Task 7: Identify and Remove Suspicious Browser Extensions

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1. **Open your browser's extension/add-ons manager.**

To open the extension/add-ons manager, go to your browser's settings or menu. For example:

- **Chrome**: Click the three-dot menu > Extensions > Manage Extensions.

- **Firefox**: Click the menu > Add-ons and Themes.

- **Edge**: Click the three-dot menu > Extensions.

- **Safari**: Go to Preferences > Extensions.

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2. **Review all installed extensions carefully.**

Examine each extension listed in the manager. Note:

- The name, developer, and purpose Ascertain whether the extension is still actively supported or updated.

- Check when each extension was installed and whether it's from a trusted source (e.g., official browser stores like Chrome Web Store or Mozilla Add-ons).

- Verify if the extension is actively used for work-related tasks or personal browsing.

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3. **Check permissions and reviews for each extension.**

For each extension:

- **Permissions**: In the extension manager, click "Details" (Chrome) or similar to view permissions. Look for excessive permissions, like "access to all data on websites" or "read/modify browsing history," which may indicate overreach.

- **Reviews**: Visit the extension's page on the official store (e.g., Chrome Web Store). Check user reviews for red flags like reports of data collection, performance issues, or suspicious behavior. Low ratings or few reviews may indicate risk.

This helps identify extensions that might misuse data or pose security risks.

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4. **Identify any unused or suspicious extensions.**

Flag extensions that:

- You don’t recognize or no longer use.

- Request broad or unnecessary permissions (e.g., access to all tabs or personal data for a simple function).

- Lack clear documentation, have poor reviews, or come from unknown developers.

- Show unusual browser behavior (e.g., pop-ups, redirects, or slowdowns).

Suspicious extensions may be malicious, potentially stealing data or injecting ads.

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5. **Remove suspicious or unnecessary extensions.**

In the extension manager:

- Click “Remove” or toggle off the extension to disable it.

- For critical extensions, verify with the IT department before removal to ensure they’re not required for work.

- Confirm removal by checking the extension no longer appears in the manager.

This reduces the attack surface by eliminating potential threats.

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6. **Restart browser and check for performance improvements.**

- Close and reopen the browser after removing extensions.

- Monitor for faster load times, reduced memory usage, or fewer crashes.

- Check if unwanted behaviors (e.g., redirects, pop-ups) stop.

Improved performance may indicate removed extensions were resource-heavy or malicious.

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7. **Research how malicious extensions can harm users.**

Malicious extensions can:

- **Steal Data**: Log keystrokes, capture login credentials, or scrape sensitive data from forms.

- **Inject Ads/Malware**: Display unwanted ads, redirect searches, or install additional malware.

- **Track Activity**: Monitor browsing habits and sell data to third parties.

- **Compromise Accounts**: Access cookies or session tokens to hijack accounts.

- **Performance Issues**: Slow down browsers or devices by running unauthorized scripts.

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8. **Document steps taken and extensions removed.**

Create a record including:

- Date and time of the review.

- List of all extensions reviewed, with their names, developers, and permissions.

- Extensions removed, with reasons (e.g., “unused,” “suspicious permissions”).

- Any performance changes observed post-removal.

- document format:

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Date: 06/05/2025

Extensions Reviewed:

- Grammarly (Grammarly Inc.): Permissions: Read/write on all sites. Status: Kept (work-related).

- Quick Search Enhancer (Unknown Developer): Permissions: All site data. Status: Removed (suspicious, unauthorized install).

Performance: Browser load time reduced by ~0.8 seconds; no further redirects observed.

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Outcome: Awareness of browser security risks and managing browser extensions.

By following these steps

- Reduce the risk of data breaches or malware from malicious extensions.

- Enhance browser performance and user experience.

- Foster a security-conscious culture by documenting and reporting findings.

- Align with cybersecurity best practices, protecting both personal and organizational data.