

How to disable Microsoft Defender in Windows 11



By João Carrasqueira — Jun 18, 2024

Windows 11: Everythin...

Windows 11: Everythin...



Thread



Follow



Share

Microsoft Defender has become an increasingly integral part of Windows over the years. It used to be Windows Defender, and for a long time, it was mostly known as a firewall, but Microsoft has been adding capabilities for over 10 years, and it now offers pretty solid baseline protection. However, sometimes you want to disable Microsoft Defender antivirus for one reason or another, and Windows 11 doesn't make it easy.

It's worth noting that the Windows Security app offers many layers of protection, and disabling each of them would not only take a lot of time but would also be very risky. This includes features like tamper protection, exploit protection, core isolation, and data

explanation. We're focusing on some of the more basic features that might interfere with the usage of your PC in this guide.

RELATED

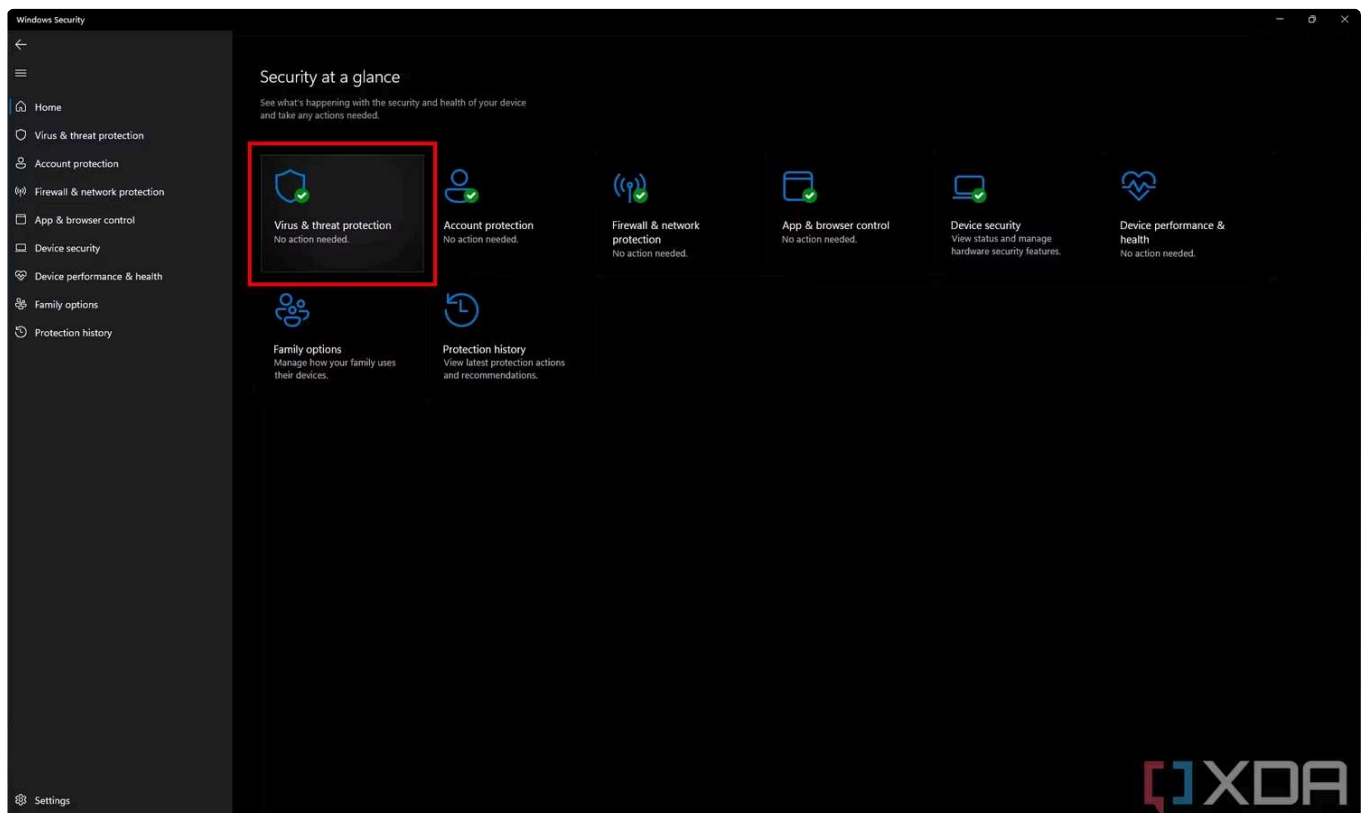


Is Microsoft Defender good enough in 2024?

Temporarily disable real-time protection

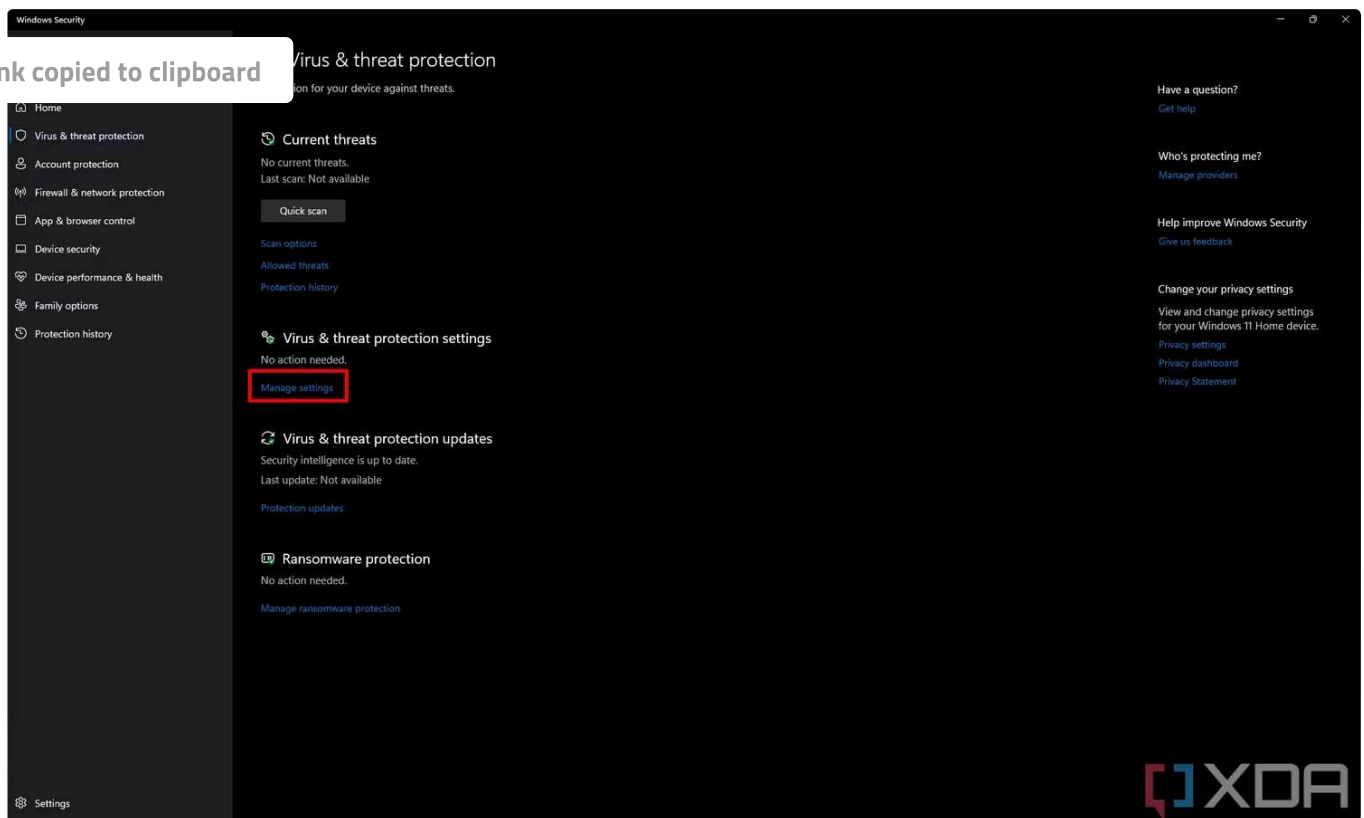
Disabling Windows Defender permanently on Windows 11 is not recommended, and somewhat challenging. However, you can temporarily turn off real-time protection if it's blocking you from doing something. Here's how:

1. Open the Windows Security app.
2. Click **Virus & threat protection** on the main menu or the left-side pane.

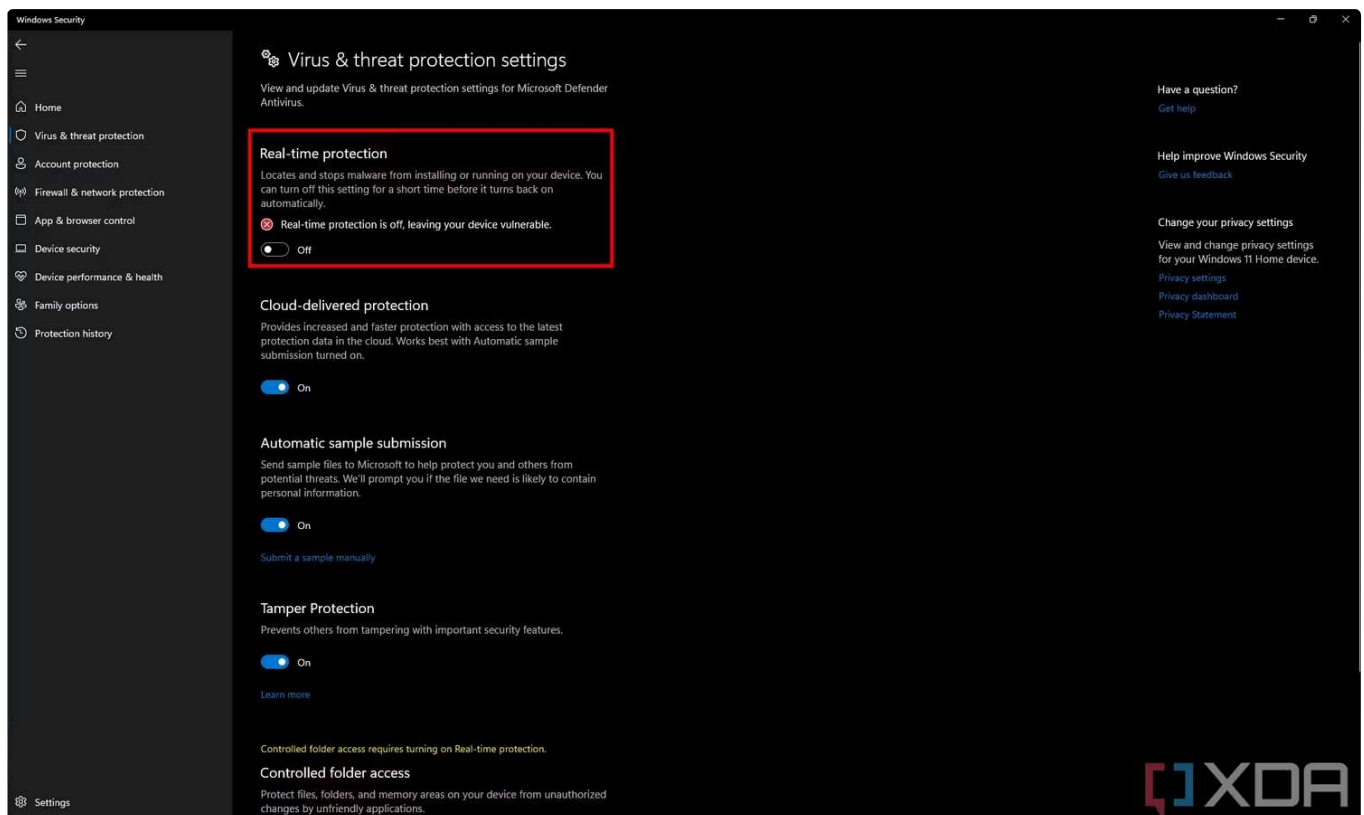


3. Under **Virus & threat protection settings**, click **Manage settings**.

Link copied to clipboard



4. Switch the toggle under **Real-time protection** to **Off**.

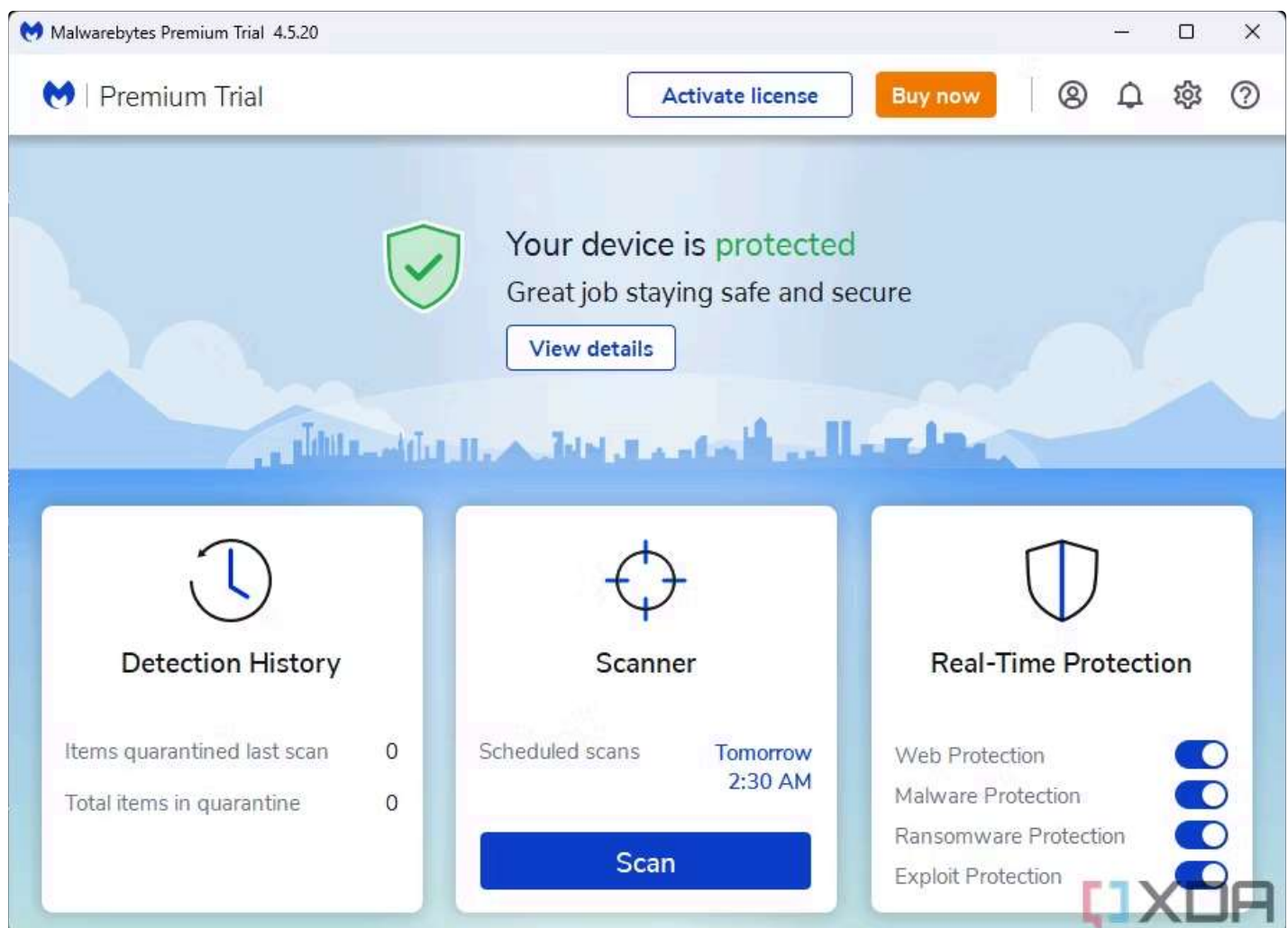


IF Microsoft Defender prevented you from running a program before, you should
Link copied to clipboard
BE ABLE TO DO IT NOW.

Do note that, after a while, real-time protection will turn itself back on to make sure your device stays protected from actual threats.

Replace Microsoft Defender with another antivirus software

If you want to disable Microsoft Defender's built-in antivirus permanently, your best bet is to install another antivirus software that can take over for Microsoft Defender. To do this, simply download and install any other antivirus you trust. There are plenty of options out there, including [Malwarebytes](#) if you want a free option. Many paid options also exist, like [Bitdefender](#), [Webroot](#), and more.



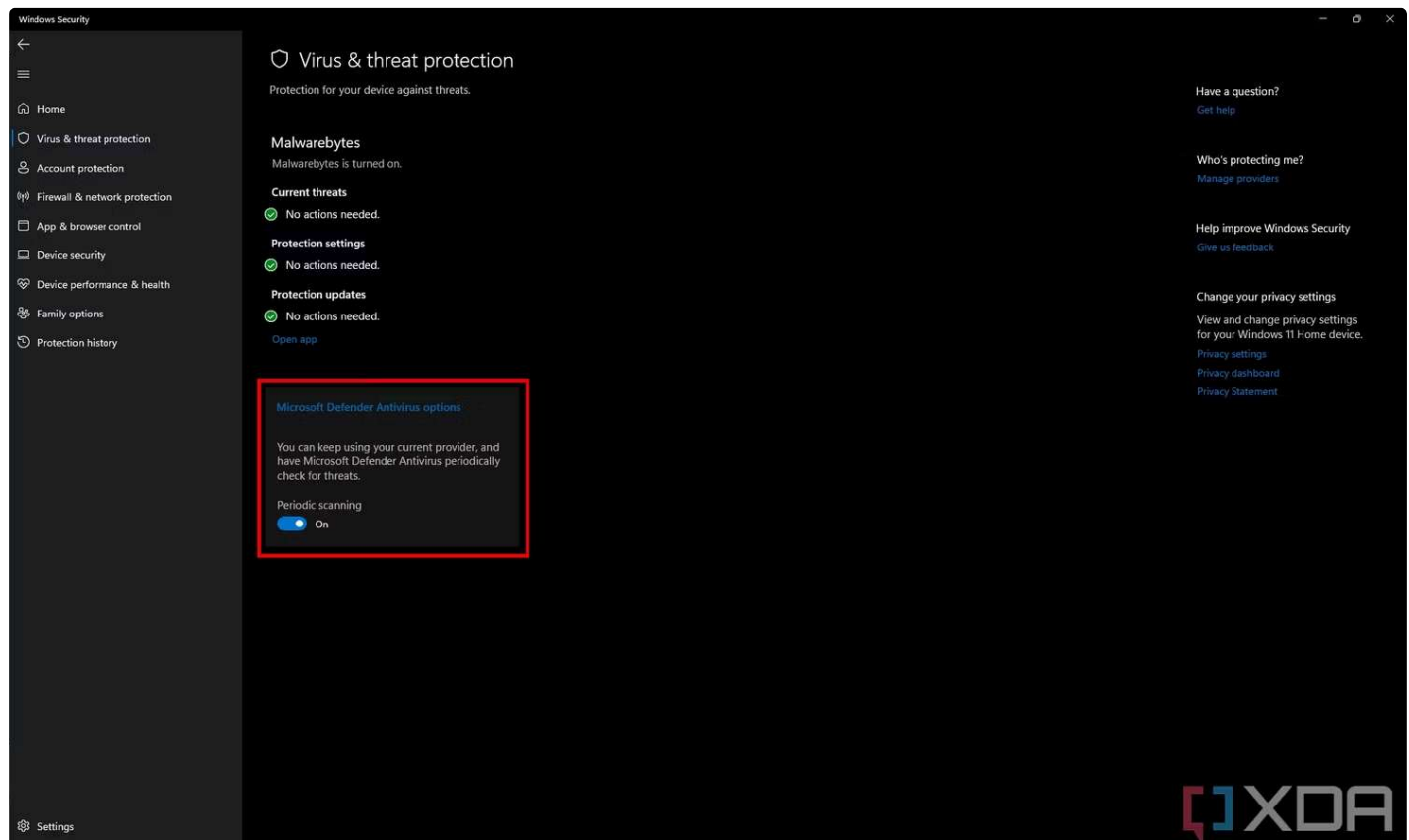
Simply download and install the antivirus of your choice, and Microsoft Defender's malware protection will be disabled. This means you can remain protected without relying on Microsoft's software, but do keep in mind that Microsoft Defender will be re-enabled if you uninstall your other antivirus. You won't normally be allowed to have no anti-malware program on your PC.

RELATED



Best antivirus for Windows 11

Additionally, even if you use a third-party anti-malware program, you can still have Microsoft Defender run periodic malware scans to get even more coverage against threats.



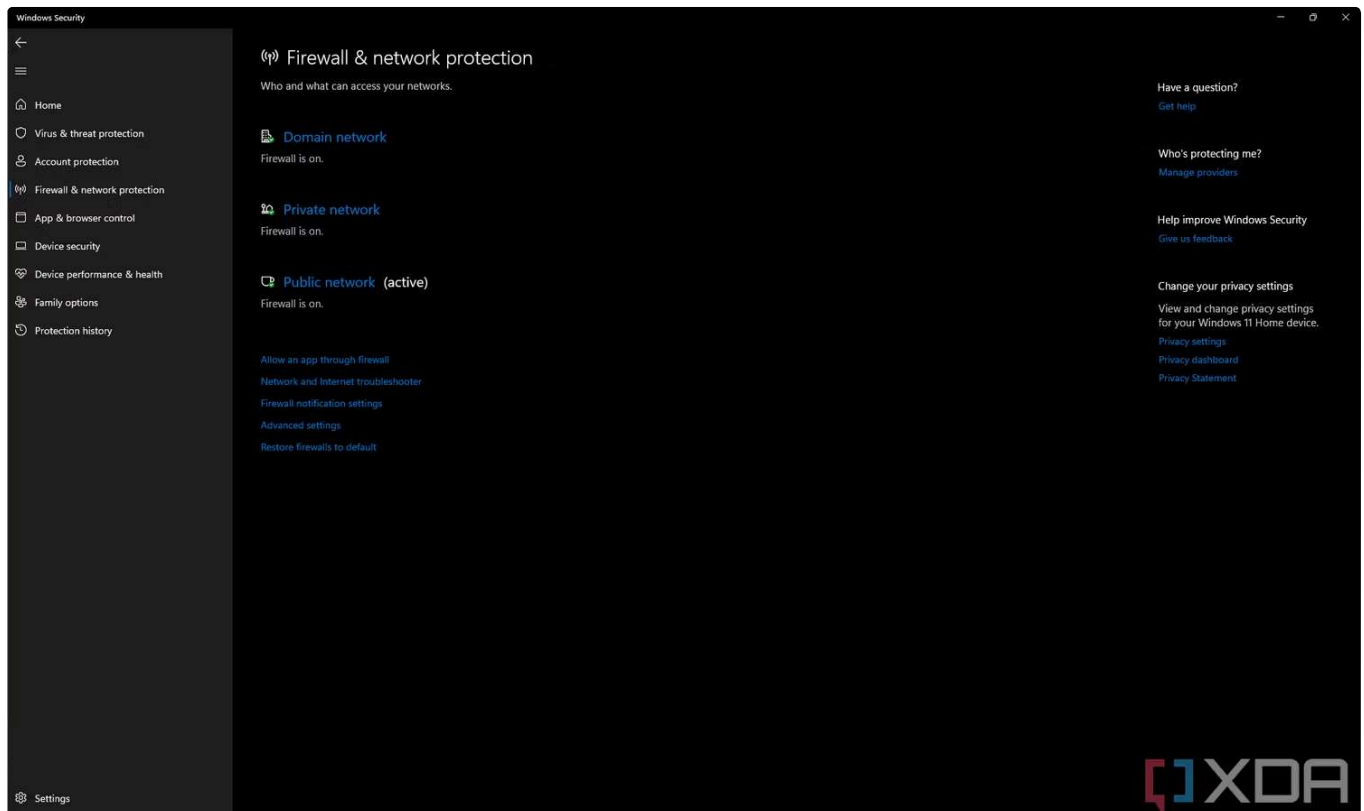
Disabling the firewall in Microsoft Defender

Something else you might want to disable in Microsoft Defender is firewall protection.

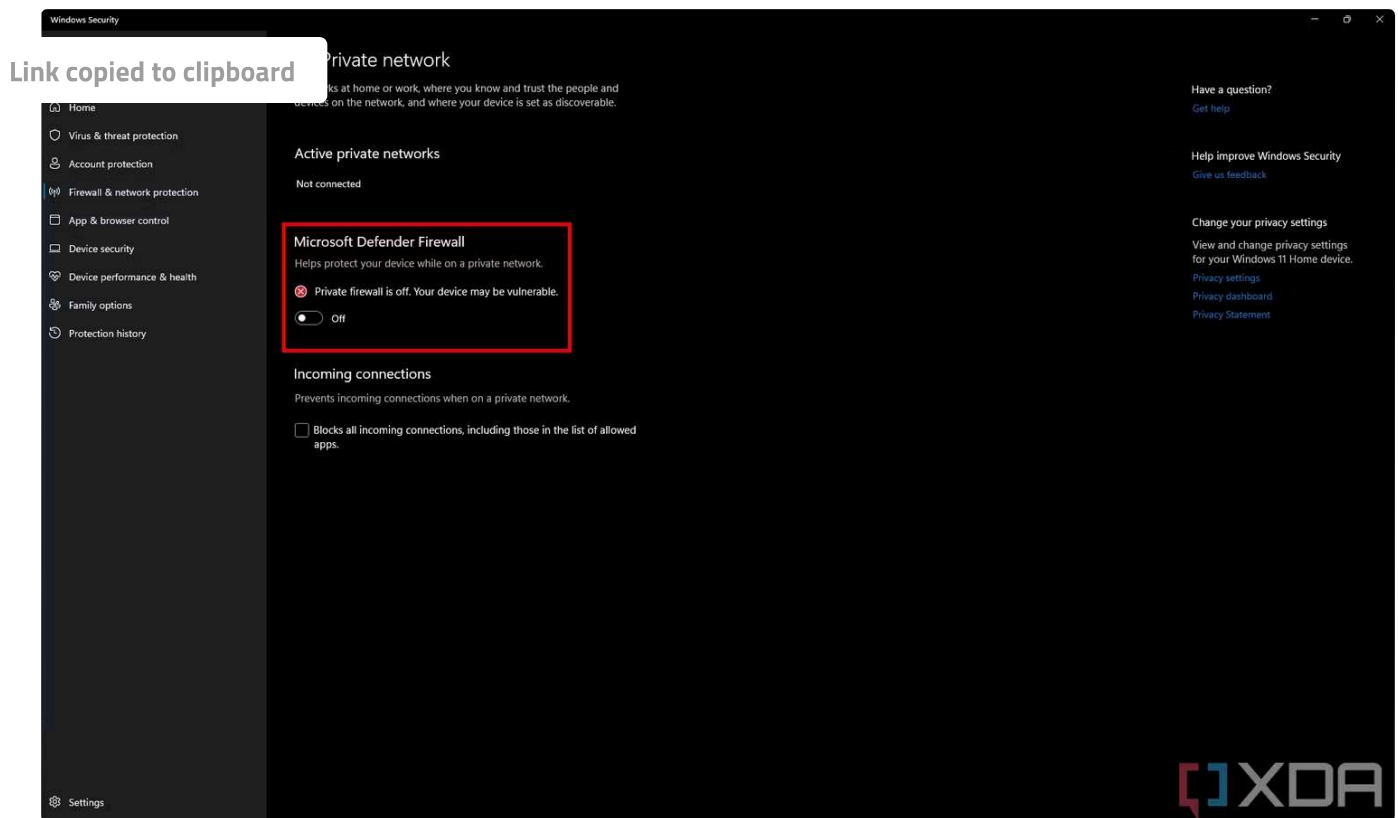
[Link copied to clipboard](#)

This monitors your network for potentially dangerous requests and blocks any threats it detects. This is a separate setting from malware protection, and it's not actually disabled when you install another anti-malware software. Here's how to disable it:

1. Open the Windows Security app.
2. Click **Firewall & network protection** in the main menu or the left-side pane.
3. You can choose firewall settings for domain networks, private networks, and public networks separately. Click the appropriate option, though we don't recommend disabling the firewall for public networks.



4. Set the toggle under **Microsoft Defender Firewall** to **Off**.



5. Repeat this for other network types if necessary.

How to permanently disable Microsoft Defender

Warning

Disabling Microsoft Defender without replacing it can leave your computer severely unprotected against online attacks, potentially resulting in loss of sensitive data or even rendering your computer unusable. Don't disable it unless you know what you're doing.

If you understand the risks and still want to disable Microsoft Defender, there are a few methods to do it, though they're fairly complex. To do this, you'll first need to disable tamper protection in Windows Security. This will make it possible to change certain Windows security settings that are usually blocked off. Here's how:

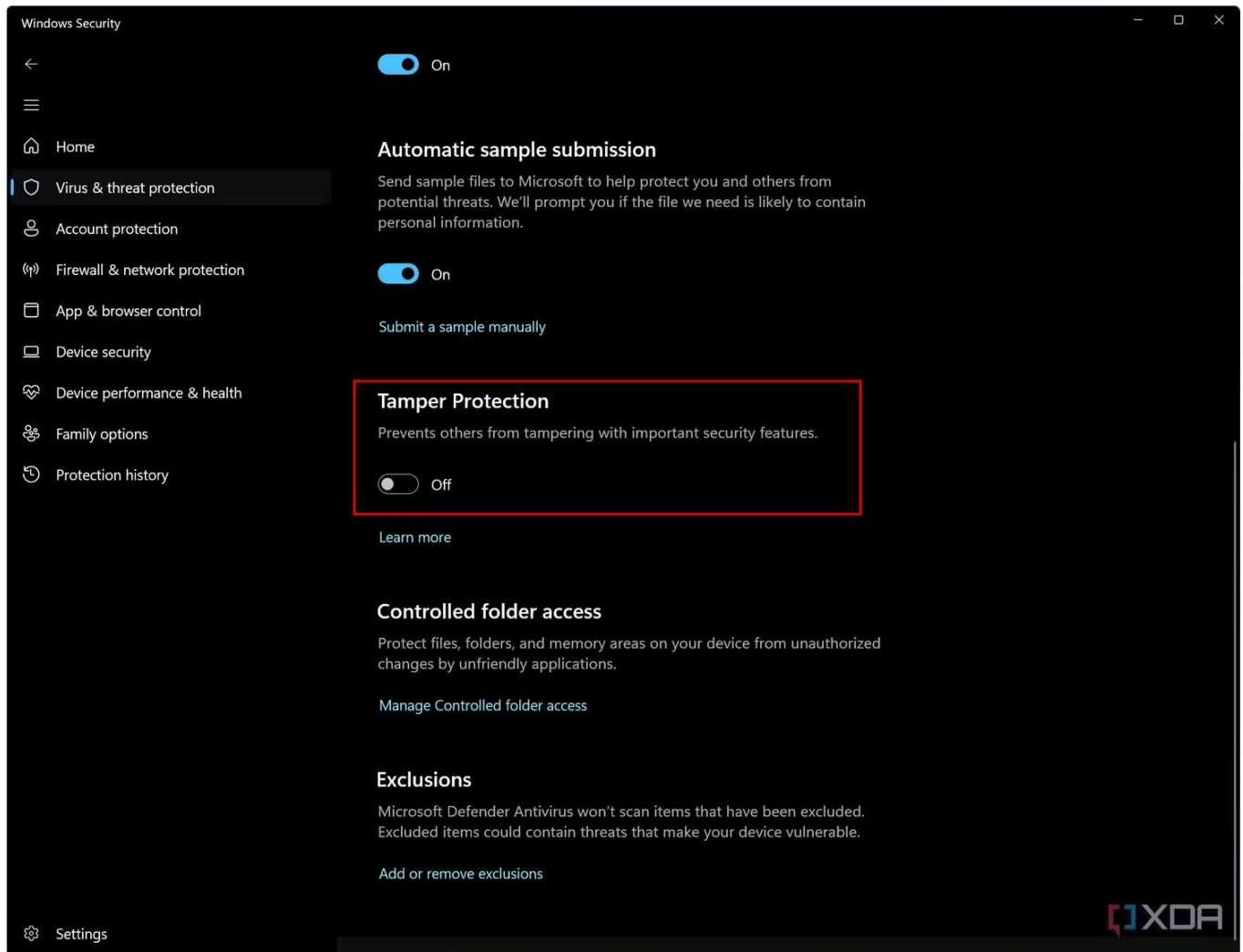
1. Open the Windows Security app.

2. Click **Virus & threat protection**.

Link copied to clipboard

3. Under **virus & threat protection settings**, click **Manage settings**.

4. Scroll down to **Tamper protection** and set the toggle to off.



This will allow you to turn off Microsoft Defender using one of the following methods.

Disable Microsoft Defender using the Group Policy Editor

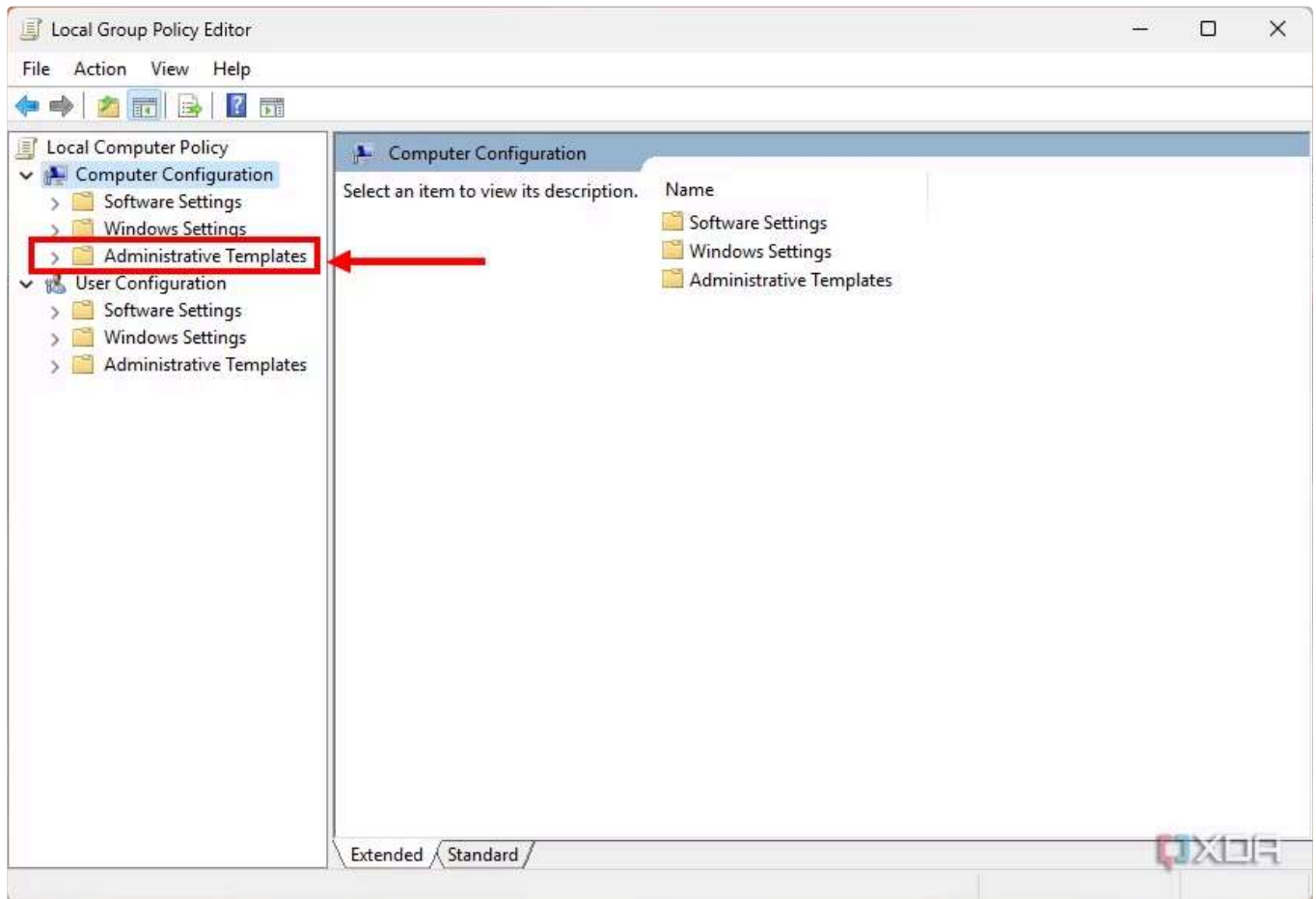
One way to disable Microsoft Defender is to use the Group Policy Editor. Normally, this tool is only available on Windows 11 Pro or higher, though you can access its settings on Home editions using an app like Policy Plus. We'll assume you're using the official Group Policy Editor here, though. Here's what to do:

1. Press **Windows + R** on your keyboard to open the Run dialog.

[Link copied to clipboard](#)

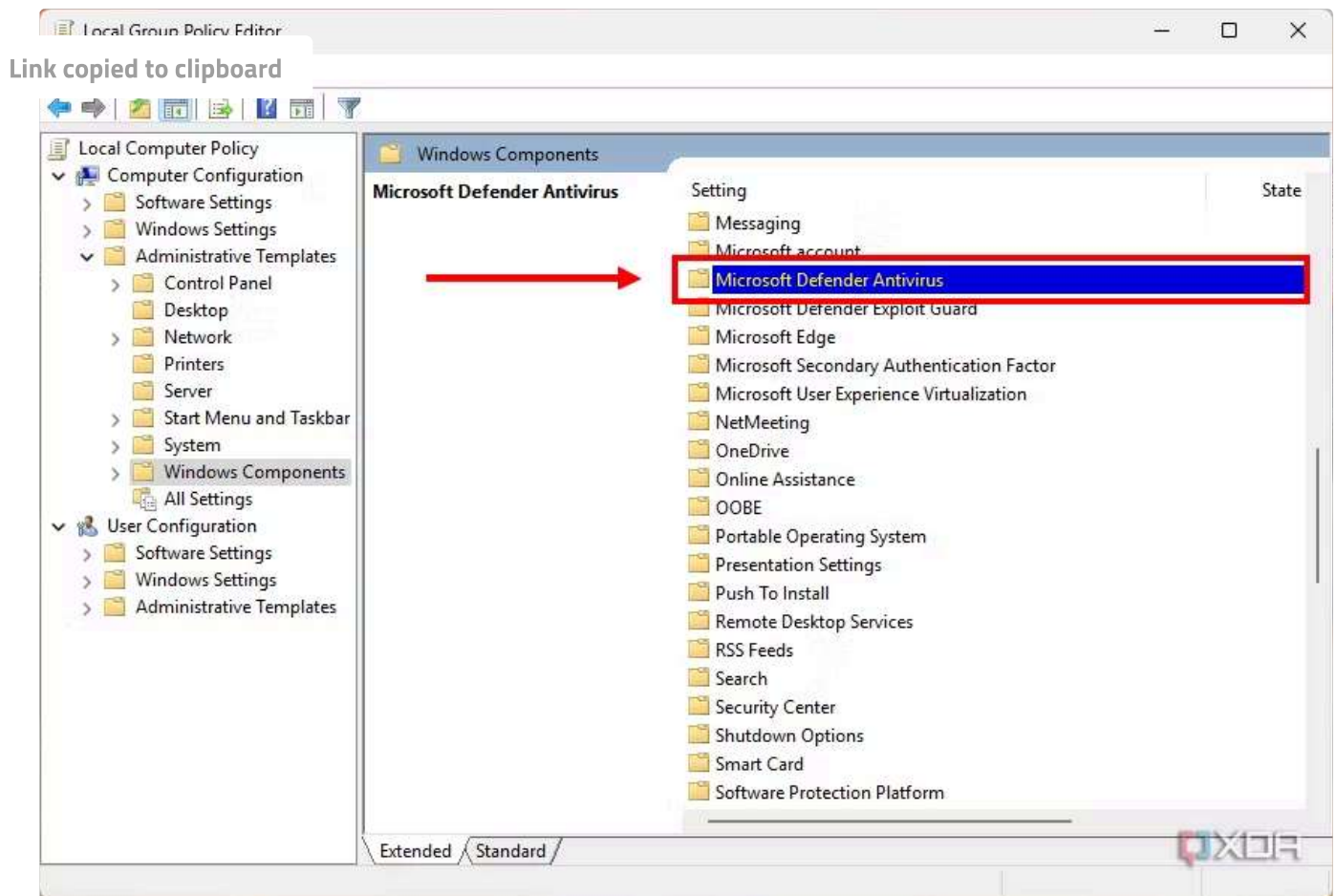
2. Type in **gpedit.msc** and press **Enter** to launch the Group Policy Editor.

3. Under **Computer Configuration** on the left pane, choose **Administrative Templates**.

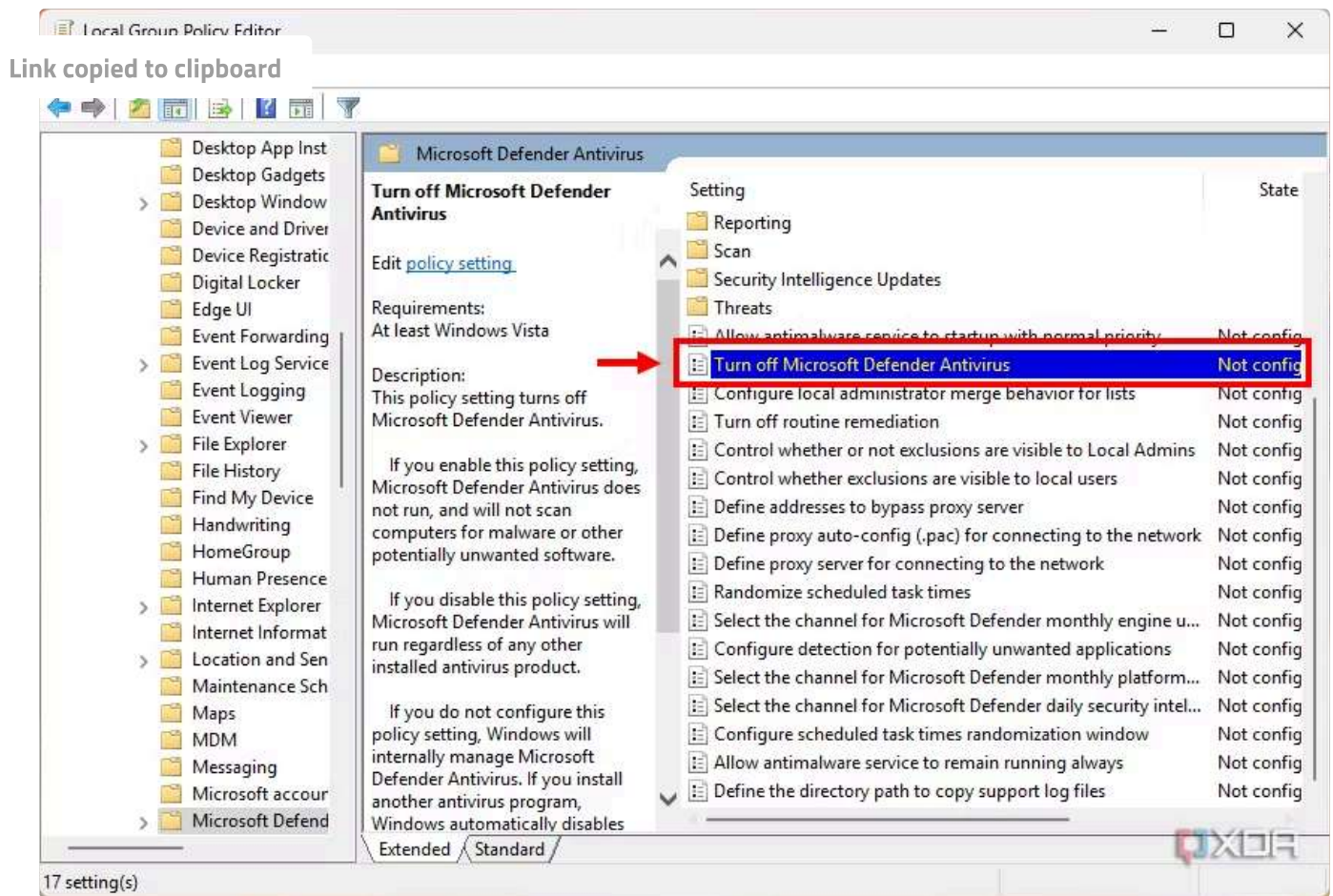


4. Choose **Windows Components**.

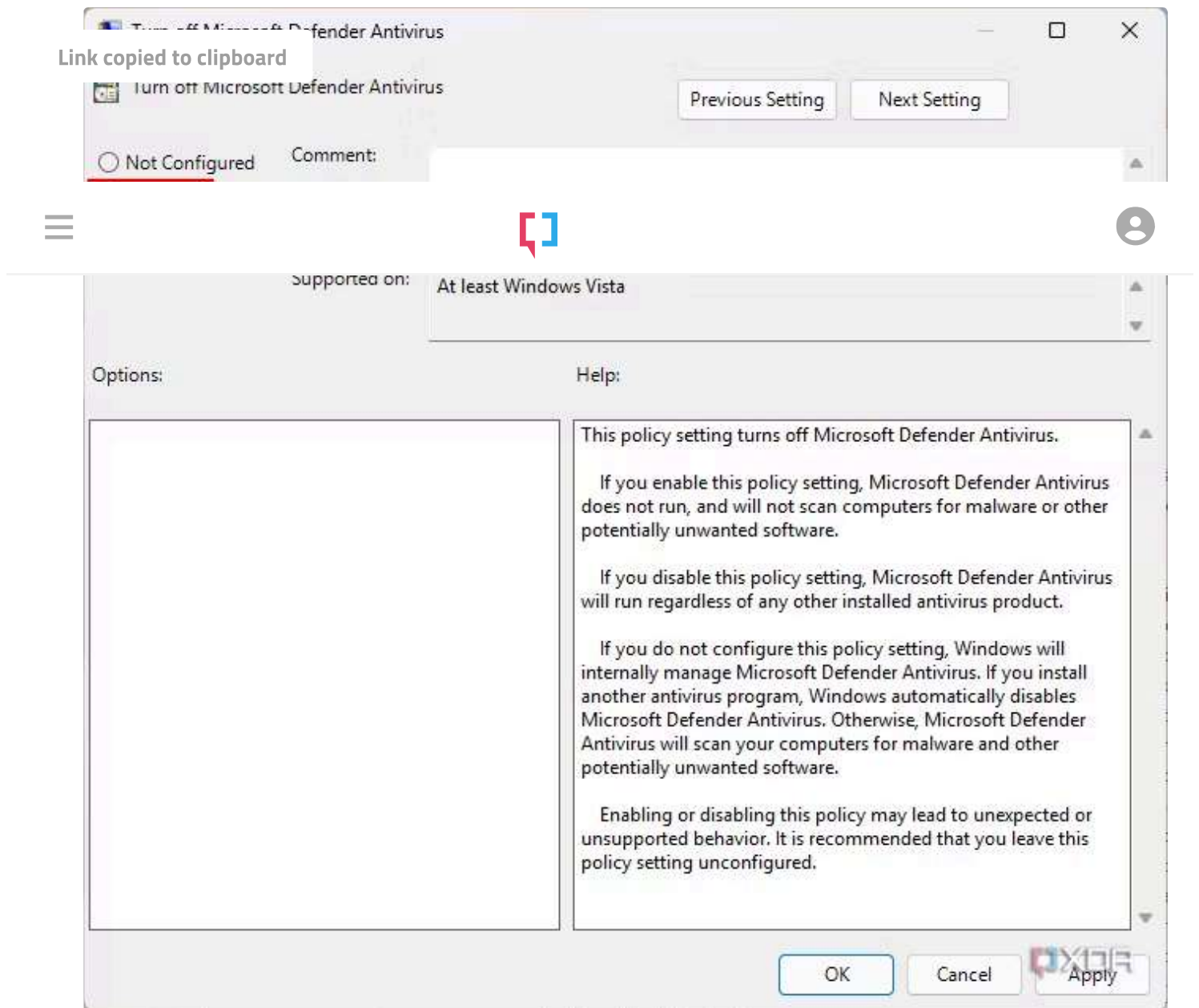
5. Find and open the **Microsoft Defender Antivirus** folder.



6. Double-click the option called **Turn off Microsoft Defender Antivirus**.



7. In the dialog that appears, choose the **Enabled** option and then click **OK**.



8. Restart your computer to finish applying the settings.

Microsoft Defender will now be disabled, which you can verify in the Windows Security app.

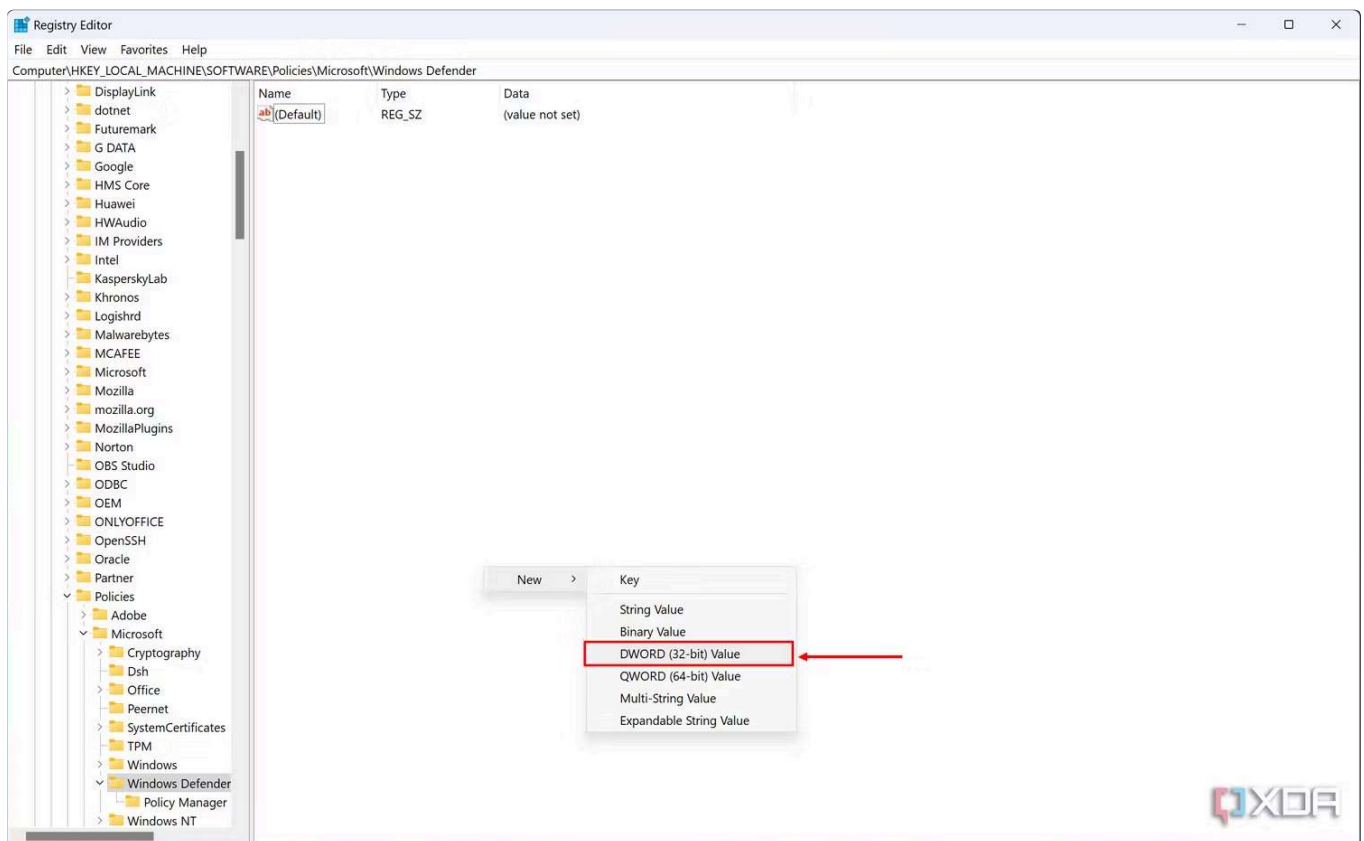
Disable Microsoft Defender with the Registry Editor

Another route for disabling Microsoft Defender on Windows 11 is using the Registry Editor, which is available on all editions of Windows 11. Here's how to disable Microsoft Defender:

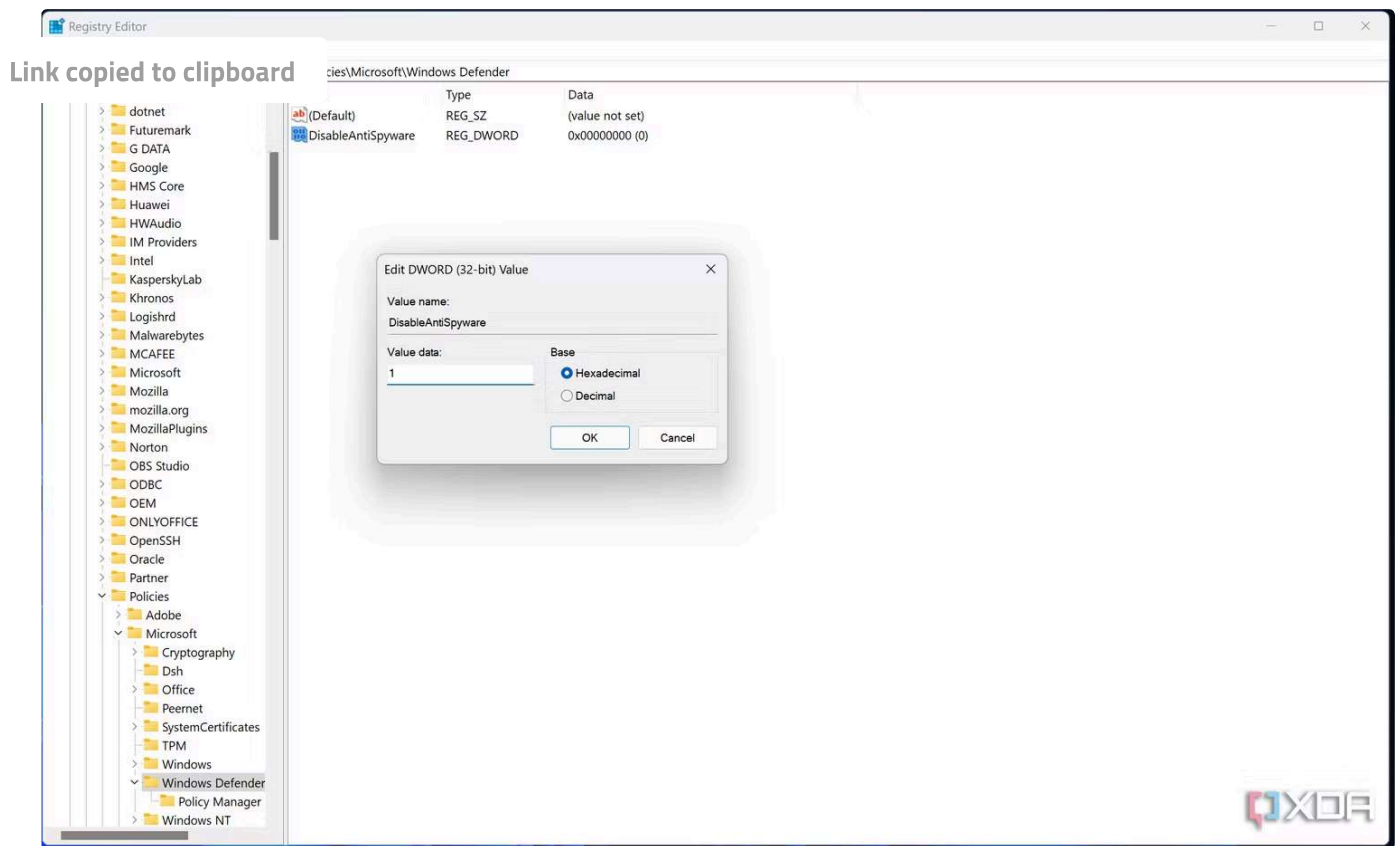
1. Open the Start menu and search for **regedit**. In the search results, click **Run as administrator** under **Registry Editor** on the right pane. Click **Yes** to confirm.
2. Navigate to the following path in Registry Editor (you can copy and paste it in the address bar):

Computer\HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows Defender

3. Right-click an empty area of the main pane and choose **New > DWORD (32-bit) Value**.



4. Change the value's name to **DisableAntiSpyware**, then press **Enter**.
5. Double-click the value to change its properties.
6. Set the **Value data** to **1**. The **base** should be **Hexadecimal**. Click **OK**.



7. Close Registry Editor and restart your PC to apply the changes.

If you ever want to undo this, simply navigate to the same path in Registry Editor and delete the value you created.

Using the Command prompt (Windows Terminal)

If you'd rather use a command-line interface for changing these settings, you can use Command Prompt or Windows Terminal to add the registry value to disable Microsoft Defender. To do this, simply follow these steps:

1. Press **Windows + X** and choose **Terminal (Admin)** from the menu.
2. Copy and paste the following command into Windows Terminal, then press **Enter**:

```
reg add "HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows Defender" /v  
DisableAntiSpyware /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
```


Link copied to clipboard

Copyright (c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Install the latest PowerShell for new features and improvements! <https://aka.ms/PSWindows>

```
PS C:\Users\joaoc> reg add "HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows Defender" /v DisableAntiSpyware /t REG_DWORD /d 1 /f
The operation completed successfully.
PS C:\Users\joaoc> |
```



3. You'll see a confirmation message. Close Windows Terminal and restart the computer for the changes to take effect.

To revert this process and delete the value you created, you can use this command to remove the registry key:

```
reg delete "HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Microsoft\Windows Defender" /v
DisableAntiSpyware /f
```

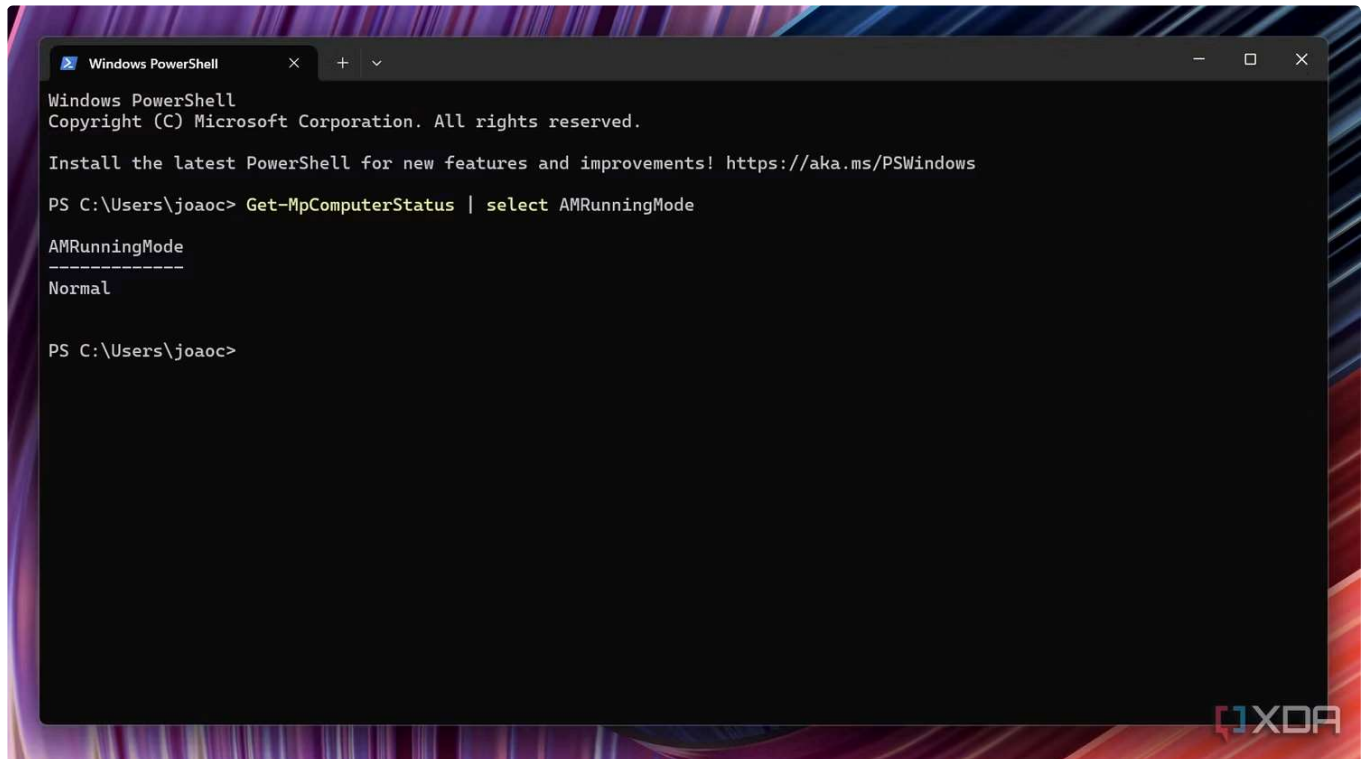
How to check if Microsoft Defender is enabled

If you've followed these steps and you want to make sure Microsoft Defender is still disabled, just follow these steps:

1. Press **Windows + X** or right-click the **Windows** icon on the taskbar and choose **Terminal**.
2. Enter the following command:

Link copied to clipboard `atus | select AMRunningMode`

3. Check whether the table says **NotRunning**. In the example below, you can see the service is still active, because it says **Normal**:



```
Windows PowerShell
Copyright (C) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Install the latest PowerShell for new features and improvements! https://aka.ms/PSWindows

PS C:\Users\joaoc> Get-MpComputerStatus | select AMRunningMode

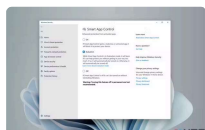
AMRunningMode
-----
Normal

PS C:\Users\joaoc>
```

Disabling Microsoft Defender is dangerous

These steps are all you need to know if you want to disable Microsoft Defender on Windows, but again, this isn't something we recommend doing. There's a reason Microsoft makes it so hard to disable Microsoft Defender, and if you really just don't trust it, your best bet is using a third-party solution to replace it. Otherwise, we don't recommend following these steps.

RELATED



How to use Smart App Control in Windows 11

Link copied to clipboard



Readers like you help support XDA. When you make a purchase using links on our site, we may earn an affiliate commission. [Read More.](#)

THREAD

We want to hear from you! Share your opinions in the thread below and remember to keep it respectful.



Be the first to post



This thread is open for discussion.

Be the first to post your thoughts.

[Terms](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Feedback](#)

RECOMMENDED

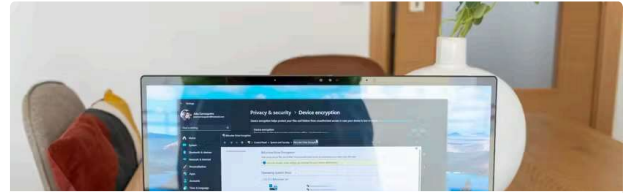
Link copied to clipboard



30 best Windows alternatives to the best Mac applications

While there are some fantastic Mac applications, not everyone wants to move from Windows. Here are some great alternatives so you can stay on...

9 hours ago



As Windows 10's end-of-life date approaches, Windows 11 hits 30%...

While Microsoft struggled to get Windows 10 users to migrate to Windows 11, the trend has finally begun to reverse.

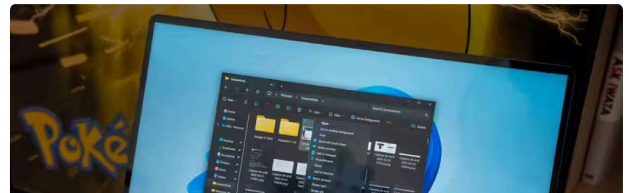
1 day ago



11 Registry Editor tweaks every Windows 11 user needs to know

Despite the risks associated with using it, the Registry Editor has many options that you can modify to improve your Windows 11 experience

2 days ago



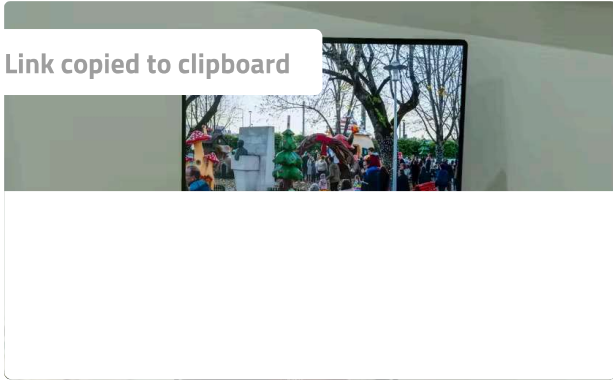
How you can add your own options to the Windows context menu

Want to customize your context menus? Here's how

3 days ago



Link copied to clipboard



How I turned my laptop into a digital photo frame

Repurpose your old laptop and add some life to your home space by turning it into a frame for your favorite photos.

2 days ago



The ultimate guide to File Explorer on Windows 11

File Explorer is one of the most essential tools in Windows 11, but you may not know everything about it. Let's take a closer look.

1 day ago



[Join Our Team](#)

[Our Audience](#)

[About Us](#)

[Press & Events](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Follow Us



[Advertising](#)

[Careers](#)

[Terms](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Policies](#)

Link copied to clipboard

Copyright © 2024 Valnet Inc.