

# Protect Your Computer with Windows Defender

Defender is your PC's built-in security app. Think of it like a gatekeeper for your PC, protecting you from spyware as well as other untrusted programs you don't really want. It's automatic and doesn't require you to do anything, although you can manually scan if you want.

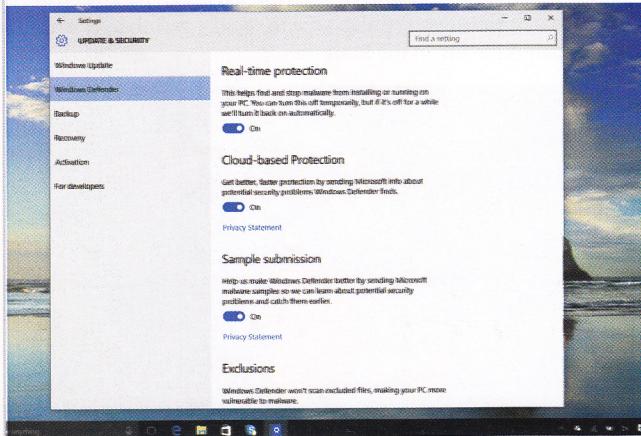
## Keep Your PC Secure

Keeping on top of PC security and privacy is important and Windows Defender is the first step to doing that. Here we'll show you how to change the settings for Windows Defender and how to manually scan.

### Step 1

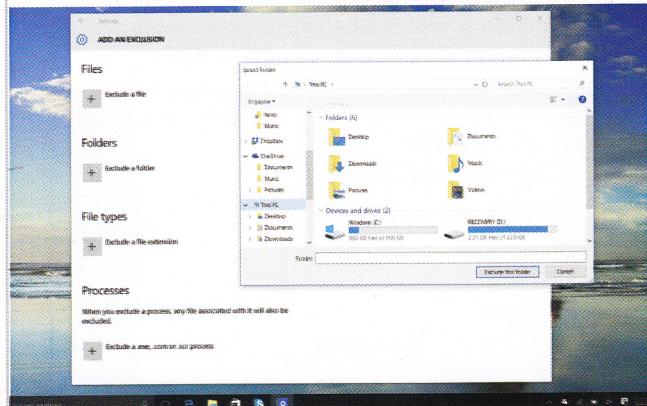
The settings for Windows Defender can be found under Update & Security in the Settings app.

Real-time protection is always on to stop malware running on your PC. It's a setting you can turn off temporarily, but Windows will turn it back on automatically.



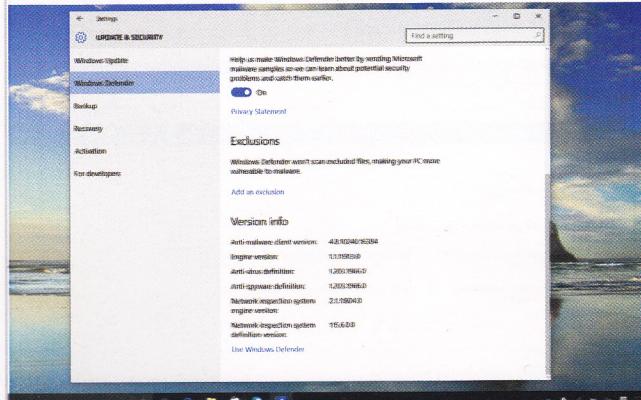
### Step 3

If you want to exclude files or folders from being scanned by Windows Defender, click the Add an Exclusion button and click the + icon next to the type of thing you want to exclude. Here we're choosing to exclude our music folder, although you can choose individual files should you wish.



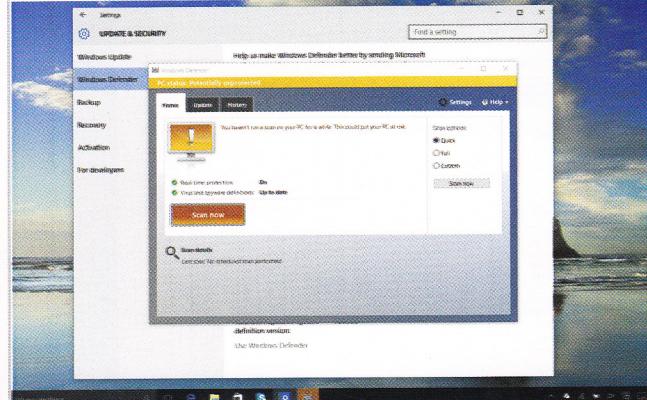
### Step 2

If you scroll further down this page, you can add exclusions to Windows Defender, and we'll look at that in the next step. Microsoft will also send details of any security threats to its own database – including sample files (unsafe files rather than your documents) – and you can also turn this off.



### Step 4

We've now clicked the Use Windows Defender button at the bottom of this window, but you can also search your PC for Windows Defender. You'll see this window tinged with yellow. That means your PC hasn't been manually scanned in a while (though Defender is always on the lookout for security threats).

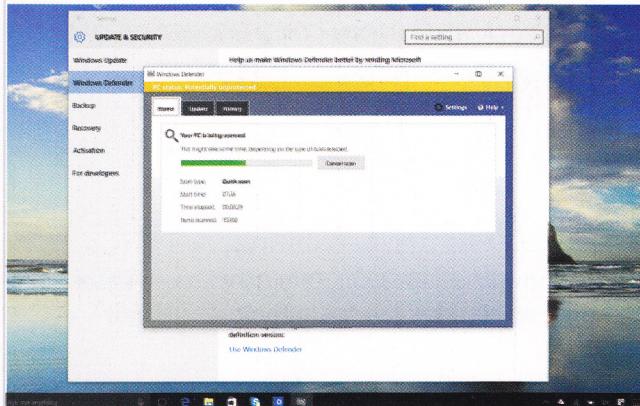


# What is a computer virus?

A computer virus is a type of program designed to cause harm or permit unwelcome access to your computer system.

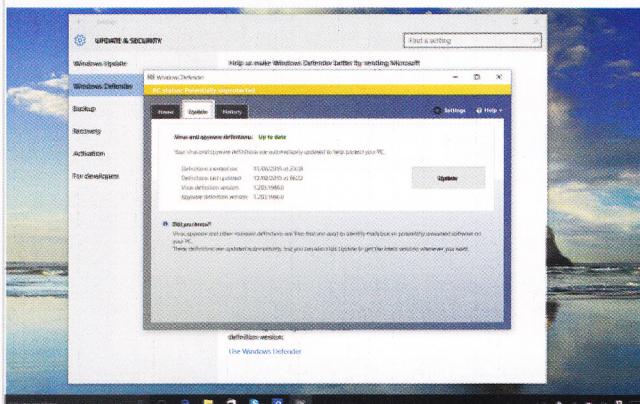
## Step 5

Now click the big Scan Now button. The window will change and you'll now see this as your PC is scanned. It won't take masses of time, but it probably won't be done in the time it takes to make a cup of tea, unless you like very strong tea.



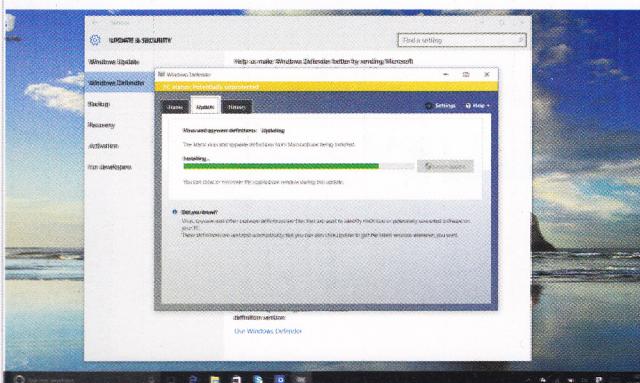
## Step 6

It's a good idea to check Windows Defender's virus and spyware definitions are up to date. To do this, click the Update tab and the Update button if you need to download updates. As you may be able to see in this window, we've got a green warning that our definitions are current.



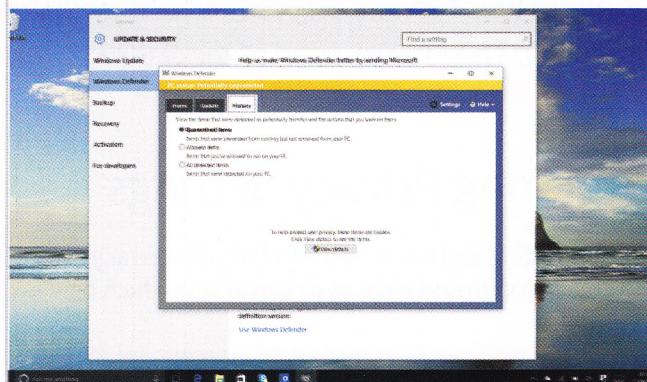
## Step 7

They should update automatically, but if your definitions aren't current, you'll see this view as the software updates. New virus and spyware definitions are released all the time as new security threats are discovered by global anti-virus labs. Often new security threats are variations on old ones, but mutations are very common.



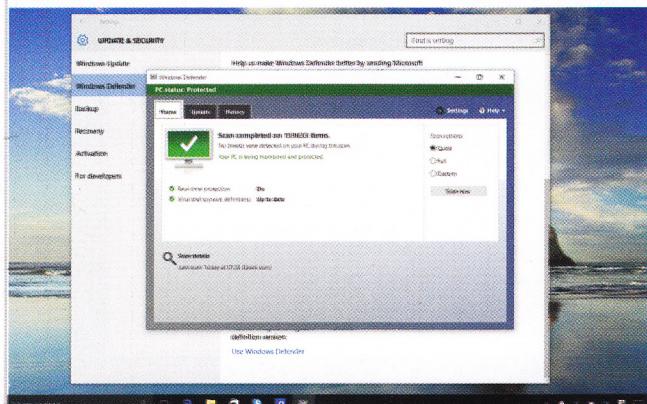
## Step 8

The History tab is interesting as it enables you to see details of any security threats uncovered. You can access information about any detected items as well as anything that has been quarantined. You can also see what you've given the OK to in the past. Usually Defender will just deal with a threat and that is that.



## Step 9

When your PC scan is complete, this is what you'll see. You want a completely green bill of health ideally, which is what we've got here. You can see details of the last scan and how many items have been scanned. And the app likes to repeat the good news – your PC is protected!



## Step 10

Coincidentally, you can choose what type of scan you do when you click that Scan Now button. There are three options on the right here; Quick – which is what we did – Full and Custom. If you click the Custom button, you can select the drives or folders you want scanned.

