

STAY SMART ONLINE ALERT SERVICE

Factsheet 6

Securing Microsoft Internet Explorer 7 Web Browser

Often, security and functionality are at opposing ends of a sliding scale in web browsers. The more functionality you allow, the greater the risk the security of your computer being compromised.

Always ensure that the brand of web browser you choose to use (such as Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox or Apple Safari) is the newest available, as the newer versions are the most secure. However, 'Beta' versions of software are 'pre-release' versions and should be avoided as these have not been fully tested under all circumstances and are more likely to affect software stability or contain security bugs.

At the time of writing Microsoft Internet Explorer version 7 was the most up to date Microsoft web browser available.¹

This article describes the settings needed to secure Internet Explorer version 7. Similar options may be available in earlier versions of Internet Explorer, though it is recommended to upgrade to the most current version (currently IE7).

The settings should be enabled for each account on the computer (whether an administrator or limited user account) as the settings only take effect on the account from which they were set.

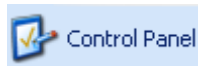
This means that each user has the ability to control the browser's security settings. However, if one user downgrades their web browser's security settings it could compromise the security of the entire computer.

-
1. Click the "Start" button in the lower left corner of your screen. The button looks like the following image.



¹ <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/winfamily/ie/default.aspx>

2. Single click on the icon labeled "Control Panel"



3. Select the "Security Center" icon.



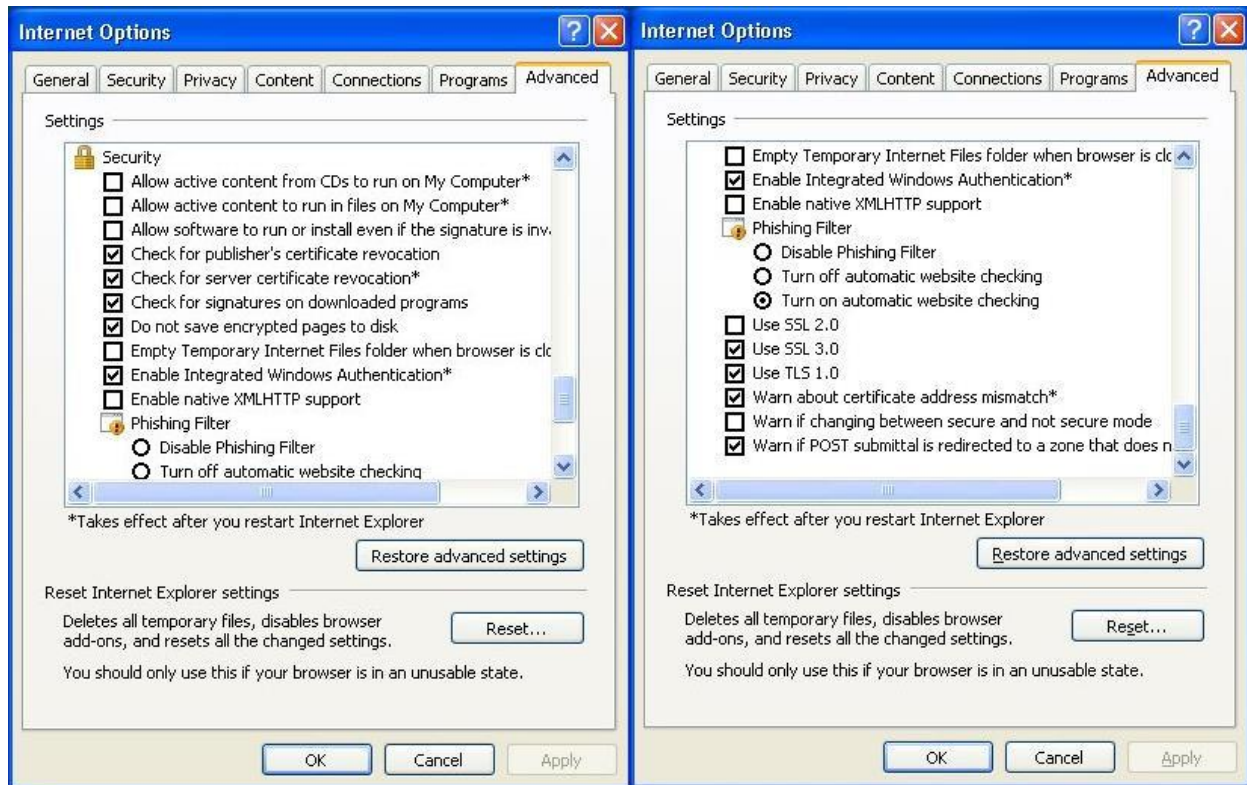
4. Click on the Internet Options icon



5. Navigate to the Security tab.
6. Click the button labelled "Reset all zones to default level".
7. Select the Local intranet zone and move the slider up to Medium level. The levels of the Zones should now reflect the table below.

Zone	Level
Internet	Medium-High
Intranet	Medium
Trusted	Medium
Restricted	High

8. Select the Privacy tab. Select the Settings Level of Medium High. Also ensure that the "Turn on Pop-up Blocker" is enabled.
9. Now select the Advanced tab. Scroll down the list until you get to the Security section.



10. Ensure that your settings reflect the same check boxes as in the images above. These are chosen to provide optimal security for browsing the Internet.
11. Click OK to save the settings.
12. If you wish to enable these features for all users of your computer, it is necessary to apply the steps described above for each user account, including the Administrator account.

Report prepared May 2008