

Microsoft 365 Defender Overview

Microsoft 365 Defender is an extended detection and response (XDR) solution that protects across:

- **Endpoints** (Defender for Endpoint)
 - **Office 365** (Defender for Office 365)
 - **Identities** (Defender for Identity, Entra ID Protection)
 - **Cloud Apps** (Defender for Cloud Apps)
 - **Data** (Purview DLP and Insider Risk)
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Defender Product Suite

- **Defender for Office 365** – Email, links, attachments, phishing
 - **Defender for Endpoint** – Threat & vulnerability management, EDR, ASR
 - **Defender for Cloud Apps** – CASB for Shadow IT, anomaly detection
 - **Defender for Identity** – On-prem AD threat detection
 - **Defender Vulnerability Management** – Exposure insights
 - **Microsoft 365 Defender** – Centralized XDR portal
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Data Loss Prevention (DLP)

DLP in Microsoft Purview helps protect sensitive data across services.

Components:

- **Sensitivity Labels** – Classify documents/emails
 - **Sensitive Info Types** – Detect PII, financial, health info via patterns, keywords, checksums
 - **Policy Locations** – SharePoint, Exchange, OneDrive, Teams
 - **File Policies** – Used in Defender for Cloud Apps (MCAS) for alerting and remediation
 - **Purview Console** – Investigate DLP incidents
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Defender for Office 365

Protects against email-based threats.

Key Features:

- **Safe Attachments** – Scans attachments (Block, Replace, Monitor, Dynamic Delivery)

- **Safe Links** – URL protection across:
 - Microsoft 365 apps
 - Office for the web
 - Teams
 - **Anti-phishing policies**
 - **Attack simulations**
 - **Remediation via Action Center**
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Defender for Endpoint (MDE)

Provides endpoint protection and EDR capabilities.

Capabilities:

- Threat and vulnerability management
- Attack surface reduction (ASR)
- Endpoint detection and response
- Automated investigation & remediation
- Data retention default: 6 months

Setup Highlights:

- Portal: security.microsoft.com
- Device Discovery via portal
- RBAC and Device Group configuration

Security Controls:

- Exploit protection
- Network & Web protection
- Controlled folder access
- Device control

Response Actions:

- Isolate device
 - Restrict app execution
 - Collect investigation package
 - Live Response
 - Threat expert consultation
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Defender for Identity

Monitors on-premises Active Directory activity to detect advanced threats.

Steps to Configure:

1. Create instance in Defender for Identity portal
2. Install sensors on domain controllers
3. Configure AD service accounts and permissions (SAM-R)
4. Integrate with M365 Defender and Defender for Cloud Apps

Detections:

- Lateral movement
- Pass-the-ticket
- Domain dominance
- Malicious insider behavior

Defender for Cloud

CSPM for Azure resources and workloads.

Supported Resources:

- Servers, Containers, App Services, Storage, SQL, Key Vaults, DNS, etc.

Capabilities:

- Continuous security assessments
- Security recommendations
- Integration with Azure Resource Graph for asset inventory

Defender for Cloud Apps (MCAS)

Microsoft's CASB solution.

Core Functions:

- Discover Shadow IT
- Data classification & protection
- Anomaly & threat detection
- Cloud app compliance scoring

Policy Types:

- File policies
- Session policies (real-time)
- Anomaly detection (e.g., impossible travel, infrequent country)

Data Classifications:

- Personal, Public, General, Confidential, Highly Confidential
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Azure AD Identity Protection

Protects identities via risk-based policies.

Risk Categories:

- **User risk** – Leaked credentials, unusual behavior
- **Sign-in risk** – Impossible travel, malware-linked IPs, anonymous IPs

Response Types:

- **Self-remediation** – User password reset
- **Admin remediation** – Manual investigation

Policy Types:

- **User risk policy**
 - **Sign-in risk policy**
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Microsoft Purview (Insider Risk)

Manages internal risks and compliance.

Focus Areas:

- Data theft
- Espionage
- Insider trading
- Code-of-conduct violations

Workflow:

Policies → Alerts → Triage → Investigate → Take Action

Audit Logging**Standard Audit (Default)**

- 90-day retention
- Thousands of events captured

Advanced Audit (E5)

- Longer retention

- High-value events (email read/forward, file access)
- Higher API bandwidth

Setup:

- Enable in Microsoft 365 Admin Center
 - Assign proper roles
 - Verify licensing
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eDiscovery

Standard eDiscovery:

- Content search
- Export results
- Role-based access

Premium eDiscovery:

- Custodian management
 - Advanced indexing
 - Review sets, tagging, analytics
 - Legal hold
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Microsoft Sentinel (SIEM/SOAR)

Central SIEM for ingesting, analyzing, and responding to incidents.

Setup Components:

- Azure tenant, subscription, resource group, workspace
- Enable Sentinel

Core Features:

- **Analytics Rules** – Incident detection
 - **Automation Rules** – Conditional, prioritized playbook triggers
 - **Playbooks** – Logic Apps for SOAR automation
 - **Workbooks** – Custom dashboards
 - **Watchlists** – Whitelist users/IPs
 - **Hunting Queries** – Proactive investigation using KQL
 - **Content Hub** – Import analytics rules, playbooks, connectors
 - **Sentinel Repos** – CI/CD integration for MSSPs
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ASIM & Data Normalization

ASIM (Advanced Security Information Model):

Standardizes log data from different sources to a common schema.

Normalization Example:

Match different field names like IP_Address and IPAddress for consistent analysis.

KQL (Kusto Query Language) Essentials

Used extensively in Sentinel for analysis and threat hunting.

Key Operators:

- where, let, join, extend, project, summarize, render
- mv-expand (expand arrays), todynamic() (parse JSON), split()

Common Queries:

```
kql
CopyEdit
SigninLogs
| extend dynProps = todynamic(extendedProperties)
| mv-expand dynProps
| extend IPAddress = dynProps.IPAddress
| project tostring(IPAddress)
```

Learn More:

[Join types in KQL \(Docs\)](#)

[Visual Video Guide](#)