

Malware

<https://www.mcafee.com/en-us/antivirus/malware.html>

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What is malware?

Malware is a catch-all term for any type of malicious software designed to harm or exploit any programmable device, service or network. Cybercriminals typically use it to extract data that they can leverage over victims for financial gain. That data can range from financial data, to healthcare records, to personal emails and passwords the possibilities of what sort of information can be compromised have become endless.

Why do cybercriminals use malware?

Malware encompasses all types of malicious software, including viruses, and cybercriminals use it for many reasons, such as:

Tricking a victim into providing personal data for identity theft
Stealing consumer credit card data or other financial data
Assuming control of multiple computers to launch denial-of-service attacks against other networks
Infesting computers and using them to mine bitcoin or other cryptocurrencies
How does malware spread?

Since its birth more than 30 years ago, malware has found several methods of attack. They include email attachments, malicious advertisements on popular sites (malvertising), fake software installations, infected USB drives, infected apps, phishing emails and even text messages.

What does malware do?

Malware can infect networks and devices and is designed to harm those devices, networks and/or their users in some way.

Depending on the type of malware and its goal, this harm may present itself differently to the user or endpoint. In some cases, the effect malware has is relatively mild and benign, and in others, it can be disastrous.

No matter the method, all types of malware are designed to exploit devices at the expense of the user and to the benefit of the hacker -- the person who has designed and/or deployed the malware.

Malwarebytes is an antimalware tool designed to protect against malicious software.

It scans a user's registry files and running programs, hard drives, and individual files.

If detected, malware can then be removed.

