

# RE: windows defender

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- *From:* Gnome <[Gnome@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:Gnome@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
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Windows defender is an anti-spyware program only. No, it can't replace McAfee programs as McAfee is superior (in my opinion) to it. Yes, you do need a software firewall in XP. In fact, if you have service pack 2 installed than you already have one. But it is lame in so many ways i can't begin to describe.

**Anti-Spyware:**

Windows defender is a stripped down version of another anti-spyware program that was quite good in its original (pre-M\$ purchase) form. As such, it is my and thousands of others i'm sure, personal preference to not install this. While it won't hurt you to do so, it may give you a false sense of security as there are many other anti-spyware programs on the internet that are far superior.

My personal choice in Spyware Terminator ([www.spywareterminator.com](http://www.spywareterminator.com)) – ironically made by the same company that used to have affiliates with spyware makers. But it has since discontinued its associations with such shady characters. Plus, it's free. To my knowledge it is the only free anti-spyware program that provides real-time monitoring (apart from Windows Defender of course). All other programs have a demo period after which you must pay or lose the real-time monitoring functionality. An example of this is SuperAntispyware (which is otherwise a very good program) – although you can still use the manual scans freely.

Note, the aforementioned programs are all anti-spyware apps and as such do not include anti-virus capabilities (well actually, spyware terminator does have the option to integrate an anti-virus app called ClamAV (made by the same company) but it isn't very effective and there are much better choices out there).

**Firewall:**

So far, the best free software firewall on the web is no longer ZoneAlarm (sorry ZoneAlarm users, i couldn't help myself taking that cheap shot ^\_~) but is instead Comodo Firewall (<http://personalfirewall.comodo.com>). This firewall blows most other competition out of the water. Including the bloated giants such as Norton and McAfee. Note, this firewall is not for the complete PC lamer. I.e. It may confuse you if you are a complete novice as to how programs connect to the web and how the various programs interact with one another. That being said – the forums are extremely helpful so given month or

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2 of experience and you should be ok.

note: if you have a hardware firewall built into your router than you most likely will not need an additional software based one. But you will need to be familiar with your routers configuration, settings and interface to minimize confusion.

### Anti-Virus:

This is where there is the most choice and it can be very confusing to decide who to go with. Questions such as; Do i go free or paid? (and yes, there are many free ones that are superior to many fee-based AV's, e.g. nod32 which, while the interface is horrendous, is one of the better ones (on par if not better than Norton/McAfee)). How often to the signatures update? Are there many false-positives? How taxing is it on your system resources (processor usage and RAM)? and many others.

My personal favourite is an offering from Russian programers Kaspersky AV ([www.kaspersky.com](http://www.kaspersky.com)). Yes it costs money after the 1 month free trial but it scores well in detection, updates, system performance, intergration (if you office for example) but is let down in the interface a bit (still way better than the Norton 2007 \*shudder\*).

Apart form all of this are various investigative utilities to monitor start-up processes etc but they are ancillary and most likely beyond your interest in the subject.

### Moral of the story:

1. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. I hate using those all-in-one suites. That being said, I don't worry about spam – actually i don't get any. Go figure. The anti-spam modules in these all-in-one suites are usually pretty good however the anti-spam components of Office Outlook is good enough on its own in my opinion.

2. Decide for yourself: there are many online forums discussing security apps that host users that have the exact same questions as you do and whilst you will only ever receive subjective responses (which is unavoidable due to humans being...well..humans). The resonses can sometimes yield new ideas, program tips and advice of much better quality than my own. One good forum is: <http://www.wilderssecurity.com/index.php>. Thus don't expect to be happy for a few weeks until you make up your mind own which setup is best for you.

Good luck!

P.S. If possible, test as many apps as you can until you settle on your choices but do so on a sperate system. I.e. install XP on a spare hard drive and play till your hearts content. Than just install the ones you like on your main hard drive. The reason i suggest this is because of the nature of security apps. They tend to not un-install themselves properly (the most notorious example is Norton \*shudder\*) resulting in a highly unstable system when you do finally decide to go with your prefered setup. Alternatively you can do this all on your main hard drive if you don't mind reformatting and

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re-installing everything when you've made your decision (a process that requires a certain level of patience in itself).

"Lamb Chop" wrote:

I would like to know if windows defender is an antivirus or antispysware or both.

Can it replace McAfee etc products?

Do I need a software firewall in XP? Any freebies around?

Thanks

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