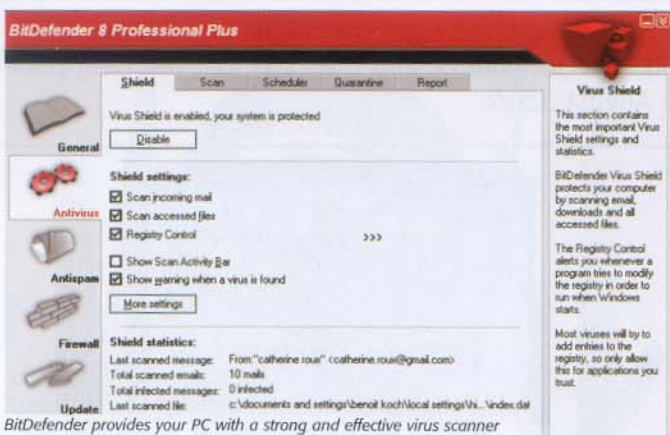


REVIEWS



BitDefender provides your PC with a strong and effective virus scanner

BitDefender 8 Professional Plus

The all-in-one computer protection suite gets an upgrade

■ Price £39.99 ■ Supplier Editions Profil ■ Web www.editions-profil.com/uk

In the old days of sporadic 56K dial-up-based surfing, many users took pains to limit the amount of time their PC was hooked up to the world wide web, which meant that while still very present, the risk of being attacked by a virus or malicious hacker was relatively low.

However, since broadband web access has really taken off in the last couple of years, the number of homes sporting an always-on internet connection has risen dramatically. While these speedy connections bring with them a host of improvements over the restrictive transfer rates of dial-up, they also whack up the risk of you being infected by nasty code.

Indeed, the risk has risen so much that to surf the web these days without some form of digital protection for your PC is really asking for trouble. So, with this in mind, it pays to invest in some powerful and well-rounded countermeasures, such as the brand new BitDefender 8 Professional Plus suite.

On offer here are a number of tools designed to protect your PC from an online assault. First up is a powerful anti-virus program that ensures that your hard drive remains free from malicious programs. Able to monitor web downloads, email attachments and any external storage device hooked up to your machine, infections are detected and cleaned quickly, leaving you free to continue with your activities.

Next up is the firewall, which keeps tabs on incoming and outgoing communications to ensure that no one is able to force their way into your system undetected. In addition, it also wipes tracking cookies from your web browser to keep your surfing habits secret.

Finally, the suite also provides an antispam tool that plugs neatly into the most common messaging clients, including Outlook, and works to keep your inbox junk-free. It's probably the least effective of the three tools, but its efficiency improves over time thanks to the facility to manually teach the program which messages are spam and which are not.

In all, this is a well-rounded package and at £39.99, there's no denying that it's aggressively priced. Factor in two year's worth of updates and we believe you'll be looking at a solid and long-lasting solution for your needs.

PC HOME VERDICT

ProcessorPentium processor
Memory64MB RAM
Hard Disk20MB
SystemWindows 98SE or higher

Ease of use	★★★★☆
Value for money	★★★★☆
Performance	★★★★☆
Features	★★★★☆

A well-rounded online protection suite at a good price – but the antispam tool leaves a bit to be desired we're afraid

OVERALL ★★★★★