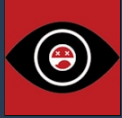




Garry's Mod

Guides

Garry's Mod > Guides > Soarin's Guides



How to Block Facepunch's Spying Analytics (April 2019)

By Soarin'

The guide to blocking Facepunch's Spying

Rate



★ Favorite

Share



The Ugly of the EULA

The EULA is something most people never read, and to be fair I don't blame most people since most of the things inside of it don't concern us and are far too long. But when a game like Garry's Mod randomly gives us a popup for a EULA out of nowhere, I felt like I should scroll through and see what FacePunch are trying to get us to agree to.

Here's some of the things that I don't like what-so-ever and I don't think you will either, this is the basis of this guide.

A. Technical Details. When you use, play or access the Facepunch Services we or third parties on our behalf may collect technical details about the device you are using, including: internet and/or network connection (including IP address); MAC address, any console device identifier; device events; your operating system, browser type/language or other software; and your hardware or other technical details.

B. Your Activities. When you use, play or access the Facepunch Services **we or third parties on our behalf may collect details of how you use our services**, including: metrics information about when and how you use the services; date and time of request and referral URL; traffic data; language preferences; in-game purchases; achievements; scores; gameplay statistics; time spent playing; and your geographical location data.

SUMMARY. We will use your information to run, maintain and improve the Facepunch Services as well as to communicate with you (e.g. with newsletters or emails). **Sometimes we may share information with partners in order to run our services.**

C. Comply with our legal obligations: where we are required to do so by law; and comply with intellectual property protection obligations we have under applicable laws including the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and the E-Commerce Directive.

We may engage third party service providers in the course of providing the Facepunch Services to you (e.g. data storage, server hosting, customer and technical support, game analytics etc) which may require them to access your information on our behalf.

Summary: You 'consent' to Facepunch logging your MAC address, IP, device identifiers, what happens on your PC, 'other software'?, they collect 'traffic data' which who knows exactly what that means, they will share your information with other companies, and they will 'comply with intellectual property protection obligations'.

Which may not be a problem to most, but the principal of all this data being collected and distributed on you is unsettling.

There's some more in the EULA such as removing access to Garry's Mod from you Steam account if you "say anything unlawful, racist, harassing, threatening, abusive, hateful, xenophobic, sexist, discriminatory, abusive, defamatory, obscene, invasive of the privacy of another person or otherwise offensive." but this guide won't be about that. Let's get onto fighting this now.

The 'Read Only' Analytics.dll Method

The Analytics.dll is the heart of this, users on Reddit including the owner of GMCHosting have said simply deleting or turning this DLL into a read-only file will stop the spying. My only problem with this is if you reinstall your GMod or Garry's Mod updates this to a new file name or litters the game with these types of files then it can be hard to track.

I'll show you how to get around that in the next chapter but this method is simple enough:

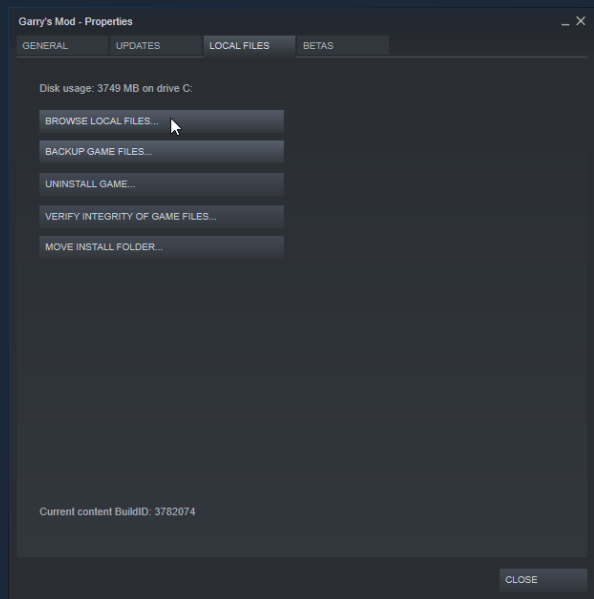
Step 1

Go to your Steam Library, right click Garry's Mod and click Properties



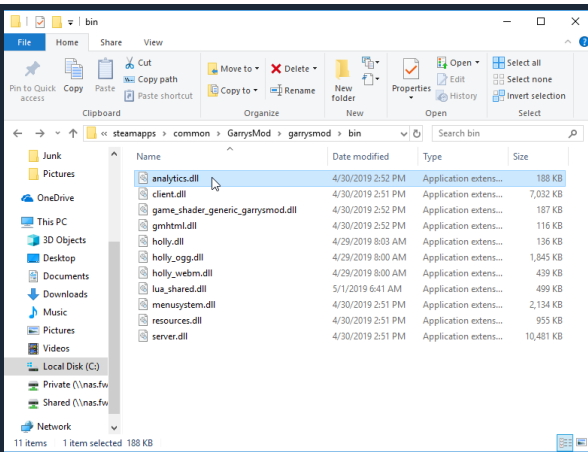
Step 2

Go to "Local Files" and select "Browse Local Files" and you'll be greeted with the root directory of your GMod folder.



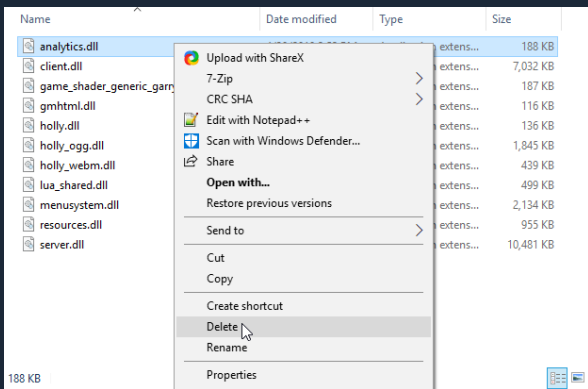
Step 3

Enter the garrysmod folder then enter the bin folder, NOT the bin folder in the root directory. The directory will resemble this: `!Steam!steamapps\common!GarrysMod!garrysmod!bin`



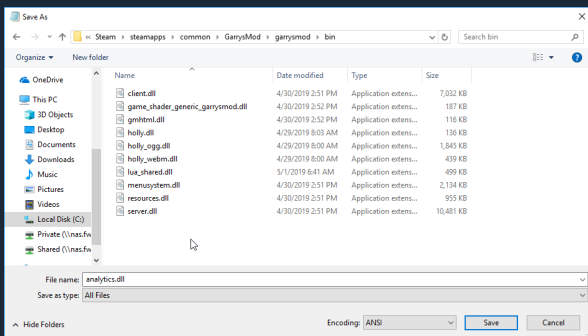
Step 4

Now you'll see our little trouble maker, I want you to take out your frustrations on it and delete it completely. If you need to take it out the recycle bin and delete it again for satisfaction I don't blame you, but make sure it isn't in that folder anymore.



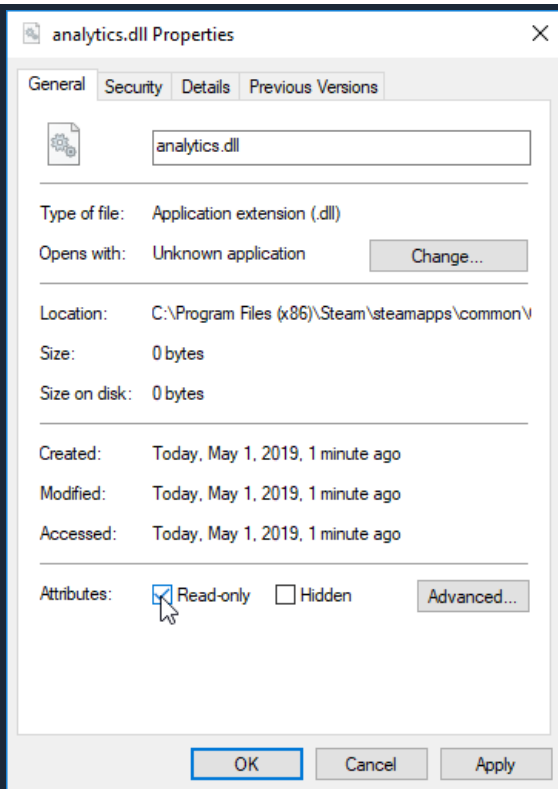
Step 5

Now open up Notepad and leave it empty, go to "Save As" and go to the directory of your Garry's Mod bin folder where you found that analytics.dll file and make sure your settings look exactly the same as this



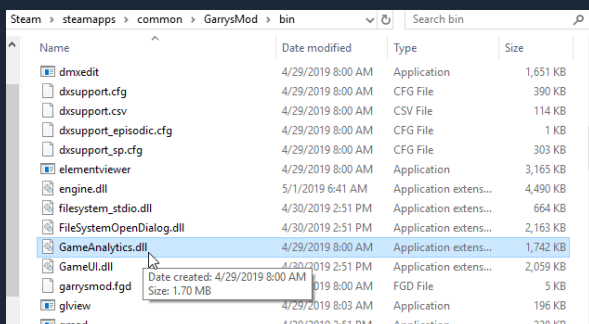
Step 6

You're almost done, go to that new analytics.dll file you just created and you'll see the size of it is 0KB. Right click that file and click "Properties" and you'll see the "Read-Only" option, make sure to check that and apply then you're done!



Do This SAME Process For GameAnalytics.dll, however save the empty Notepad as GameAnalytics.dll!

The file directory & name is: \steamapps\common\GarrysMod\bin\GameAnalytics.dll



How does this work?

To my understanding it works this way: When you delete the analytics.dll file and recreate it, it'll still be executed but there will be nothing in it to be executed by the game so it does nothing. The reason you make it read-only is so it can't be overwritten whenever a GMod update comes out or you reinstall Garry's Mod, which is the flaw with just simply deleting it because it will come back.

With this method you'll (to the community's understanding at this point in time) be ready to go and not be spied on by Facepunch!

Blocking via Hosts Method

This method is a wee bit more advanced but I'll try to make it as easy as I can for you with a few commands in your CMD instead of traversing the Windows Firewall.

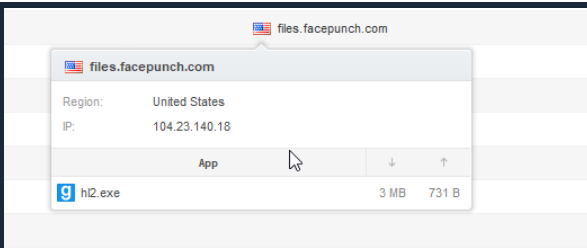
This method will have the same result as the empty read-only analytics.dll but if GMod updates to hide some more files throughout Garry's Mod then this method will still be fine (unless if they add more IPs). I'll keep updating the guide as the community finds out about more hosts but right now I think I've got all of them.

UPDATE: Willox has come here and confirmed that Garry's Mod does not use Redshell, I will still include how to block it in this guide as the concept of being tracked is universal and people do not like it. This will block Redshell for other games too.

Block **files.facepunch.com** at your own discretion, Garry's Mod tries to connect to this each time it launches so that's why I included the block. Everything in the game is still functional for me even with them blocked.

If you visit **Facepunch.com** then I suggest to not block **files.facepunch.com**, I will be looking into this now and I will update the guide if that block is unnecessary all together.

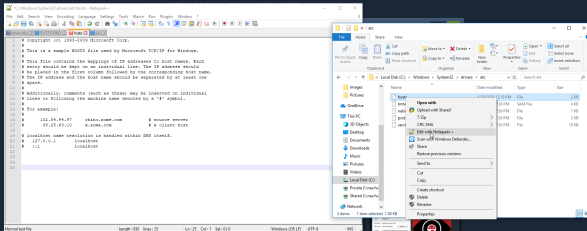
Edit: I'm still not sure why the game connects to that domain, clarification would be welcomed but until then it's up to the user.



I have updated the hosts file lines to include direct blocks to gameanalytics thanks to Willox!

Step 1

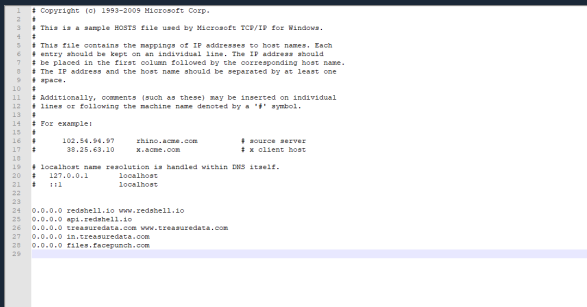
Go to this directory in your Windows: C:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc and open up your hosts file with your text editor of choice



Step 2

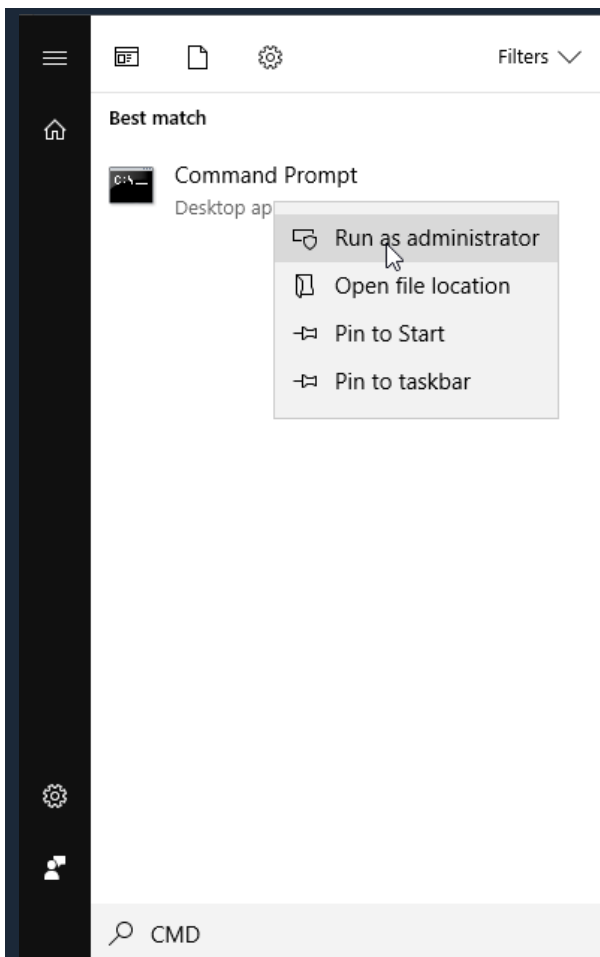
Go to the bottom of the hosts file and add these lines separately as shown in the picture:

```
0.0.0.0 redshell.io www.redshell.io
0.0.0.0 api.redshell.io
0.0.0.0 treasuredata.com www.treasuredata.com
0.0.0.0 in.treasuredata.com
0.0.0.0 files.facepunch.com
0.0.0.0 gameanalytics.com
0.0.0.0 api.gameanalytics.com
0.0.0.0 rubick.gameanalytics.com
```



Step 3

When you're done with Step 2 don't forget to just save (not save as), next we'll move onto the CMD commands to paste in in order to block the IP addresses. Press your Windows key and type in "CMD" and right click your Command Prompt and Run as Administrator



You can ping any of those sites we blocked in your hosts to verify they can't connect, if they can't and it looks similar to this then you've done everything correct!

Test it by typing ping **api.gameanalytics.com**

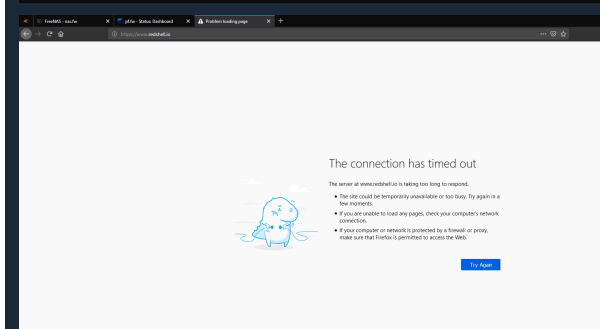
Or any of the above listed hosts

You can also try to visit one of the websites you put inside your hosts file such as redshell.io and it should look like this:

```
C:\>ping api.gameanalytics.com

Pinging live-collect-blue-1b-184443518.us-east-1.elb.amazonaws.com [52.5.158.150] with 32 bytes of data:
Request timed out.
Request timed out.
Request timed out.
Request timed out.

Ping statistics for 52.5.158.150:
    Packets: Sent = 4, Received = 0, Lost = 4 (100% loss),
```



Summary

Disclaimer

These are IPs found by the community and by me, block these at your own discretion. They seem to be working quite well for me as I monitor the traffic going in and out of my Garry's Mod and I can verify that the ONLY IPs my Gmod has going through it is the servers I'm connected to. Whenever I launch the game I can see the amount of blocked traffic detected rise every time as seen by the picture (13KB of blocked traffic after only a couple hours, 500B~ blocked every time I launch the game)

I am unsure of all to what **files.facepunch.com** is for, I've blocked it and I have not lost any important functionality. Some users reported their updates box at the top right of their start screen doesn't function anymore. I'll keep the block up there however if this is important to you then you can unblock it. I suggest you to unblock it too if you frequently browse Facepunch forums.

Misc

0 / 13 KiB IPv4 192.168.1.29 * GarrySpying TCP/UDP

I'm not sure if Facepunch is collecting as much data as their EULA claims,

Garry himself said it doesn't but at the same time why would it be in the EULA? They give themselves legal rights to do it by doing so, and if they're not distributing data (even though they say they do in the EULA) their partners are such as GameAnalytics could be. I hope this doesn't become a trend and I hope these things don't start getting enforced such as the censorship.

I hope this guide helped you, I will be fixing the guide up and adding/removing things as more information comes out from the community. If this guide disappears then it's likely it was taken down by Facepunch and I will have Garry's Mod restricted from me but at least it helped some people

Thank you to TheWizard and FrankGlass123 for finding most of the IPs/Hostnames listed on this guide!

Also thank you Goran_Rayman for helping finding an issue in the article regarding the hosts file!

179 Comments



R00K 49 minutes ago

Is it ironic that when I tried to show people this guide on the discussion forums it got flagged down as spam? And I got a warning for it, yet these guys get to make as many posts as they'd like about the situation. I don't see them getting flagged as spam, yet.



Lucidies 1 hour ago

is this what causes me to have the icons and models turn black randomly? it never happend intill recently



pawelrexsisty 5 hours ago

b



Catazeus_ 14 hours ago

I can't find analytics.dll... Feels like it was renamed...



Archie Buttle 15 hours ago

Hi, here is a post on Reddit explaining why GameAnalytics is spyware (and the business model behind it):

https://www.reddit.com/r/playrust/comments/bkf4lw/so_i_just_seen_that_rust_uses_gameanalyticsdll/emjurqu/

Also, here is a guide to disable the DLL files through secpol.msc (assuming you're running Windows Professional Edition):

https://www.reddit.com/r/playrust/comments/bjtn07/will_facepunch_add_red_shell_analytics_software/emhesjl/



Soarin' [author] 17 hours ago

The messages about the gamemodes and whatnot above my messages (I'm Powder Blue Dwarf Gourami) aren't mine, somebody else ranting about something.

<https://i.imgur.com/rYHel47.png>

<https://i.imgur.com/gN8U5zW.png>

I rejoined and asked if he had a bad day, but you can see it wasn't an aggressive conversation. The moderators joined in agreeing that adults have no excuses for not having expensive computers. Facepunch staff are very toxic, but again Willox and Rubat have always been pretty nice to deal with and they don't seem to share the other traits that people like Laylad.

As for the tracking processes running, we don't know that as the EULA doesn't state it. I wouldn't be surprised if that's all it is, but based on the other parts of the EULA I'd just keep a distance.



checkraisefold 20 hours ago

Fair argument, only part I dispute is the "It states in the EULA that is has permission to track programs running on your PC, again they are extremely vague and I'd rather not even give them options to it". This basically just means they're checking the current processes running, probably not logging it though. likely some basic crap to make sure the game isn't running twice or something. Could you provide some evidence about being kicked from the S&box discord?



Soarin' **[author]** 20 hours ago

Also forgot to add, servers by default don't log in Garry's Mod and you have to manually enable it. It doesn't track your MAC but it does track your IP.



Soarin' **[author]** 20 hours ago

[1]

Your MAC address is not distributed as you casually connect throughout the internet,

"people don't want their info and their conversations tracked & distributed" is a completely unwarranted claim for this situation as there is no possible way that Garry's Mod is lawfully gathering personal data like messages and conversations.

States in in the GameAnalytics Privacy Policy that it tracks 'social interactions' and it's stated in the Garry's Mod EULA. Steam anonymizes data on their servers and data that is distributed is anonymous and sent as a collective group instead of as an individual's data. Also on top of that, Steam deletes logs after 2-4 weeks. I don't trust Discord and I prefer not to use it as their CEO has a bad history of security including getting his last project banned off the Apple Store for security violations.



Soarin' **[author]** 20 hours ago

[2]

It states in the EULA that is has permission to track programs running on your PC, again they are extremely vague and I'd rather not even give them options to it. The EULA is only about a week old so you are correct as we haven't seen any bans on it yet, but it's extremely unfortunate they're giving themselves power to restrict the game community. The Facepunch forums is already massively censored, I saw a guy get banned for criticizing Garry's Mod 13 and preferring Garry's Mod 12. I got kicked multiple times off the S&Box Facepunch Discord because I was questioning if low-spec'd PC users can play S&Box. Their reasoning for that was 'Why should we cater to poor people?'.