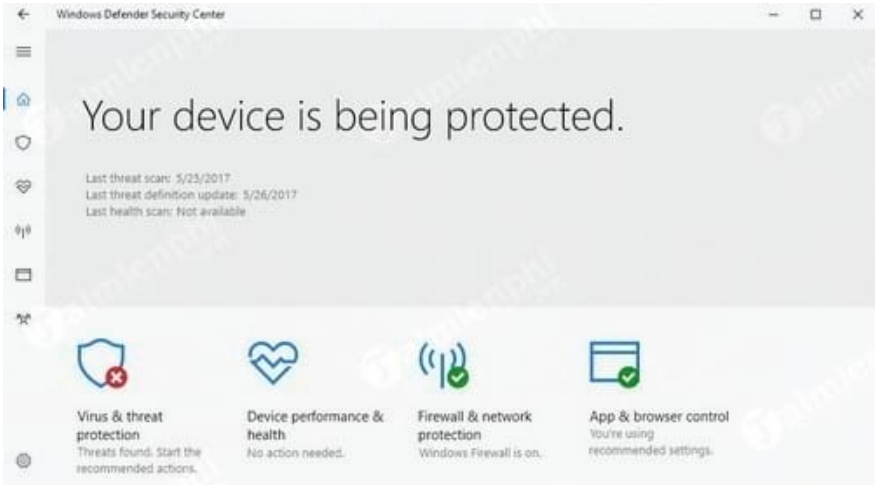
How to set up Windows Defender to increase defense capabilities

Windows Defender Antivirus is the default security solution integrated on all versions of the Windows 10 operating system. Basically, Windows Defender Antivirus helps protect users' computers from malware including trojans and viruses, rootkits, spyware and many other forms of attacks on Windows computers. Below TipsMake will guide you how to set up Windows Defender to increase defense capabilities.

Compared to third-party antivirus software, **Windows Defender Antivirus** only provides basic computer protection options, but the overall level of protection of Windows Defender Antivirus has improved. compared to other anti-virus software.

On the Windows 10 Creators Update, Microsoft introduced a new feature called **Windows Defender Security Center** . It can be said that Windows Defender Security Center is the 'hub' of the center of security-related settings.



Along with **Windows Defender Security Center** , the blocking level of Windows Defender Antivirus is also 'raised' to a new level to enhance protection against threats.

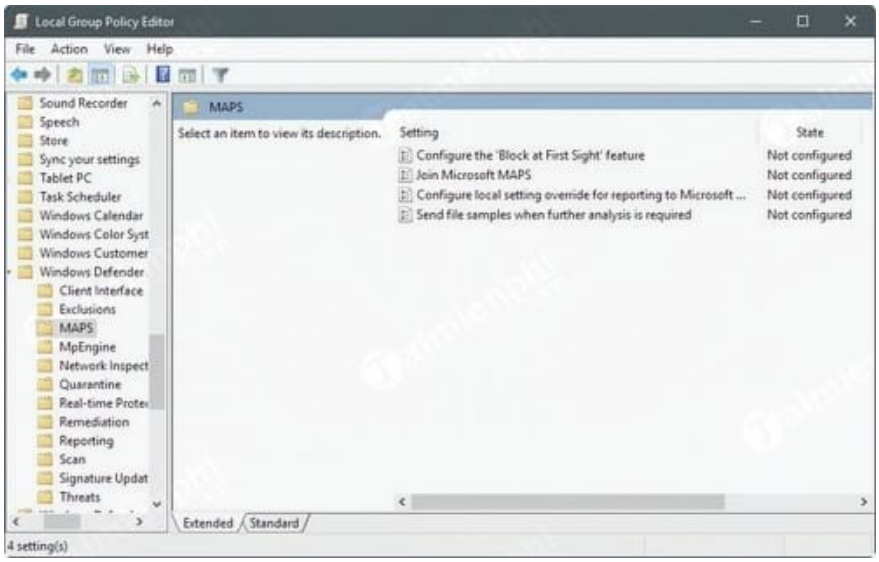
Note: The steps below to set up Windows Defender in Windows 10 and 8 to increase defense capabilities activate the cloud protection level of Windows Defender Antivirus. This feature is only available on **Windows 10 version 1703** (and higher versions) and managed through various interfaces including **Group Policy** , **Registry Editor** , **System Center Configuration Manager** or **Microsoft Intune** .

The main benefit of enabling cloud protection is to detect and block new malware, even without a signature.

The key difference with **Microsoft Advanced Protection Service** , the previous version of the cloud protection service available for Windows 10 version 1607 and Windows 8.1, is that you can configure the cloud blocking timeout and on the first version This feature was also initially supported (in 1607 but not on Windows 8.1).

Set up Windows Defender to increase defense capabilities

Use Group Policy to enable cloud protection for Windows Defender



If you are using Windows 10 (or Creators Update or higher versions) Pro or Enterprise, follow the steps below to enable protection:

Step 1: Enter **gpedit.msc into the Search box on the Start Menu and press Enter to open the Local Group Policy Editor** window .

Step 2: On the Local Group Policy Editor window, in the left pane, navigate to the key:

Computer Configuration => Administrative Templates => Windows Components => Windows Defender Antivirus => MAPS

Step 3: Find and double-click **Join Microsoft MAPS** .

Step 4: Set the value from **Not Configured** to **Enabled** .

Step 5: In the Join Microsoft MAPS section, select **Advanced MAPS** .

Basic membership is no longer an option, as Microsoft 'deprecates' this option on Windows 10. If you choose basic membership, you will be automatically signed up for Advanced membership instead.

Basic membership sends basic information to Microsoft about the detected software, including the software's location, the actions you applied or were applied automatically, and whether the action was successful.

Advanced membership , in addition to basic information, will send additional information to Microsoft about malware, spyware and unwanted software, including the location of the software, file names, how to how the software works and how it affects your computer.

Note that both will send data to Microsoft.

The MAPS folder includes 3 additional policies you may want to configure:

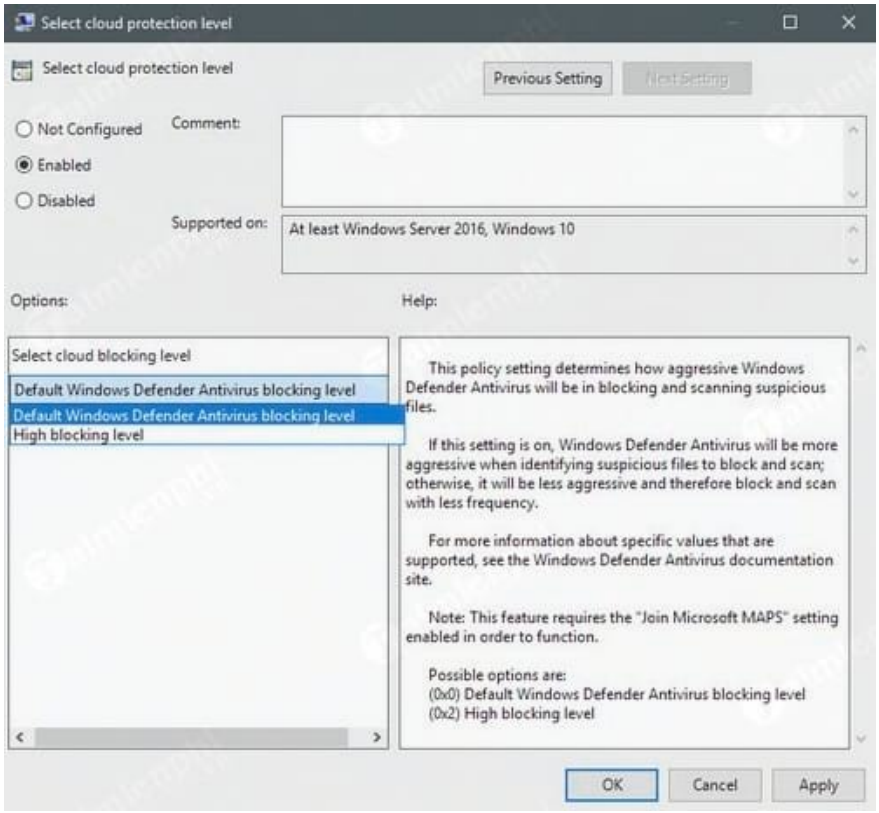
- **Configure the "Block at First Sight" feature** : can enable or disable the Block at First Sight policy. If this policy is enabled, checks are performed in real time with Microsoft Active Protection Service before content is allowed to run or be accessed on the device.

- **Configure local setting override for reporting to Microsoft** : allows users to configure local overrides. If this policy is enabled, Local preference settings take priority over Group Policy.

- **Send file samples when further analysis is required** : determines whether and when sample files are transferred to Microsoft. You can set it to always prompt, send safe samples automatically, never send or send all samples automatically.

Note that, if you enable the policy Configure the "Block at First Sight" feature, you must select one of the two automatic sending options.

Change Windows Defender cloud protection level



Now that you have engaged MAPS on your device, you can set up a higher level of protection.

Step 1: On the Local Group Policy Editor window, navigate to the key:

Computer Configuration => Administrative Templates => Windows Components => Windows Defender Antivirus => MpEngine

Step 2: Find and double-click Select cloud protection level.

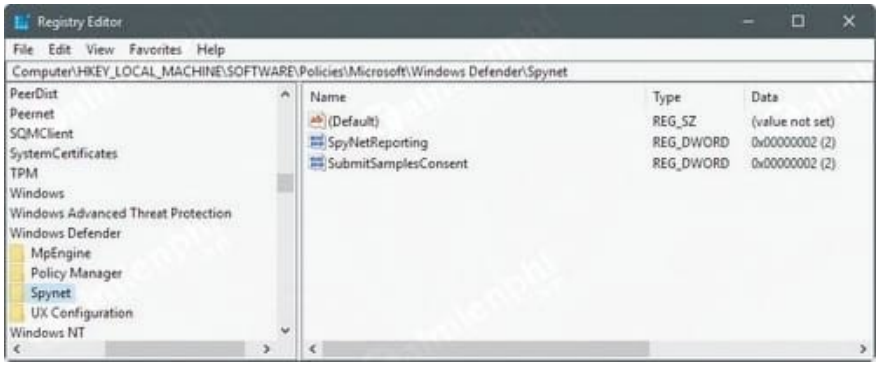
Step 3: Set the value to Enabled and in the Select cloud blocking level section, select the High blocking level option.

Microsoft talks about the difference between two levels of blocking:

- Default Windows Defender Antivirus blocking level setting provides strong detection without increasing the risk of detecting legitimate files.

- Setting High blocking level will apply a strong level of detection. Although it is unlikely, some legitimate files may be detected (although you will have the option to unblock or dispute such detection).

Use Registry Editor to enable cloud protection for Windows Defender



On Windows 10 Home devices, Group Policy Editor is not supported. However, users can use Windows Registry Editor to make the necessary changes.

Step 1: On the Search Start Menu frame, enter **regedit.exe** there and press **Enter** .

Step 2: If the **UAC** window appears on the screen , click **Yes to open the Windows Registry Editor** window .

Step 3: On the Windows Registry Editor window, in the left pane, navigate to the key:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINESoftwarePoliciesMicrosoftWindows Defender

Step 4: Find and right-click **Windows Defender** , select **New** => **Key** .

Step 5: Name this new key **Spynet** .

Step 6: Right-click Spynet, select **New** => **DWORD (32-bit) Value** .

Step 7: Name this value **SpynetReporting** .

Step 8: Double click on **SpynetReporting** , and set the value in the **Value Data** box to **2** .

Step 9: Return to the **HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINESoftwarePoliciesMicrosoftWindows Defender** path .

Step 10: Right-click **Windows Defender** , select **New** => **Key** .

Step 11: Name this key **MpEngine** .

Step 12: Right-click on the newly created MpEngine key, select **New** > **DWORD (32-bit) Value** .

Step 13: Name this value **MpCloudBlockLevel** .

Step 14: Double click on MpCloudBlockLevel and set the value in the **Value data** frame to **2** .

Doing this will help you set up Windows Defender to make your computer's defense more secure with detailed reports and higher security.

In addition, many times users turn off Windows Defender using the Registry on Windows 10. This method takes a bit of time but ensures that Windows Defender is completely turned off. You can refer to how to **turn off Windows Defender using the Registry** here on Windows 10. .

Opt out of MAPS

You can opt out of MAPS by deleting Registry keys or setting policies in **the Group Policy Editor** to **Disabled** or **Not configured** .

Conclude

Setting up Windows Defender to increase your defenses is a good idea. However, some users may not want to use this option, possibly because: first, it allows sending more data to Microsoft (including sample files if configured this way). , and second, because it can increase the number of false positives (error positive rate).

To use Windows Defender faster, you can add Windows Defender to the right-click Menu like many other applications. For details, please refer to the article **adding Windows Defender to the right-click Menu** here.