

Overview

HouseCall is Trend Micro's award-winning free online malware and spyware scanner.

HouseCall 7.1 improves on the recently released HouseCall 7.0 by providing a full scan option and an option to scan specific folders. It retains all features from the previous version, including the intuitive interface and the ability to perform fast scans that target critical system areas and active malware. It is also powered by the Trend Micro™ [Smart Protection Network™](#) and includes the latest in-the-cloud scanning, threat intelligence feedback, and correlation technologies to provide earlier detection and removal of emerging threats.

Like the previous version, HouseCall 7.1 is a showcase for the Smart Protection Network, which uses cloud-based threat intelligence during scans, and feeds threat data back into the network which is then automatically updated and strengthened as more products, services, and users access it, creating a real-time neighborhood watch security service.

With the threat landscape changing more rapidly than ever before, and hackers getting more subtle at infecting users' machines, security vendors are challenged to keep up. As a free on-demand service, HouseCall 7.1 is an ideal complement to existing antivirus security by providing a quick system check for identifying emerging threats.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What's new in HouseCall 7.1?

HouseCall 7.1 adds a full scan and a custom scan option. It retains all features in HouseCall 7.0, which is a major redesign of Trend Micro's highly popular free online malware scanning service. It keeps the new user interface and the streamlined scan process that enables shorter scan times and faster detection of active infections.

The following features are new in HouseCall 7.0 and 7.1:

- Full and custom scan options allow users to specify which folders to scan (new in 7.1)
- Support for 64-bit versions of Windows Vista™ and Windows™ 7 (new in 7.1)
- Quick scan option offers targeted scanning of critical system areas and active threats, reducing scan times to within a few minutes
- Stand-alone, browser-independent implementation eliminates compatibility issues associated with browser-activated scanners
- Smart Scan technology refers to patterns in the cloud, delivering the latest protection while reducing download times
- Smart Feedback shares threat information with the Smart Protection Network, which correlates data from a global intelligence network to quickly discover new threats
- Review and restore lets you check and compare scan results and recover files
- Enhanced detection and cleanup addresses rootkits and other sophisticated threats

2. Where can I find the HouseCall 7.1?

You can access the latest version of HouseCall from <http://housecall.trendmicro.com>. Click **Download HouseCall 7.1**.

3. What is meant by “active malware”? Does the malware have to be actively engaged in malicious activity at the time of the scan to be detected?

“Active malware” refers to malicious programs that have been installed on computers and are capable of launching themselves after the computer restarts. These programs typically perform malicious activities, including contacting a “command & control” center, logging keystrokes, copying personal data, and sending spam.

A dormant malware file is typically not considered an active threat, unless it is actually running and has installed.

4. Why does Trend Micro continue to provide HouseCall as a free service?

Trend Micro has offered the free HouseCall on-demand virus scanning service for more than twelve years. We feel it is important to protect not only paying customers but also the general public.

The threat landscape is changing dramatically, and users are more at risk today than at any time in the past. Threats are harder to detect and harder to clean. HouseCall is a great on-demand security option, whether or not it is used as a supporting scanner with another security solution, because of its strong ability to detect and fix threats.

Product Questions

5. I hear that HouseCall 7.1 downloads an application launcher. What is this launcher?

The standalone application model frees HouseCall from browser dependencies. HouseCall users will not have to worry about browser compatibility issues or having ActiveX or Java enabled. The new model uses a local application launcher to start the main HouseCall application. When starting HouseCall from the landing page, users basically download and start the launcher. They can choose to save the launcher and open it whenever they want to perform a scan.

6. How large is the launcher and what is its function?

When a user starts HouseCall 7.1 for the first time, a small executable (1.4MB) is downloaded. This launcher application runs locally and manages the download of local scanning components, such as the scan engine, configuration files, and pattern files. On subsequent scans, the launcher checks for existing scanning components and downloads them only when they are outdated.

If you save a local copy of the launcher, you can use it to open HouseCall anytime.

7. Does HouseCall expire?

Because HouseCall 7.1 uses our latest technologies, we are anticipating frequent updates. To help ensure that users have the latest version, HouseCall will check for a new version every time it is used. If a new version is available you will be directed to visit the HouseCall landing page and download the latest version.

8. What types of scans can I perform with HouseCall?

With version 7.1, you can perform three types of scans:

- **Quick scan**—targets critical system areas to detect and remove active malware; these scans are designed to focus on active threats and can complete within several minutes. HouseCall 7.1 ensures that there are no active threats by checking running processes and important registry and disk sections. It also checks for malicious browser plug-ins and rootkits.
- **Full system scan**—checks all system areas, including all files and folders; these scans take the longest, but are able to check everything on the computer for threats.
- **Custom scan**— checks specified folders only; to scan specific files on a computer, select the folder that contains the questionable files.

9. I placed some files with known malware in a folder and started scanning. Why was HouseCall unable to detect some of the threats?

To speed up scans, HouseCall performs quick scans by default. It focuses on key system areas to address active threats and reduce the total scan time. Manually copying infected files leaves inactive copies of threats and does not simulate real-world infections. Real malware programs drop copies into key folders and take advantage of system settings to autostart and operate effectively.

To check a specific folder for threats, whether or not they are active threats, run a custom scan and specify the folder.

10. What change has resulted in the reduced average scan time of less than 15 minutes?

By default, HouseCall 7.1 performs a quick scan, which can identify and scan areas that are most likely to contain active threats. By looking only at critical areas of the computer, HouseCall 7.1 reduces total scan times from hours to minutes, but is still very effective at fixing infections.

11. What types of threats can HouseCall 7.1 detect? Can it detect Web threats?

HouseCall 7.1 detects active malware and spyware, or basically file-based threats. It can detect Web threats that have already been downloaded to infected machines. However, HouseCall 7.1 does not support malicious URL blocking, which can proactively protect against Web threats.

12. Does HouseCall 7.1 replace real-time Internet security solutions?

HouseCall 7.1 provides an easy, on-demand check for active viruses and other malware. It complements, but is not a substitute for, existing antivirus software that provides proactive protection and continuously scans and monitors for threats.

For always-on real-time protection, Trend Micro recommends that users install Internet security software, such as [Trend Micro Internet Security Pro](#), which provides the most comprehensive protection available for your personal and financial information—whether you are at home or on the road.

13. Which languages will the HouseCall 7.1 version support?

Initially HouseCall 7.1 will be available in English only. Regional language support of HouseCall 7.1 may be offered depending on requirements.

14. Which operating systems and browsers are supported by HouseCall 7.1?

- Windows™ XP (32-bit) Home or Professional with SP2 or SP3
- Windows Vista™ (32-bit, 64-bit) Ultimate, Business, Home Premium, or Home Basic with SP1
- Windows 7, RC (32-bit, 64-bit)

HouseCall 7.1 is browser independent.

15. Will Trend Micro offer technical support for HouseCall 7.1?

We typically do not provide support for free tools. We do encourage users to submit feedback. We sometimes incorporate feedback into future versions and use feedback to update the product FAQs and address the most common questions and concerns.