



MICROSOFT INTERNET EXPLORER SECURITY AND PRIVACY SETTINGS

WHAT ARE THE INTERNET EXPLORER SECURITY SETTINGS?

Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) offers many built-in features, including **Security Zones**, **privacy settings**, and **cookie management**, to help you experience secure browsing. As with most Microsoft products, IE Security Settings can be customised to suit your own preferences.

WHAT ARE SECURITY ZONES?

When browsing the Internet, it is advisable to find a compromise between freely downloading unknown content and placing inflexible restrictions on which sites you can visit. While having no security in place leaves you more vulnerable to potential threats, being too restrictive compromises the usefulness and enjoyment of the Internet.

Internet Explorer 6.xx and higher offers several security zones. By default, IE places all websites in the **Internet zone**, which offers a medium level of predefined security. Other security zones include **Local intranet**, **Trusted** and **Restricted**. Within each zone, individual security settings can be enabled, disabled or customised.

For step-by-step instructions on how to assign websites to different security zones, please visit: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/using/howto/security/settings.mspx>.

WHAT ARE THE IE PRIVACY SETTINGS?

Privacy Settings tell Internet Explorer how to handle cookies (see below for more information on cookies). By default, privacy is automatically set to a medium level in IE. However, you can change the privacy settings in IE to meet your requirements. For instance, you can place strict restrictions on the types of cookies you'll accept or allow more cookies than the IE default. IE is also flexible, enabling you to turn on cookies temporarily for any particular site, with the option to delete the cookies when they are no longer required. IE can also block cookies coming from sites whose policies are at odds with user-defined settings.

See <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/using/howto/privacy/config.mspx> for more information on how IE helps to guard your privacy on the Internet.

WHAT ARE COOKIES?

Cookies are small text files that web sites store on your computer, either temporarily or permanently. Cookies can be quite useful, such as when they store your password and user ID for a website in order to enable automatic login and configuration details to be activated on subsequent visits to the site.

Cookies can also be used to track your movements through a site, recording where you go within the site, how long you spend there, and any information that you might enter while visiting.

**WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF USING COOKIES?**

Cookies are an integral part of using the Internet: without them you couldn't receive personalized information or complete online transactions. However, placing some restrictions on cookies is a sound security practice.

PROS

- Cookies save time by eliminating the need to retype personal information on web sites you have visited in the past
- Cookies help to personalize your web browsing experience
- Cookies, for the most part, can only be read by the party that created them

CONS

- Cookies track your activities on the web, thus potentially infringing on your privacy
- Cookies from third-parties (such as advertisers) may share the information they collect with others

HELPFUL LINKS

Microsoft Internet Explorer
<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/>

How to manage cookies in IE 6
<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;enus;283185&Product=winxp>