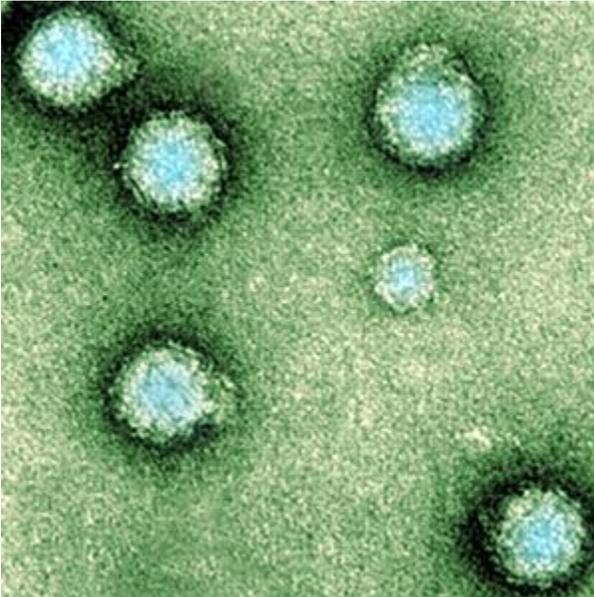


What To Do If Your Computer Gets Infected By A Virus

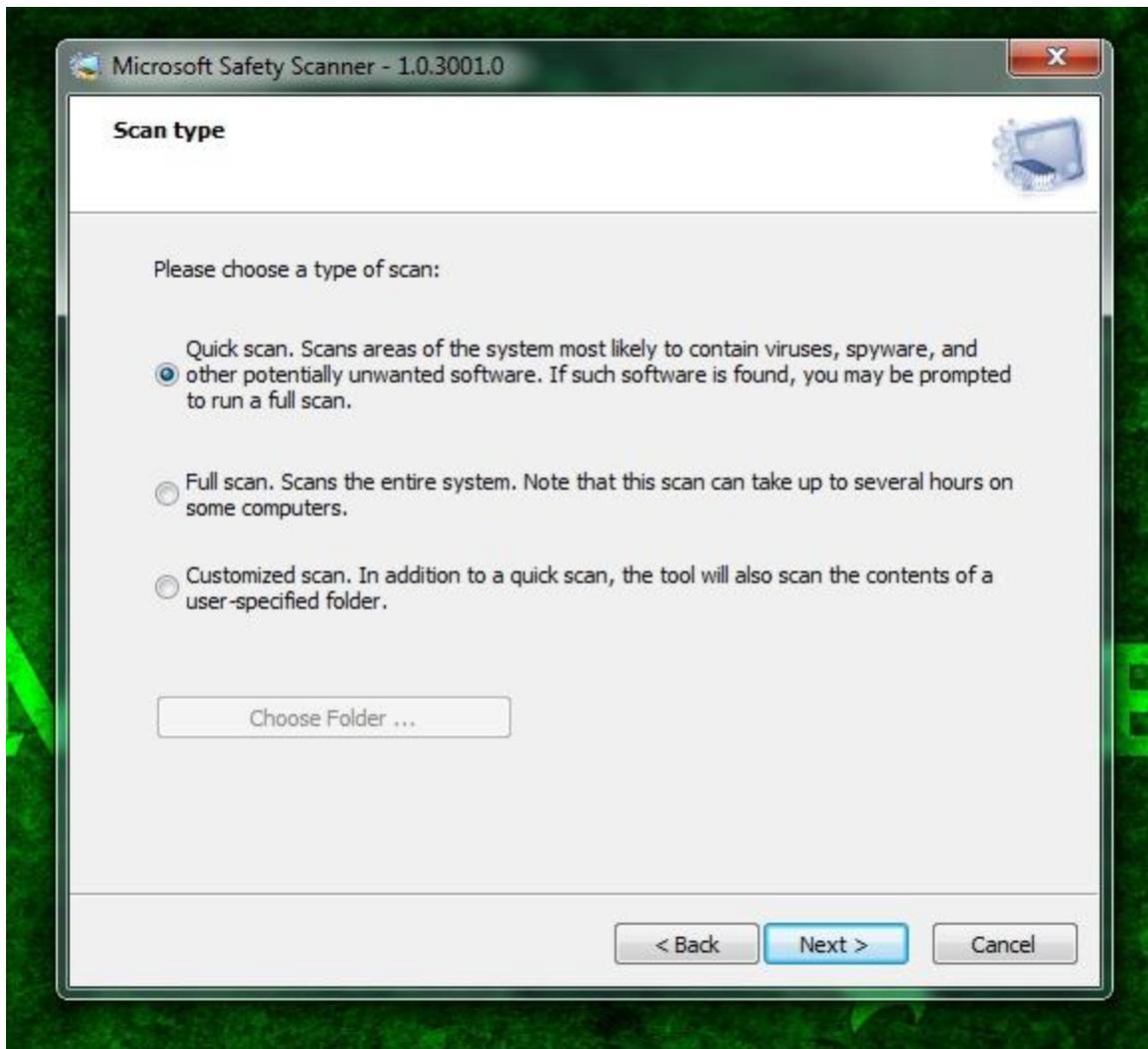


Not too long ago, I outlined a couple of steps in this article on how to protect yourself from a virus should you decide not to run any antivirus software on your system.

However, let's say that you did follow all those steps like a good person and you still ended up getting infected, as you probably noticed once an antivirus tool you never installed suddenly tells you your computer is about to self-destruct. Well, that's just great. So how do you remove such a virus from your computer?

There's hope and solutions on offer. So, read on.

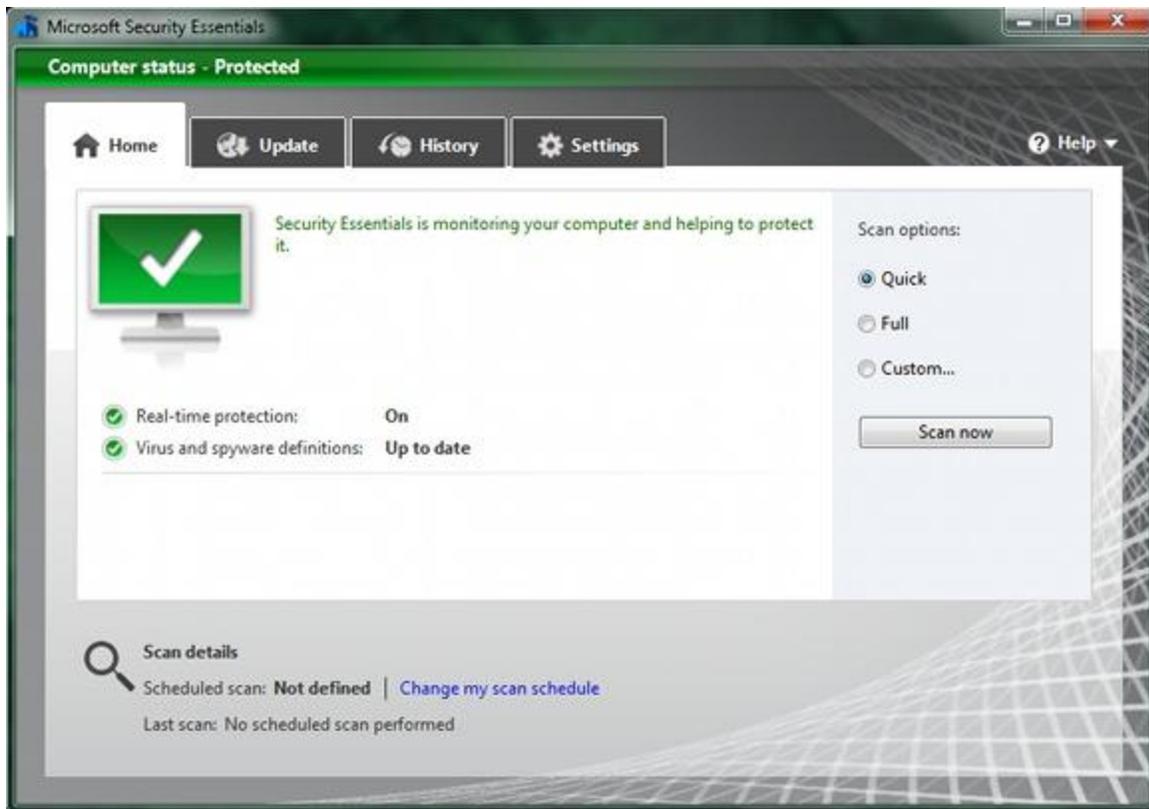
Use Microsoft Safety Scanner



Microsoft offers a tool that can remove certain kinds of malicious software. That tool used to be the Windows Malicious Software Removal Tool, but recently Microsoft is offering the Microsoft Safety Scanner. This scanner is supposed to check your computer for any viruses, spyware, and other bad stuff and remove it.

There are plenty of other similar online scanners, but some may lead you to actually downloading more malware on your system rather than removing it. By using Microsoft's tool, you can be sure that it genuinely wants to remove any malware from your system.

Install Antivirus Software



Although you probably should've had it installed before to make use of its real-time protection, it might be helpful to install an antivirus tool *now* to help remove the malware that is currently wreaking havoc on your system. An antivirus tool can also scan for any other files that have dormant viruses in them, waiting for you to activate them. There are plenty of free ones that are very effective, such as AVG, Microsoft Security Essentials, and Avast, just to name a few. These tools will hopefully be able to remove that pesky virus before it does too much harm.

Search the Internet For Possible Solutions

While it's not recommended to use the internet when you know you're infected with a virus (as the virus could potentially start sending out any information it's finding on your system), you can use a clean system to go online and search for the virus that you may have (based on the symptoms your computer is experiencing) and how you can possibly remove it. With some luck, you might find a solution that has been tested and proven to work.

Reinstall Windows

Last but not least, if all else fails, reinstall Windows or move to any other operating system such as Linux. If the virus is really that pesky, it's best to just help Windows destroy itself so that you can rebuild on the ashes. Before you begin with your reinstallation, don't forget to backup your data. *Please*, scan all the files that you're backing up so that you don't accidentally save the virus you're trying to get rid of and then reinfect yourself later. It's a long and hard process and is therefore the ultimate last resort, but at least this method works every time.

Don't Buy A New Computer!

I've come across enough people who think that if their computer gets infected with a virus, the world is going to end and they'll need to dump the infected computer and buy a brand new one. This is absolutely *not true*, as the hardware is still perfectly in tact. Reinstalling Windows is like resetting the system, and gets rid of the virus in the process. There's no need to go out and spend \$400+ for a decent new computer just because you got infected with a virus.

Conclusion

Getting rid of a virus is sometimes easy and sometimes very tricky. Your level of success will vary depending on the bug you managed to catch. However, there is always one way or another to get rid of a virus. We just hope that it doesn't have to be very destructive to your own data. Just remember, when it comes to viruses and protection, it's better to be safe than sorry.