

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 232: Bitdefender Antivirus Free Edition

Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR 715 N. Dries Street Saukville, WI 53080-1664
(262) 268-1949 wb9rqr@att.net

There are quite a few very good antivirus suites out there, and for the last few years I have been using Panda Antivirus. It works, and has been unobtrusive until recently. But, during the last few months, I have noticed that Panda throws quite a few pop-up notices on the desktop, trying to get the end user to pay for the program. I guess the business pressure is on Panda to increase its revenue stream, hence the increase in pop-up notices.

So, I went looking to see if there is anything else out there that might replace Panda. I found it. Bitdefender is said to rank as one of the best antivirus programs out there, pretty much equal to Kaspersky (which is not free). It does not nag you with pop-ups like Panda and others, so you can enjoy your computing without constant (or even occasional) interruptions. Unlike AVG, Avast or Avira, it will not slow down your system. Just quiet, competent vigilance, and that is exactly what we want from an antivirus sentinel. Plus, once installed, just right click a file, folder or whole drive, and select "Scan with Bitdefender" from the menu for a very fast scan. Nice. I have installed it on all five of my Windows machines.

Here is the easy way to do it. First, download the installer, "**Bitdefender_online.exe**" from Majorgeeks at http://www.majorgeeks.com/files/details/bitdefender_free_edition.html or direct from Bitdefender <https://www.bitdefender.com/solutions/free.html>. Leave this file, about 8 Mb, on your desktop, ready to double-click to start, but DO NOT START THE INSTALLATION YET. Make sure you have about an hour for the uninstall and new install before you start. You do not want to leave your machine without protection.

Now use Geek.exe (recommended) or CCleaner (also recommended) to uninstall your current antivirus completely. Geek.exe will do the best job of cleaning up the leftover junk. When done with the uninstall process, reboot your machine.

With the reboot completed and the machine on-line to the Internet, double-click **Bitdefender_online.exe** to start the installation process. When the installation is done, do a system scan to find any bad stuff that might be hiding, and use Bitdefender to remove or quarantine it. When that is done, reboot again. Don't forget this last step, and make sure Bitdefender starts up automatically when the reboot process is finished.

There has never been a time when a good antivirus program has been more needed. Ransomware, a new type of malware in which your machine becomes locked until you pay a hefty ransom, is striking individuals for hundreds of dollars and businesses for many thousands of dollars. This is a nasty virus class that will provide you with much grief if it hits your machine. Bitdefender is one of the ways to prevent it. And, prevention is really the best way of dealing with this problem. Happy computing!