

<http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2015/08/05/stop-windows-10-spying-dead-in-its-tracks-with-one-free-app/?intcmp=trending>¹

The verdict is in: people love Windows 10. Microsoft's new operating system has been a hit with the tech press and users alike, with millions of people around the world singing the new software praise. Yes, anything is better than Windows 8, but Windows 10 isn't just "better than Windows 8," it really is a terrific piece of software that dials back Microsoft's earlier missteps and encourages productivity. Of course, nothing is perfect and Windows 10 has a few issues. Beyond the bugs —here are some common Windows 10 problems and how to fix them² —Microsoft's Windows 10 software has some features that can certainly be considered an invasion of privacy, and they're enabled by default. We told you how to opt out of several of Windows 10's spying features in an earlier article, but now there's a new free program that can do almost all of the heavy lifting for you.

MUST READ:

Windows 10: The first 5 things you need to do immediately after you install it [See more below]

In our earlier article, we explained that Windows 10 includes a number of settings that track usage in different ways. We also shared an excerpt from Microsoft's Windows 10 privacy statement that is more than a little disconcerting.

Here's that excerpt again:

"Finally, we will access, disclose and preserve personal data, including your content (such as the content of your emails, other private communications or files in private folders), when we have a good faith belief that doing so is necessary to:

- 1. Comply with applicable law or respond to valid legal process, including from law enforcement or other government agencies;*
- 2. Protect our customers, for example to prevent spam or attempts to defraud users of the services, or to help prevent the loss of life or serious injury of anyone;*
- 3. Operate and maintain the security of our services, including to prevent or stop an attack on our computer systems or networks; or*
- 4. Protect the rights or property of Microsoft, including enforcing the terms governing the use of the services.*

However, if we receive information indicating that someone is using our services to traffic in stolen intellectual or physical property of Microsoft, we will not inspect a customer's private content ourselves, but we may refer the matter to law enforcement."

Whether or not you might be considered a "privacy nut," this should alarm you at least a little.

Windows 10 will opt you into a number of iffy tracking features by default, and it's up to you to go in and opt out.

Our earlier coverage discussed a few key settings and how to manually opt out, thus preventing much of the tracking that Microsoft has enabled in Windows 10. That's just the tip of the iceberg, though there are a number of other things users concerned with privacy will want to address.

Enter DoNotSpy10, a new free app from German developer pXc-coding.

Moving beyond the key settings we discussed earlier, this app creates a centralized interface where users can quickly and easily adjust settings related to 37 different features that have a direct impact on security and privacy. This means that instead of combing through a dozen different settings screens in Windows 10, users can adjust all of their privacy and security settings in one place.

Here's a full list of the settings DoNotSpy10 can currently configure:

- Disable telemetry
- Disable handwriting data disclosure
- Disable Application Telemetry
- Disable Steps Recorder
- Deactivate and reset Cortana
- Disable sensors
- Disable Windows Media DRM Internet access
- Disable app notifications
- Stopping and resetting the advertising ID
- Disable sending write information
- Disable app access to localization
- Disable app access to microphone
- Disable app access to user accounts info
- Disable app access to messages
- Disable app access to Uncoupled devices
- Disabling Windows Update distribution
- Disable Windows Update for other products
- Disable automatic Windows Updates
- Disable Automatic Driver Updates
- Disable Biometrics
- Disable handwriting Error Reporting
- Disable Inventory Collector
- Disable lock screen camera settings
- Disable localization
- Disable Web search
- Activate postponing upgrades
- Disable Password button ads
- Disable SmartScreen filter for URLs
- Disable access to language list
- Disable app access to camera
- Disable acquaintance
- Disable app access to calendar
- Disable app access to wireless connections
- Disable prompts Feedback
- Disable WiFi Sense
- Disable Windows Defender
- Deactivate OneDrive

Now, we should note that there are still a few steps from our earlier article that DoNotSpy10 doesn't cover. Namely, you'll still need to go online to Microsoft's site and opt out of the company's invasive advertising tracking features. For complete instructions on how to do that, be sure to visit our earlier article. To download and install DoNotSpy10 for free, follow the link below in our source section above.

Windows 10: The first 5 things you need to do immediately after you install it (2)

In a recent post, we told you **how to skip the queue and install Windows 10 right now**. Your job isn't done once you've got it installed, however, because there are a few things you need to make sure you take care of right away.

Kill Wi-Fi sharing

By default, Windows 10 is set up to share your Internet connection over Wi-Fi. This is a nifty feature if you want it, and a dangerous one if you don't. To be on the safe side, you should probably just disable it right from the get-go.

Open the **Settings** app from the taskbar or Start Menu, then open **Change Wi-Fi settings** and click **Manage Wi-Fi settings**. Now, uncheck all the boxes under "For networks I select, share them with." You may also want to slide the toggles to off underneath "Connect to suggested open hotspots" and "Connect to networks shared by my contacts."

Customize the Start Menu

Ahhhhhhhhhhh! The Start Menu is back!

It's OK, you can get excited. We won't judge. Once you get past the simple fact that the Start Menu is there, however, it's time to begin making the most of it.

We published a big post on Wednesday about **customizing the Start Menu**, and we highly suggest that you check it out. In it, you'll learn how to add and remove tiles, how to enable and disable live tiles, how to resize the entire Start Menu and how to change its appearance.

Manage restarts

I switched from Windows to OSX as my primary desktop operating system eight or nine years ago, though I still used both for a while. Now, the only regular interaction I have with Windows (aside from testing it for BGR) is when friends and family call me for help because something is broken. This happens all the time. As great as Windows 10 is compared to Windows 8, I don't expect these calls to end anytime soon. And of course, four out of every five frantic calls I get are resolved with the same fix:A restart.

People... when something goes wrong with your computer, restarting is the first thing you should try. In fact, you should be restarting your computer regularly if you don't shut it down each night. That said, automatic restarts after software updates that are unexpected can be very annoying. So here's an important setting to tweak:

In the **Advanced update** section within **Settings**, select **Advanced Windows Update options**. Then, in the drop-down menu at the top, choose "Notify to schedule restart." This way, your computer will still restart regularly whenever updates are installed, but you'll get a warning first.

Meet the Action Center

Microsoft's spin on Apple's Notification Center is called the Action Center. It might not be the most original feature in the world, but it's quite useful and we listed it among **the five best fixes for annoying problems in Windows 8**. Live tiles are nifty, but having one location for all of your notifications is a welcome change.

Seriously, get to know the new Action Center.

Don't let notifications own you

As great as the new Action Center is, however, think of it like an iPhone. If you give every app carte blanche access to notifications, you'll lose your mind. Instead, you want to analyze things on a per-app basis and choose which apps can pop up notifications and which should stay quiet.

In Windows 10, you can adjust notifications settings by clicking the notifications icon in the system tray. The click **All settings**, followed by **System** and then **Notifications & actions**. Here, you'll be able to pick and choose which apps can display notifications and which ones cannot. You'll also be able to tweak a few additional settings pertaining to notifications.

It's your own fault if you don't know that Windows 10 is spying on you. (3)

That's what people always say when users fail to read through a company's terms of service document, right? Well, there is Microsoft's 12,000-word service agreement. Some of it is probably in English. We're pretty sure it says you can't steal Windows or use Windows to send spam, and also that Microsoft retains the right to take possession of your first-born child if it so chooses. And that's only one of several documents you'll have to read through.

Actually, here's one excerpt from Microsoft's privacy statement that everyone can understand:

Finally, we will access, disclose and preserve personal data, including your content (such as the content of your emails, other private communications or files in private folders), when we have a good faith belief that doing so is necessary to:

- 1. Comply with applicable law or respond to valid legal process, including from law enforcement or other government agencies;**
- 2. Protect our customers, for example to prevent spam or attempts to defraud users of the services, or to help prevent the loss of life or serious injury of anyone;**
- 3. Operate and maintain the security of our services, including to prevent or stop an attack on our computer systems or networks; or**
- 4. Protect the rights or property of Microsoft, including enforcing the terms governing the use of the services.**

However, if we receive information indicating that someone is using our services to traffic in stolen intellectual or physical property of Microsoft, we will

not inspect a customer's private content ourselves, but we may refer the matter to law enforcement.

If that sentence sent shivers down your spine, don't worry. As invasive as it is, Microsoft does allow Windows 10 users to opt out of all of the features that might be considered invasions of privacy. Of course, users are opted in by default, which is more than a little disconcerting, but let's focus on the solution.

Rock Paper Shotgun has broken things down into four main bullet points that will guide you through regaining control of your personal data.

First, you'll want to open **Settings** and click on **Privacy**.

There, you'll find 13 different screens —yes, 13—to go through, and you'll want to disable anything that seems worrying. The blog notes that most of the important settings can be found on the **General** tab, though other tabs are important as well. For example, you'll definitely want to adjust what types of data each app on your system can access.

Next, users should consider dumping Cortana. Yes, the voice-driven assistant is easily one of the best new features in Windows 10, but it also plays fast and loose with your data. As a result, many users will find that the benefits do not outweigh the risks. For the third task, you'll have to venture outside the confines of your PC and hit the web.

Perhaps this is a good opportunity to check out Microsoft's nifty new Edge browser. In it, **click on this link** and set both "Personalized ads in this browser" and "Personalized ads wherever I use my Microsoft account" to off. This will disable Microsoft's Google-style ad tracking features.

The last tip is one that most users will likely forgo, as it is a bit excessive.

Rock Paper Shotgun recommends removing your Microsoft account from Windows 10 completely and using a newly made local account instead. This way, Microsoft doesn't grab hold of all your data to sync it across machines. They tell us that's a great and useful feature, but if you want to kill it just follow the link below in our source section for complete instructions and plenty more details.

SOURCE SECTION - If you want to see the pages (Links) referenced above:

(NOTE – Copy and paste into your browser — Hyperlinks removed)

Rock Paper Shotgun — <http://www.rockpapershotgun.com/2015/07/30/windows-10-privacy-settings/>

Windows 10 brings back the Start Menu –here's how to customize it

<https://bgr.com/2015/07/29/windows-10-start-menu-how-to-customize/>

How to Skip the Queue and install Windows without waiting —

<https://bgr.com/2015/07/29/how-to-install-windows-10/>

NEW -How to reclaim your privacy in Windows 10, piece by piece

http://www.pcworld.com/article/2971725/windows/how-to-reclaim-your-privacy-in-windows-10-piece-by-piece.html#tk.rss_all

Windows 10 the First 5 things you need to do - Original Article... &
Windows 10 the First 5 things you need to do - Newer Article..... &
Opt-Out, Microsoft — <https://bgr.com/2015/07/31/windows-10-upgrade-spying-how-to-opt-out/>

Microsoft Privacy Statement — <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/privacystatement/default.aspx>

Pxc Coding — <http://pxc-coding.com/de/portfolio/donotspy10/>

Very Looong Fox News Article with lots of links and text —
<http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2015/08/05/stop-windows-10-spying-dead-in-its-tracks-with-one-free-app/?intcmp=trending>