

Better Browsing

Internet Explorer

Internet Explorer is the most commonly used Web browser available – but it is also the most insecure. The application has a history of security holes and isn't as good as other browsers at blocking pop-ups.

Windows comes with Internet Explorer set as the default Web browser – so whenever you click a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) link in a document, email, or instant message, Windows uses Internet Explorer to load and display the webpage. For security and streamlined browsing, you can easily install another browser and make it your default. After installing one of the recommended Web browsers, go to the application's *Preferences* and select *Default Application*. note: You don't need to uninstall Internet Explorer, because although it isn't the best Web browser out there, it is still the most commonly used one, so some webpage will look best on Internet Explorer and it might be worth having for those special cases.

Mozilla

<http://www.mozilla.org>

The Mozilla web browsers are open source programs from the Netscape Navigator family. Firefox is a stand-alone web browser while Mozilla is a web-browser-and-email-client-in-one. Mozilla also makes Thunderbird, the stand-alone email client as an alternative to Microsoft Outlook. It boasts a powerful pop-up blocker and tabbed browsing. Firefox is "skinnable", which means that you can easily personalize the way it looks.

Opera

<http://www.opera.com>

Opera is smaller than other browsers and has some unique features as well. Chief among these is the ability to open multiple windows, even at start up, without running out of memory. You can also zoom in and out of Web pages and navigate entirely with your keyboard.

Safari

<http://www.apple.com/safari/>

If you have a Mac, Safari and Internet Explorer are both installed before you turn it on for the first time. Safari is faster than Internet Explorer and it works well with Rendezvous and the Address Book applications that are also standard on Mac OS X. However, some Mac users prefer Firefox or Opera to Safari, so try them out!

Temporary Internet Files and Internet Cache

Whenever you visit a website, your computer automatically downloads a great deal of content from the site so that the next time you visit the site, it will load much faster. If you have a slow internet connection, this can make surfing the web much less cumbersome, but on faster internet connections, it isn't necessary and only clutters your hard drive and can actually make pages load slower because your computer spends time looking for the files instead of just getting them from the webpage's server. This is especially true if you use Internet Explorer. So, if you choose to use Internet Explorer, it is important to delete your Temporary Internet files once in a while.

- 1) Quit Internet Explorer.
- 2) Go to *Control Panel > Internet Options > General*
- 3) Click the "Delete Files" button
- 4) Check "Delete all offline content," click OK.

Another way to control how much space your Temporary Files take up is by resizing your Internet Cache. By default, Internet Explorer uses 10% of your hard drive for Temporary Files – which was fine years ago, but is much too big today. In Internet Explorer, go to *Settings* and adjust the Temporary Internet Files size to 50 mb then click OK.

HTTP Cookies

A cookie is a file created by a website and stored on your computer that is typically used to authenticate or identify your computer as a registered user so that you don't need to sign in every time you go to the website. Cookies are also used in maintaining a "shopping basket," site personalization, and tracking which pages a user visits. Some people prefer not to allow cookies because it is one way for companies to monitor your web browsing for marketing purposes.

You can control whether or not your computer will allow cookies very easily. In Internet Explorer, go to *Tools > Internet Options > Privacy Tab*. In Mozilla, go to *Tools > Options > Privacy*. In Safari, go to *Safari > Preferences > Security*.

CCleaner

CCleaner (Crap Cleaner) is a freeware system optimization tool that removes unused and temporary files from your system - allowing Windows to run faster, more efficiently and giving you more hard disk space. You can download it for free from <http://www.ccleaner.com/>