

Mac's aren't immune from viruses. Here are 15 of the best antivirus software packages and security suites for protecting your Mac or MacBook from viruses and malware, reviewed and ranked by our expert editors.

By [Karen Haslam](#) and [Chris Barylick](#) FEB 11, 2025 9:34 am PST



Image: Foundry

Macs have tended to be less of a target for malware in the past, leading some to believe that Macs don't need antivirus, but the increasing popularity of Macs means this has changed. Don't find out the hard way that Macs aren't immune from viruses and other types of malware. While it is typically Windows computers that get news headlines for being attacked by computer viruses, Macs are vulnerable to malware, too. In this collection of Mac antivirus reviews, fully tested by our expert editors, we recommend the best Mac

antivirus software to help keep you and your Mac or MacBook safe from whatever rogue software comes your way.

Not everyone is a security expert or knows [how to check their Mac for viruses](#), but you don't need to be a security expert to keep your Mac safe. Apple includes some [built-in antivirus protection](#) in macOS, and a good Mac antivirus product will add an extra layer of protection, ensuring your Mac is safe from new and [known malware](#), blocking [ransomware](#), protecting older systems from security vulnerabilities caused by outdated software, and stopping you from passing on Windows viruses to PC-using friends and colleagues.

The most difficult decision for you as a Mac user is deciding which of the multiple Mac antivirus programs on the market is going to do the best job of keeping you and your data safe, and which ultimately offers the best value.

Check out our Best overall Mac Antivirus: [Intego Mac Internet Security](#)

Our Macworld experts are here to help, and *no-one* is better placed to guide you on which antivirus to choose for your Mac than the leading authority on Mac products and products built for Mac (the clue is in our name). We thoroughly test all Mac

antivirus products from a usability and functionality perspective and use a combination of our own testing data and AV Comparatives/AV-Test lab data to ascertain which is the most reliable and trustworthy security product for your Mac. These are the security products our own editors would (and do) choose for their own machines, so you can place your full trust in our Mac antivirus recommendations.

Our top pick right now is [Intego Mac Internet Security](#). But depending on the type and number of devices you want to protect, and your budget, you may prefer one of the other Mac antivirus recommendations in our list below. Some cover more than Macs, so you can also use them to protect your iPhone, iPad and other devices. You won't find every Mac antivirus product we've tested here, only the very best contenders, meaning you can be sure that any of these products will do a decent job of protecting your Mac. If you are thinking of trying out software that isn't listed below we may have reviewed it and not thought it was good enough for this round up, in that case, take a look at all the Mac Antivirus apps we've reviewed [here](#).

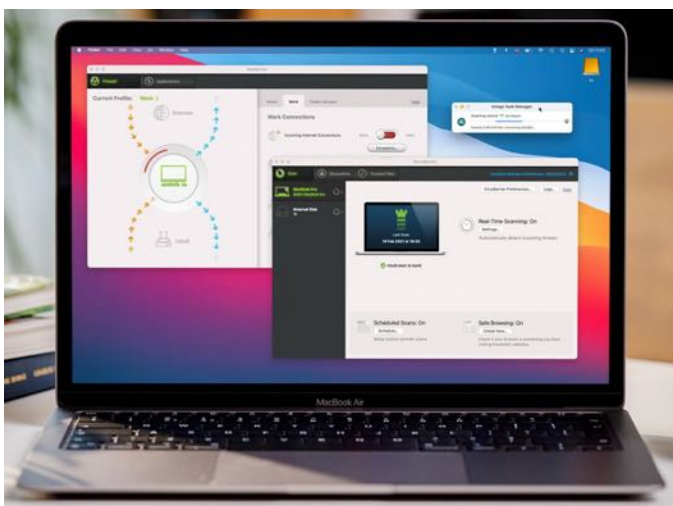
You'll also find some free options for those of you looking for the best free antivirus for Mac. Although, if value is the most important criteria for you, we also recommend looking at our [best Mac antivirus deals round-up](#). And, if you're running Windows, also check out the advice from our sister site PC World for the [best Windows antivirus](#).

Want to protect your iPhone? Many of the antivirus solutions below also include support for iOS and other operating systems too. Also read: [How to scan an iPhone for malware and stay safe](#).

Updated February 2025 to add details of our test of Malwarebytes free antivirus app.

Best Mac Antivirus 2025: Reviewed and Ranked

1. Intego Mac Internet Security X9 – Best overall Mac antivirus



Pros

- Built for Mac.
- Easy set up.
- Good performance.

Cons

- Mac specific (no Windows/Android protection).

Price When Reviewed: From \$24.99 for first year, usually \$49.99 a year (1 Mac) Using our link

Best Prices Today: [\\$24.99 at Intego \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS

[Intego's Mac Internet Security X9](#) combines the company's VirusBarrier and NetBarrier applications to provide both antiviral protection and network traffic filtering programs. There's also an Intego Premium Bundle X9 that includes five apps: VirusBarrier and NetBarrier as well as Mac Washing Machine (a Mac cleaner), ContentBarrier (Parental controls) and Personal Backup (a bootable backup).

Intego's Internet Security costs \$24.99/£20.99 for the first year. Intego's Mac Premium Bundle costs \$29.99/£23.99 for the first year. Use our link to get the deal: [You can get Intego Mac Internet Security X9 and Mac Premium Bundle here](#).

The Mac Internet Security X9 is easy to download, install, and configure. It checks for the latest viral definitions and sets up real-time scanning features and intuitive network monitoring, allowing users to see and work with both incoming and outgoing Internet connections on their Mac.

While Mac Security X9 doesn't offer every feature, it offers impressive configuration and customization to both its VirusBarrier and NetBarrier tools. VirusBarrier performs well in protecting users from viruses, while NetBarrier acts as a firewall that protects connections. The application allows users to create settings for home, work, or public connections, and allows or deny connections as needed.

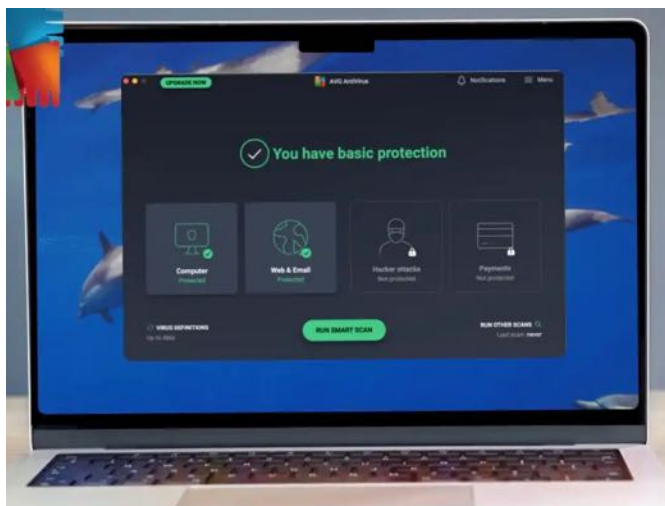
There are some issues to address, we'd like to see a running counter tracking the number of files processed in a VirusBarrier scan and we were disappointed that it allowed traffic to questionable websites linked to spam messages.

Mac Internet Security X9 doesn't try to upsell users to Intego's other suites and services. The tools in place are effective, work well, and make this utility worth considering.

- AV Comparatives, June 2024: 99% Mac Malware Protection, 93% Mac PUA Protection, 100% Windows Malware Detection.

Read our full [Intego Mac Internet Security X9 review](#)

2. AVG Internet Security for Mac – Effective Mac antivirus



Pros

- Caught an impressive amount of questionable apps.
- Long trial.
- Easy to use.

Cons

- Let in a fake Flash player.
 - No indication that scans are happening.
- Price When Reviewed: \$3.89 a month for 1 Mac (\$46.68 for the first year, then \$77.99 a year), or \$4.99 a month for 10 devices

(\$59.88 for the first year, then \$99.99 a year).

Best Prices Today: [\\$46.68 at AVG \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS

AVG Internet Security for Mac is easy to download from the [AVG website](#), downloads and installs easily, and once permissions have been assigned to your entire hard drive, you're good to go. Best of all, it is available as a 60-day trial period before billing begins.

AVG Internet Security focuses on four directives: Computer Protection, Web & Email Protection, Hacks Attacks, and Payment Protection. The Smart Scan feature checks your virus definitions to make sure they're up to date and scans for viruses and malware. A Ransomware Shield, Network Inspector, and Fake Website Shield features look things over to see where you stand in terms of your overall online presence and security.

The set of whitelists and exceptions can be customized to hone in on files you want to scan and leave out areas you want to leave alone. A quick antiviral scan took a few minutes while a full scan of an entire NVME drive with 821GB of data on it took just over 5.5 hours to complete.

Scans on external drives and specific folders are easy to set up and execute, the scheduling feature works well, the software can set up location configurations, and there are customization options for network security.

Tests with malware and phishing-based websites went well. The software, combined with macOS's Gatekeeper functionality, stopped the vast majority of sample malware installations, quarantining them quickly and preventing installation. The software also prevented questionable external code from being loaded on suspect websites and blocked phishing sites from loading.

There are a few places for improvement with AVG Internet Security for Mac, but not many. During testing, the software allowed a fake version of Adobe Flash Player to be installed. If you do override the macOS Gatekeeper and AVG security features and install malware, AVG Internet Security does a good job of removing it.

If there's one thing I might change about the software, it's the fact that the scheduled scan feature doesn't readily display that the scan is taking place.

AVG Internet Security for Mac catches an impressive amount of viral, phishing, and malware activity for a consumer package, and does its job well, all while wrapped in a bright, friendly user interface that's easy to navigate. Granted, given the subscription pricing and packages, a VPN client wouldn't be out of the question, and the price point for a single device moves into questionable territory, but the software still performs well, travels well with its location settings, and this is appreciated.

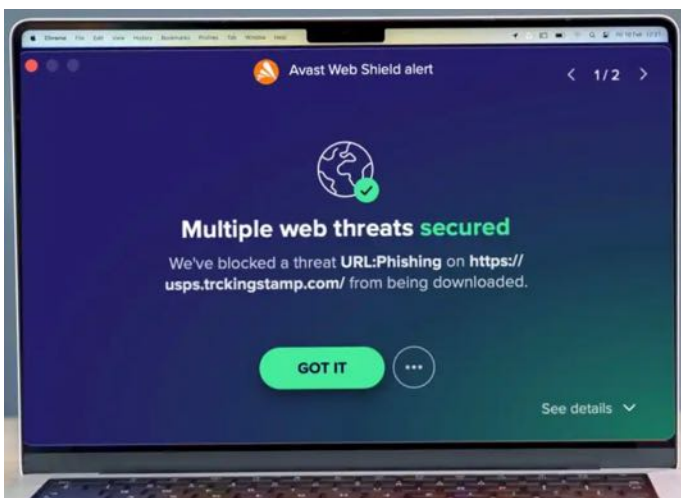
Have a look at its 60-day trial to see what works, what doesn't, and what might be right for you. You may also be interested in trying the free [AVG AntiVirus for the Mac](#). Despite being free, AVG's free AntiVirus covers all the bases: blocking viruses and malware from websites, downloads, and email attachments. AVG will scan applications and check every file and remove threats from your Mac. It auto updates so you shouldn't miss out on protection from the latest threats.

- AV Test, December 2024: 100%
- AV Comparatives, AV Comparatives, June 2024: 100% Mac Malware Protection, 98% Mac PUA Protection, 100% Windows Malware Detection.

Get [AVG Internet Security](#) or [AVG AntiVirus for the Mac](#).

Read our full [AVG Internet Security for Mac review](#)

3. Avast Premium Security – Best Mac antivirus for malware protection



Pros

- Doesn't impact performance.
- Caught problem test files.

Cons

- Slow manual scanning.
- No option for single device license.
- Upselling.

Price When Reviewed: From \$50.28 for first year, usually \$77.99 a year (1 Mac).

Best Prices Today: [\\$50.28 at Avast Software \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: Mac, PC, iOS and Android

There are four Mac antivirus products from Avast. The paid for [Avast Premium Security](#) and [Avast One](#), and the free [Avast Free Antivirus](#) and [Avast One Essential](#). Avast Free Antivirus is a free version of Avast Premium Security, while Avast One Essential offers additional features like ransomware protection, privacy protection, and data leak detection.

Avast Premium Security is a well-featured suite that protects your Mac from various threats, including browser script hacks, ransomware, and remote attack activity. It includes modules such as Virus Scans, Core Shields, Traffic Monitor, Network Inspector, Email Guardian, Ransomware Shield, and Quarantine, all easily accessible from the home screen.

Virus scan options include Smart Scan, Deep Scan, Targeted Scan, or External Storage Scan. The Traffic Monitor shows data usage and bandwidth usage, while Network Inspector scans the network for safety and alerts users when

unfamiliar devices join the network. Core Shields prevents fake websites from loading and triggering software.

The main frustration with Avast Premium Security is its subscription-based model, but that tends to be standard these days. Some features are only available on the Avast Ultimate subscription tier.

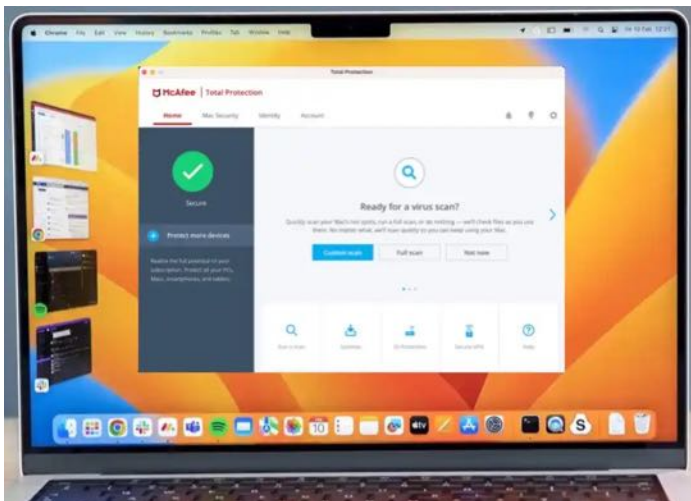
Those looking to save money can try the two free Antivirus for Mac solutions, [Avast Free Antivirus](#) and [Avast One Essential](#). If you want just a virus scanner, we recommend Avast's Free Antivirus, which is the free version of Avast Premium Security. Avast One offers some additional functions and a different interface, but annoys with intensive advertising for paid functions.

You can get [Avast Premium Security for Mac here](#). Also consider [Avast One](#), [Avast Free Antivirus](#) and [Avast One Essential](#).

- AV Test, December 2024: 100%
- AV Comparatives, June 2024: Approved, 100% Mac Malware Protection, 98% Mac PUA Protection, 100% Windows Malware Detection.

Read our full [Avast Premium Security review](#)

4. McAfee Total Protection



Pros

- Good, customizable set of security tools.
- Background scanning feature is handy.

Cons

- Laggy when initially launched.
- McAfee demands credit/debit card info to use trial.

Price When Reviewed: Single: \$29.99 (1 device) for first year, usually \$89.99;

Essential: \$39.99 (5 devices) for first year, usually \$119.99 a year

Best Prices Today: [\\$29.99 at McAfee Total Protection \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS, Windows, iOS, Android, ChromeOS

[McAfee Total Protection](#) continues to be steadily updated and offers a good suite of anti-viral, anti-malware, identity protection, VPN, and scheduling tools. It is simple to use; once you've walked through the guided steps for assigning permissions to work behind the scenes you can just leave it to get on with its job.

The software can perform a full scan of your hard drive as well as scan custom locations such as external volumes, and schedule scan times. You can control what Total Protection does when it finds suspect files, such as notifying you, quarantining them, or deleting the files. During our tests, it located and quarantined two suspected virus files I didn't know about, thereby earning its keep.

Other features include an ID Protection tool that compares your email address to known data and password breaches, a firewall, and a Secure VPN feature that lets you quickly set up a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

McAfee's Total Protection package extends up to five devices on one account, so it's easy to add the app to other Macs, iPhones, iPads, and Android-based phones and tablets as needed. It's worth noting that the Windows version offers features that you don't get in the Mac app.

We noted some occasional performance impacts as it ran in the background, but it was largely unobtrusive in its efforts. Our only other grumble is the lack of simplicity in ending the trial.

[You can get McAfee Total Protection here.](#)

Read our full [McAfee Total Protection review](#)

5. Norton 360 – Best value Mac antivirus



Pros

- Easy-to-use & effective.
- Multiple device cover.
- Minimal performance impact

Cons

- No backup on macOS.
- Didn't spot threats in zip files.

Price When Reviewed: Standard (3 devices):

\$39.99 for first year, usually \$94.99 a year;

Deluxe (5 devices): \$49.99 for first year, usually \$119.99 a year

Best Prices Today: [\\$39.99 at Norton Security \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS, Windows, iOS, Android

Norton 360 provides protection in Mac OS X 10.10 or later, with a reduced price for the first year. The Standard package protects one device. For more devices (including Macs, iPhones or PCs), the Deluxe or Select package are required. Note that all prices increase significantly after the first year.

The software offers 110GB of cloud-based backup, a password manager, a basic VPN client, and Dark Web monitoring.

Norton 360 is easy to download and install, and its add-on programs work fairly well. The VPN is basic but easy to configure your preferred country of origin and initiate a connection. The password manager is reliable and includes a downloadable recovery key. There is an admirable level of possible customization on the firewall, although technical knowledge is needed.

Other utilities within Norton 360 for Mac include a Startup Manager module, File Cleanup module, and Dark Web protection module. With antiviral monitoring and scanning it's easy to create white lists and exceptions as well as schedule scans, including of external volumes like USB thumb drives. However, the application still can't perform scans on .zip files, I had to decompress the text drive of sample infections before it could see them.

In our tests, the software was successful in catching a good amount of viral activity, with 25 individual infections detected on a test drive after scanning it. However, Norton 360 for Mac missed the OSX.Proton malware.

Extensions for web browsers and Norton Private Browser are included. These warn about spam and phishing-based websites, but still allowed us to travel to questionable websites from spam email links.

However, there are still bugs to sort out, such as a bug in the Cloud Backup where we were unable to successfully click the "Get Started with Backup" button and create an initial backup set for the cloud. It also failed to remove OSX.Proton malware.

- AV Test, December 2024: 100%

[You can get Norton 360 here.](#)

Read our full [Norton 360 review](#)

6. Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac



Pros

- Doesn't slow down your Mac.
- Effective real-time protection.
- Unobtrusive browsing protection.

Cons

- No password manager.
- Very limited VPN.
- No identity protection.

Price When Reviewed: \$24.99 per year for 1 device (usually \$39.99), \$29.99 per year for 3 devices (usually \$59.99)

Best Prices Today: [\\$24.99 at Bitdefender \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac covers: macOS, Bitdefender Total Security covers: macOS, Windows, iOS, Android

Bitdefender is another maker of antivirus solutions that has a number of solutions for the Mac, including a free option. There's [Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac](#), which offers basic protection for up to three Macs, [Bitdefender Total Security](#), which protects up to five devices (macOS, iOS, Windows and Android), and Bitdefender's free [Virus Scanner for Mac](#), which we review here: [Bitdefender's free Virus Scanner Review](#).

Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac is easy to download, install, and assign full drive permissions. It offers a speedy Quick Scan mode that performs a quick overview and locate, quarantine, and remove viral candidates within a few minutes as well as a Full Scan mode which runs in the background so you can continue to work. External volumes such as USB flash drives can be scanned.

There isn't much in the way of malware that gets by it. However, we found the application's ability to locate and neutralize malware that was already on the system mixed – it missed four significant pieces of malware.

Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac offers anti-phishing protection in the form of web browser extensions for the Safari, Google Chrome, and Mozilla Firefox web browsers. These offered varying degrees of success. Under Safari, Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac offered no prominent phishing protection, allowing us to visit questionable websites with no warning whatsoever.

Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac offers an anti-tracker for web browsers and access to a VPN with basic functionality and a limit of 200MB a day. It encourages you to update to the full version, there are better [VPNs for Mac](#) out there.

When we reviewed it Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac retailed at "50% off" which is \$19.99/£14.99 a year for one Mac (then \$39.99/£29.99 a year), but the deal prices change often. There is also a [30-day trial](#) available.

There is also Bitdefender Total Security which includes Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac as well as coverage for iOS, Android and Windows. That software retails for \$69.99/£44.99 a year for five devices (then \$109.99/£74.99 a year) and offers a license that covers five devices, including Macs, Windows, Android and iOS with a 30-day trial available.

- AV Test, December 2024: 100%
- AV Comparatives, AV Comparatives, June 2024: 100% Mac Malware Protection, 99% Mac PUA Protection, 100% Windows Malware Detection.

Read our full [Bitdefender Antivirus for Mac review](#)

7. Avira Prime



Pros

- Easy to use.
- Full VPN.
- Won't slow down your Mac.

Cons

- No fine-tuning scan options.

Price When Reviewed: From \$59.99 for first year, then \$109.99 a year.

Best Prices Today: [\\$59.99 at Avira – Prime \(first year, 5 devices\)](#)

Covers: macOS, Windows, iOS, Android

Avira Prime, the paid version of Avira's free antiviral software [Avira Free Security \(see our review\)](#), provides several tools for the user. Avira Prime is designed around several modules (Virus Scans, Protection Options, Quarantine, VPN, Passwords, Cookie Cleaner, Identity Assistant, Junk Cleaner, Uninstaller, and Startup Apps). Each module can be customized and configured as needed. The software installs cleanly and requests permission to fully access the hard drive, which is par for the course.

The Quick Scan can take less than 10 seconds, while a Full Scan took over six hours to look over 800+ gigabytes of files on a one terabyte SSD. The Custom Scan feature allows files and folders to be dropped in for quick scanning as well as external volumes to be scanned through as needed. There is a scheduler so you can program scans in advance.

You can minimize Avira Prime and work with other applications as the scan continues which is lucky because the Full Scan took over six hours to complete. Avira Prime located and quarantined several minor worm files, but missed suspect files such as the Wave web browser, which has been implicated in assorted phishing scams.

Cookie Cleaner module allows you to view and clean up cookie data, helpfully grouping cookies into different categories to make it easy to remove tracking and ads-based items in different browsers.

Junk Cleaner reclaimed a decent 55GB of space when we tried it. There's also an uninstaller manager for cleaning up deleted apps and managing those that start automatically.

Identity Assistant can track your email addresses, phone numbers, credit cards, bank accounts, physical addresses, driver's license, and so on, to check for any illicit activity.

The included Password Manager is a combination of local system and browser extensions plus a web-based management console with its own master password.

The password manager and junk files cleaner are included in both free and paid-for versions of Avira. Where Prime differs from the Free Security version is that you get full, use of the VPN service instead of a 500MB per month limit. The VPN can also block malicious website content.

You can get [Avira Prime here](#). Also consider [Avira Free Security for Mac](#).

Read our full [Avira Free Security for Mac review](#).

- AV Test, December 2024: 99.5%

Read our full [Avira Prime review](#)

8. Trend Micro Antivirus for Mac



Pros

- High malware detection rate.

Cons

- Wouldn't detect some malware in our tests.
- Fewer extra features compared to less-expensive competitors.

Price When Reviewed: \$29.95 for first year, usually \$39.95 a year (1 Mac)

Best Prices Today: [\\$29.95 at Trend Micro \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS

[Trend Micro Antivirus](#) isn't too challenging to use, but looks almost old-fashioned compared to many competitors. The range of functions seems quite limited compared to competitors such as Norton and Avast. For example, there is no anti-phishing function and no VPN application included in the package.

There are five menu items: Overview, Web, Scans, Folder Shield, and Logs. Overview is the at-a-glance dashboard for Trend Micro Antivirus that shows that the various protections are active, the last time the app was updated and the last time a scan was run.

Trend Micro offers a smart scan, custom scan, and full scan. In our tests Trend Micro had no trouble detecting most threats; however, in a few cases, it didn't detect all the malware contained in a folder until a scan had been run.

Folder Shield is Trend Micro's approach to ransomware protection. If an unknown program tries to change anything in certain folders, such as Documents, Music, Pictures, Movies, and Mobile Documents, Trend Micro will alert you.

Trend Micro's web extension boasts a privacy scanner that is supposed to check your privacy settings on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

- AV Test, March 2024: 100%

Read our full [Trend Micro Antivirus for Mac review](#)

9. BitMedic Pro Antivirus



Pros

- Fast, simple to use.
- One-time \$10/£10 payment.
- Good external drive scanning and scheduling tools.

Cons

- Clunky user interface.
- Buggy, occasional application crashes.

Price When Reviewed: \$9.99 (single payment)

Best Prices Today: [\\$9.99 at Mac App Store \(one off payment\)](#)

Covers: macOS

BitMedic Pro Antivirus is a good antiviral program, albeit with some shortcomings that need to be worked through, not least the fact that this hasn't been updated since 2020.

The program, which retails for \$9.99/£9.99/CA\$9.99 on the [Mac App Store](#), features a nice complement of tools, including an Antivirus Scan module, an Adware Cleaner module, a Result Log, a Custom Scan module, a Browser Privacy module, and a System Settings module that allows you to schedule deep scans, customize system behaviors, and create a whitelist of files not to scan.

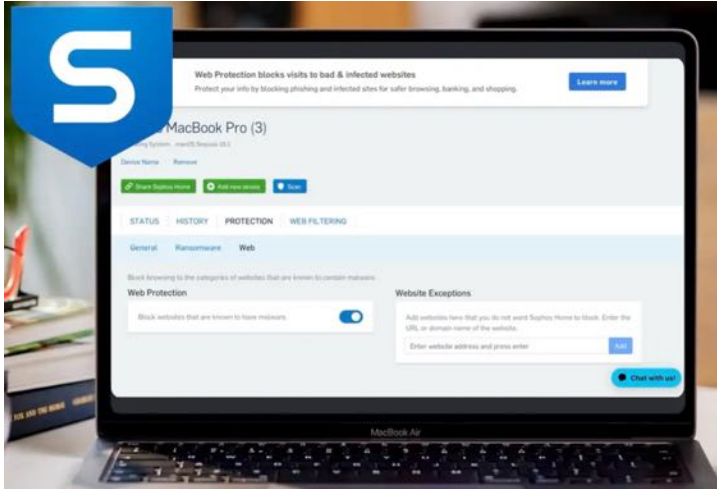
Initial tests with the Antivirus Scan module's quick scan and deep scan went well and BitMedic Pro Antivirus was able to find several phishing-based emails. The application crashed twice during testing though. Frustratingly, there was a lack of specific descriptions as to what the infected files were and their full location, even after a drop-down arrow was clicked.

The inclusion of an Adware Cleaner module is a nice touch – it performs well, and runs quickly. The Browser Privacy module functions as a quick and easy way to clean up your history, auto logins, bookmarks, remove all extensions, and reset the preferences on your browser, but this is an all-or-nothing option and we'd prefer to disable or delete individual extensions.

The \$10/£10 price point with no subscription, is very appealing, but there are a few elements that let it down.

Read our full [BitMedic Pro Antivirus review](#)

10. Sophos Home Premium for Mac



Pros

- Reasonable protection.
- Reasonably priced for 10 devices.

Cons

- Awkward web-based dashboard interface.
- Difficulties scanning an external or network volume.

Price When Reviewed: \$59.99 first year, \$99.99 for two years, and \$139.99 for three years (10 devices)

Best Prices Today: [\\$44.99 at Sophos \(first year, 10 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS

Sophos Home Premium is a well-rounded anti-piracy/anti-malware suite, its core modules centering around antivirus protection, web protection, ransomware protection, and malicious traffic detection.

The software is available for a good price to protect up to 10 devices. In the past Sophos offered a free version of its Home product with just the antivirus protection and website protection. That was discontinued in late 2021. There is a free 30 day trial.

We had some issues installing and getting the software set up. Everything is controlled via the Menu Bar icon and a web-based dashboard and it's not always clear it is running.

Once you've signed in, it's easy enough to customize and configure core elements such as actions that occur when malware is found, scan scheduling, and web filtering, and elements such as accessible scan logs and network file scanning.

You can choose between quick scans and full scans, which can take several hours and cover the full extent of the hard drive. While the scan scheduling feature worked well, it only allows you to set schedule times set to every 30 minutes (11:00 AM, 11:30 AM, 12:00 PM, etc). Scanning an external volume such as a thumb drive or network volume feels is harder than it should.

You can configure Web Filtering options to allow blocking for certain categories, such as adult content. The filters work reasonably well and it's easy enough to create a whitelist to provide exceptions.

There's room for improvement. Although Sophos Home Premium functions well with macOS's GateKeeper feature and caught and filtered a respectable amount of test malware, it allowed the AdWind malware and an infected copy of Adobe Flash Player to be installed. We had to use another utility to remove the AdWind malware.

Read our full [Sophos Home Premium for Mac review](#)

11. CleanMyMac



Pros

- Easy to use and a nice interface
- Subscription or one-time purchase available

Cons

- Left some adware and malware behind

Price When Reviewed: \$39.95/a year for 1 Mac, \$119.95 for 1 Mac (one time purchase)

Best Prices Today: [\\$39.95 at MacPaw \(first year, 1 device\)](#) [\\$117.95 at MacPaw \(one time purchase\)](#)

Covers: macOS

The thing about [CleanMyMac](#) is that it is a [Mac Cleaner](#) and [optimizer](#) first and an antivirus second, but the fact that [CleanMyMac's antivirus protection](#) is built into the suite of tools makes it worth assessing as an antivirus solution. The question is whether if you use CleanMyMac for its primary purpose, will it also protect you from malware?

Looking at CleanMyMac as an antivirus tool, we found that the software offers a good level of customization, and it's easy to choose between the three scan modes (Quick Scan, Balanced Scan, and Deep Scan), each of them offering quick performance as CleanMyMac scans your hard drive and external drives. It's also easy to configure scan behaviors, such as whether or not to include external drives in your scans or target .DMG files, and whitelists can also be created to exclude specific volumes and folders from the scans.

In our tests results were mixed though. The software teamed up well with macOS' GateKeeper feature, stopping questionable software that hasn't been signed as safe by Apple from being installed, but it was still possible to get a fair amount of malware past these systems and on to our Mac.

The Quick Scan feature caught two elements from CrossRat and a threat in the form of the infamous AdWind malware. The Balanced Scan function was able to root out most of the Elite Keylogger malware. The Deep Scan feature found the remnants of the AdWind malware, but we had to dig that out with a third-party utility.

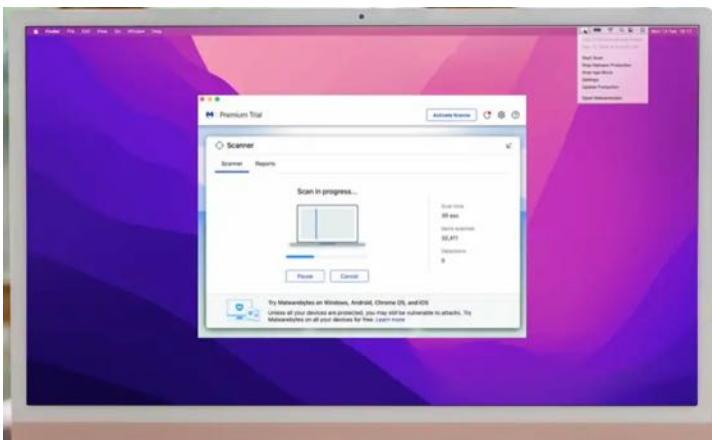
CleanMyMac was able to catch some elements of malware as they were being opened for the first time, but there were questionable chunks of software that remained even after they'd purportedly been removed and the Mac had been rebooted.

CleanMyMac also offered no tangible warning against visiting questionable websites and allowed us to click on every questionable link to be found in Gmail's Spam folder without warning.

The interface is excellent, and MacPaw makes good use of its potentially great MoonLock antiviral engine to catch a fair amount of viral activity, but it still left adware and malware behind.

Read our full [CleanMyMac review](#)

12. Malwarebytes Premium Security



Pros

- Friendly user interface.
- Impressive scan speed.
- Reliable malware removal.

Cons

- Left some malware.
- Lack's custom scan feature.
- Features from the Windows version not included.

Price When Reviewed: Standard: \$44.99 a year for one device; Plus (inc VPN):

\$59.99 a year; Total: \$94.99 a year (usually \$189.99)

Best Prices Today: [\\$44.99 at Malwarebytes \(first year, 1 devices\)](#)

Covers: macOS

[Malwarebytes Premium Security for Mac](#) offers antiviral, VPN, and Real-Time Protection features and is available at \$3.75/£2.50 a month for its Basic version, \$5.00/£4.15 a month for its Security + VPN version, and \$7.92/ £6.25 a Month (down from \$15.83/£12.50 a month) for its Complete Protection version. There is also a free antivirus from Malwarebytes which we look at here: [Malwarebytes Free Antivirus Review](#).

Malwarebytes Premium builds on the free version of [Malwarebytes](#), which is reasonably good at hunting down and removing some of the peskiest viruses and malware, but was thwart with bugs and crashes when we tested it.

The paid-for version sports a bright, friendly user interface and a good array of features. It includes quick viral scans, functional scheduling for scans, decent

customization elements including whitelist creation, a good VPN client, and Real-Time protection that keeps an eye on what's attempting to be installed.

The software performed well, offering speedy scans. Malwarebytes was able to quarantine and remove almost all the malware I installed, although it left elements behind such as the controversial Wave web browser, an incompatible version of MacSecurity, and a fake Adobe Album application.

The VPN isn't as customizable as a dedicated VPN client, but it performs well and gets the job done. See our [review of the Malwarebytes VPN](#).

There doesn't seem to be a custom scan element that allows you to easily scan an external volume such as a thumb drive, and the Real-Time Protection feature doesn't kick in and scan an external volume once it's mounted, nor can you drag and drop a volume into Malwarebytes for it to scan – which you can do in the Windows version of Malwarebytes. Malwarebytes offers no warnings against questionable websites and links either.

Read our full [Malwarebytes Premium Security review](#)

13. ClamXAV



Pros

- Effective antivirus protection.

Cons

- Annual subscription for basic malware protection with no other features.

Price When Reviewed: From \$29.95 a year, 3 Macs

Best Prices Today: [\\$29.95 at Canimaan Software Ltd \(first year, 3 devices\)](#)

Covers: macOS

Installing ClamXAV from the [ClamXAV website](#) is quick and easy. The installation file is automatically downloaded. After the initial setup, where you need to grant permission to access the Downloads folder and modify security settings, you are all set.

You can run a manual scan from the main screen, but there are several other options. A quick scan checks system files and other areas on your Mac, you can select just your hard drive to run a scan on all folders and files on the disk, and dragging and dropping a single folder or file onto the scanning pane checks it for malware. You can also select an external drive or connected USB stick for scanning. There's also a real-time scanning component—Sentry—that is always on guard.

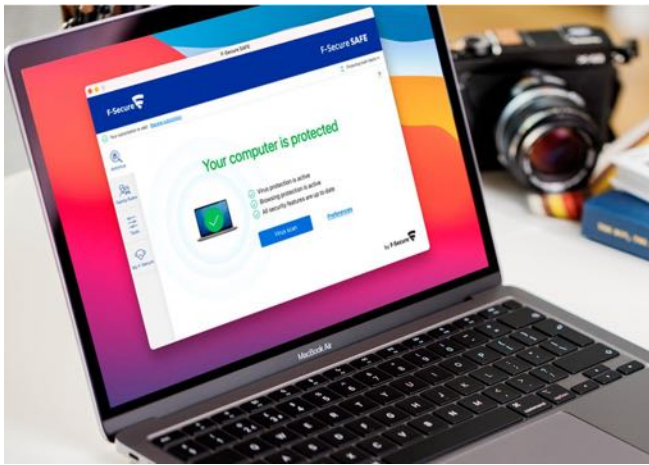
It is possible to schedule any type of scan to run on specific days and times. By default, any malicious files are automatically quarantined, but you can decide whether or not to quarantine infected files. You can open the quarantine folder to see what files were caught.

ClamXAV proved effective at detecting and stopping test malware files, but there's nothing more to the program beyond the basic antivirus scanning and options. ClamXAV is certainly effective at virus scanning, but that's a capability found in many free and equally effective security products for the Mac.

- AV Test, September 2023: 100%

Read our full [ClamXav review](#)

14. F-Secure Total for Mac



Pros

- Includes virus protection, secure browsing, ID monitoring, a VPN, and a password vault in one package.
- Effective and flexible VPN.

Cons

- Missing quick virus scan and a scheduled scan.
- Lacks features of the Windows version.
- No notification for malware infections.

Price When Reviewed: From \$69.99 a year (1 device)

Best Prices Today: [\\$69.99 at F-Secure \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS

F-Secure Total for Mac is a simple-to-use security software suite that works on macOS, iOS, Windows and Android devices and protects your data from a wide range of threats. It includes several useful features, but lacks certain key options, especially in virus scanning.

The program is \$69.99/£59.99 a year for one device, which is steep, but there's a free 30-day trial that requires no credit card and even gives you free technical support if you need it.

Clicking the Scan button runs a full virus scan that checks your entire system, while clicking the link for Viruses & Threats takes you to another screen where you can scan just specific folders. But there are no options to run a quick scan or even to schedule a scan, unlike the Windows version which includes a quick scan. It provides real-time

virus and spyware scanning to automatically block malware, and 'DeepGuard' monitors applications for any changes indicative of a malware infection.

You can set up ID monitoring to check your email address for data breaches among your online accounts. The VPN is another defense and includes tracking protection to prevent advertisers from monitoring your online activity and a kill switch to quickly cut off all internet traffic.

F-Secure offers a password vault that creates and stores secure logins for all your accounts. The password vault requires an extension that supports Chrome, Firefox, and Edge. Safari isn't yet supported.

Unfortunately, F-Secure doesn't let you review blocked or deleted malicious files, and no setting allows you to quarantine files instead of removing them.

F-Secure's Safe (which was the old name for F-Secure Internet Security) was tested by AV-Test in June 2023 and scored 5 out of 6 for protection, 5.5 out of 6 for performance and 6 for usability.

- AV Test, December 2024: 100%

Read our full [F-Secure Total review](#)

15. Eset Home Security



Pros

- Good level of antiviral and real-time protection.
- Excellent customization and preference options.

Cons

- Extremely slow drive scan.
- Didn't include the promised password manager or encryption features.
- Mac App Store purchase option doesn't work.

Price When Reviewed: Essential: \$49.99 a year for one device; Premium: \$59.99 a year for one device

Best Prices Today: [\\$49.99 at ESET \(first year, 1 device\)](#)

Covers: macOS, Windows and Android

ESET Home Security (available in Essential, Premium and Ultimate configurations) is developed by Slovakian software company ESET. The suite will protect your Macs (as well as PCs, and other smartphones and tablets, but unfortunately not iOS). We tested

ESET Home Security Premium, which offers extensive antiviral and malware protection, and Real-time File System Protection, as well as a password manager, an encryption tool – although it turned out the latter two were missing from the version we reviewed, which appears to be an error.

The software can be downloaded from [ESET's website](#). There is a [30-day trial](#) available with only an email address and no credit or debit card needed. ESET Home can also be found on the U.S. version of the Mac App Store, but the download doesn't actually work.

ESET Home Security Premium retails at different price points given the number of devices it's installed on and the number of years you subscribe for. It's usually \$59.99/£44.99 for one device for one year, scaling up from there, but there are discounts from time to time which can be seen on the [ESET website](#).

The application allows for changes such as blacklists and whitelists to be created, different levels of detection and sensitivity, access to the logs and proxy servers, reactions as to new volumes being mounted, and an impressive level of customization.

Scheduled scans can be set up easily, and it's fairly simple to designate which areas of a local or cloud-based drive will be scanned and when. In our tests ESET's initial scan was able to locate and quarantine 18 suspect files without incident.

However, issues within the software included: extremely long scan times ranging from seven to more than 24 hours to look over an internal solid-state drive, the scheduler feature failing to activate a scan, a lack of a progress bar or elapsed time readout during a scan, the software's uninstall feature failing to install multiple times, and our copy of the ESET Home Security Premium software arriving without the advertised password manager or encryption features.

While ESET Home Security Premium completes its primary task of antiviral and malware prevention, several bugs and omissions need to be fixed.

Read our full [Eset Home Security review](#)

Best Free Mac Antivirus

Looking for a free antivirus for Mac? Here are our top recommendations that we have reviewed:

- [Avast Security for Mac \(read our review\)](#) – offers a free option alongside the Premium plan. [Get it here](#).
- [Avira Free Antivirus for Mac \(read our review\)](#) – is free and also includes a VPN. [Get it here](#).
- [AVG Antivirus For Mac \(read our review\)](#) – free version offers basic features. [Get it here](#).

- [Bitdefender Virus Scanner for Mac \(read our review\)](#) – is free to use. [Get it here.](#)
- [Intego VirusBarrier Scanner \(read our review\)](#) – free virus scanner. [Get it here.](#)
- [Malwarebytes Antivirus for Mac \(read our review\)](#) – has a free version as well as a paid version. [Get it here.](#)

Best Mac Antivirus: Specs Comparison

Developer	Product name	USB	Ransomware protection	Adware prevention	Anti-phishing	Email protection	Fire wall	VPN	iOS version	Parental Control	Support	Trial	Price
Intego	Internet Security X9	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	7 days	\$49.99/£49.99 / year (\$24.99/mo)
AVG	AntiVirus for Mac	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	60 days	Free (Paid for version is \$2.49 per month for one year / \$2.39 a month)
Norton	360 Delux	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	30	\$39.99/£34
McAfee	Total Protection	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	30	\$34.99/£34
Avast	Premium	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	60	\$44.99/£39
Bitdefender	Total Security	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	30	\$39.97/£34
Eset	Cyber Security Pro	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	30	\$49.95/£39.95/yr
Trend Micro	Antivirus for Mac	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	30	\$39.99/£49
Avira	Prime	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	30	\$99.99/£85

Best Mac Antivirus: Buying Advice

FAQ

1. Do Macs even need antivirus software?

Plenty of Mac users will tell you that Apple computers are inherently secure and don't require protection. We'd argue that they are wrong, or at very least overconfident.

Not long ago, the [Silver Sparrow malware](#) was detected on Macs powered by the M1 processor and infected hundreds of thousands of Macs. And it's just one example.

The bad guys are absolutely targeting Mac users – and they're getting smarter and greedier. Cyber security is something you can't afford to ignore, and good Mac antivirus will help keep you safe.

[Macs are generally more secure](#) than their Windows brethren because macOS is a Unix-based operating system, which means it is sandboxed. This is like having a series of fire doors: even if malware gains access to your Mac, it is unable to spread to other areas of the machine. But while they are more difficult to exploit than Windows PCs, it is not impossible.

You can read more about this topic in our article [do Macs need antivirus?](#) More general advice can be found in our [Mac security tips](#); and those who have been hit by a malware attack should see [how to remove a virus from a Mac](#).

2. What features should I look for in Mac antivirus?

All Mac antivirus software packages find viruses using both on-demand- and always-on protection. The former examines individual files either during scheduled scans or when you decide to run one. This can take a long time, especially if you have a lot of files, and some antivirus products will hog your Mac's processor power to prioritize the scan, so it's worth selecting a convenient time.

Always-on malware protection protects you when a scan is not currently active. If malware arrives – perhaps via an email or a downloaded file – your antivirus software should detect and quarantine it. Quarantining a file involves moving it to a safe folder, allowing you to decide what to do with it. You'll typically receive a notification of the discovered malware, but some Mac antivirus products can be more informative than others in these notifications (something we keep in mind in our testing).

The effectiveness of this on-demand and always-on virus protection is absolutely the most important thing when it comes to choosing Mac antivirus, but additional features may also affect your choice.

Many Mac security suites now include ransomware protection. Ransomware is a type of malware that encrypts your files and demands a fee to decrypt them. An anti-ransomware feature will typically block any app from writing to a user's home folders, such as Documents or Photos, unless that app has been whitelisted. Some apps, such as Microsoft Word, are pre-approved, and you can whitelist any that you trust.

Web protection via browser plugins or extensions is also a common component and aims to stop you (or your children) from visiting infected websites or handing over personal information when you shouldn't.

Different vendors offer different add-ons, and it is certainly a case of you get what you pay for: free products will have fewer bells and whistles, but the most comprehensive Mac security suites will include password managers, parental controls, cloud storage and more. The underlying antimalware engine will usually be the same for all security products from a particular company, so you can save money if you don't need all those extra features.

3. Should my Mac antivirus include a VPN?

One of the add-ons you might find with Mac security products, although also commonly sold separately, is [Mac VPN](#) (virtual private network). For many users, these are of interest because they can mask your location and allow you to view things (like streaming series) that are otherwise off-limits in your location. But they also have a very real benefit for security, protecting your internet connection by encrypting it, which is especially useful when using public Wi-Fi networks. In this day and age we should all be using VPNs and, while we'd recommend buying a dedicated Mac VPN product, one built into your antivirus software is better than nothing – just be prepared to be nagged to upgrade to the full product.

4. What is the best value Mac antivirus?

Value is perceived differently by all users: for some the best value Mac antivirus is the free one, and for others, it is the one that is affordable but includes the most useful add-ons. We prefer to consider value in terms of which is the best all-round offering, rather than the budget deal.

That said, there are ways you can save money even on the more expensive products. Bear in mind that all antivirus for Mac apps are sold as yearly subscriptions, and often the first year has a hefty discount. When that first year

is up, there's nothing stopping you switching to another product and benefiting from that discount again. Alternatively, opt for a three- or even five-year subscription to save even more money – and why not: it's not like viruses are going to disappear in the meantime and you won't need it.

Some of the best Mac antivirus products can also cater to your other devices – and not just iPads and iPhones, but also Windows and Android devices. If you have multiple devices in your household, this can present a huge saving.

Take a look at our recommendations of the [Best Mac Antivirus deals](#), which includes the cheapest options.

5. How do I spot fake Mac antivirus software?

Because many of us are waking up to the idea that malware is a threat to the Mac, malware writers have made it their business to play on that fear. There have been cases of malware writers disguising their viruses as antivirus apps – two notable examples are Mac Auto Fixer and MacDefender. It's important to always read reviews on reputable sites such as Macworld before installing any software on your Mac or MacBook.

At the same time, don't believe everything you read. [MacKeeper](#) is a great example of an antivirus program that has got a bad rap, but it's worked hard to repair its reputation. It has gained Apple Notarization, which means the software has been checked by Apple for malicious components, and the company has garnering certification from various bodies to prove it isn't a PUP (potentially unwanted program), including an AV-Test certificate. That said, we haven't recommended it here, and that's simply because we feel that there are better options available. If you have already installed MacKeeper and wish to try one of our alternative recommendations, we explain [How to uninstall MacKeeper](#).

6. What can't Mac antivirus protect you from?

Using a Mac antivirus product, especially one that includes tools to improve your online privacy, may lull you into believing you're completely safe from personal and private information leaking out and that you no longer need to keep your wits about you. That's not quite the case. While there's no reason to panic, you should still practice caution – and there are a few more issues you should consider when using Mac antivirus, too.

First, an antivirus for Mac product may upload the complete text of files flagged to the cloud, where it can be analyzed by separate tools hosted there. This practice is normal and sensible: some malware can detect when a running process may examine it, and will then engage in subterfuge. Antivirus software makers also can access their massive databases to examine files with

characteristics that trigger their algorithms – certain elements that match known malware. As a result, security researchers discover new viruses, worms, Trojans horses, and the like. However, helping the greater good means you'll have to be comfortable with trusting a third-party with your file contents. Where appropriate, we noted privacy policy issues in individual reviews.

Second, this software may also rely partly or entirely on cloud-based checks of URLs, malware, and the like. Accordingly, an antivirus package might upload every URL you visit, metadata about files, signatures of files, information about your computer's hardware, a list of running or installed applications, and more. Companies vary on their disclosure of such policies, and may not let you opt out of this kind of sharing. We note issues in each review as appropriate.

Third, antivirus software makers also get a sense of what behavior is happening on your computer that's being monitored or blocked, and may use that information for their own purposes. In some cases, you can opt out of this information gathering.

7. How we test Mac antivirus software

Each software package is evaluated by creating a clean installation of macOS, cloning it for each antivirus product, and then booting separately into each one to install a different package. This is to ensure that previous app installations don't interfere with new ones – sometimes antivirus software treats other antivirus software as an infection.

In addition to visiting malicious websites, downloading known malicious software, and even running said malware on our Mac, we also reference the most recent reports from two labs that regularly cover macOS malware: [AV Comparatives](#) and [AV-TEST](#). These laboratories test antivirus software against sets of known malware as well as products that are grouped as potentially unwanted applications (like adware).

The latter doesn't damage or expose your computer or its files but may consume power and CPU cycles. Because the testing effectively looks at a combination of virus databases and behavior, they remain good gauges even after many months. When an antivirus for Mac software package lacks a rating from a known security research lab, we do more extensive testing with real malware.

Finally, while we gave props for a lot of different features and behaviors, we mark down products if they lack any or all of the following:

- A nearly perfect score on macOS malware detection
- Ransomware monitoring
- Native browser plug-in or system-level Web proxy
- A high score on Windows malware detection