

Using SANDBOXIE to Safely Browse the Internet



(Based on ver 3.62)

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- **GENERAL:**

- ✓ Once Sandboxie is set up, all you have to do is click the Sandboxie Icon on the desktop and your regular Internet Browser opens safely in a sandbox.
- ✓ Sandboxie uses your regular Internet Browser to go on the Internet without the fear that you will be tricked into infecting your PC by malicious websites, or by infected downloads.
- ✓ Although Sandboxie does some amazing things with many kinds of programs, this article focuses on using the Sandboxie program to make your Internet browsing safe from malware infections.
- ✓ The tips in this article are for the FREE version of Sandboxie. The paid version offers many bells and whistles, but for safe Internet browsing, the FREE version is adequate.
- ✓ Be aware that some programs do not play well with Sandboxie. For details, see: <http://www.sandboxie.com/index.php?KnownConflicts>
- ✓ NAG SCREEN: The only downside to the FREE version of Sandboxie is that 30 days after installation, a Nag screen pops up most every time you use it with a 5 second delay telling you that the Nag delay will go away permanently if you buy Sandboxie. *(Currently about \$42.00 for a lifetime license that works for all your PC's (as an Individual owner)).*

- **HELP AND TUTORIALS:**

- ✓ For an overview of what a sandbox is, go to the <http://www.sandboxie.com> home page.
- ✓ Also see the Sandboxie Help pages at: <http://www.sandboxie.com/index.php?HelpTopics>
- ✓ See this Tutorial video set (3 parts; About 20 min total). It is very good: <http://www.securitytube.net/video/578>
- ✓ You can get to the 6-part "Getting Started" tutorial for the Sandboxie program at any time as follows: *(Double-click the Sandboxie Control Icon on the Task bar > Help > Getting Started Tutorial)*

- **DOWNLOAD AND INSTALL SANDBOXIE**

- ✓ You can download the SANDBOXIE program from: <http://www.sandboxie.com>
- ✓ During the installation, you may be notified of software compatibility conflicts between Sandboxie and some other program/s. You will be asked to give permission to automatically change some configuration settings to fix it. Just click OK. *Note: You can get to this screen anytime: (click Sandbox > Configure > Software Compatibility).*

- **SETTING UP SANDBOXIE TO "AUTO-DELETE" FILES:**

- ✓ By default, Sandboxie does NOT Auto-delete anything. Everything is saved in the sandbox until you delete it.
- ✓ I highly recommend setting up Sandboxie to "Automatically delete contents of sandbox" when the sandboxed browser is closed. This will delete all browser changes, add-ons, downloads, and program installs *(including malware)* each time you close Sandboxie. To set up Sandboxie to always Auto-Delete:
 - 1) Double-click the Sandboxie Control Icon in the System Notification area.
 - 2) In the Sandboxie window; *(click Sandbox > Default Box > Sandbox Settings > Delete > Delete Invocation).*
 - 3) Click to check the box for Automatically delete contents of sandbox, and click OK.
- ✓ NOTE: "Auto-delete" usually does not include manually downloaded files. They are kept in the sandbox until you manually either Recover them or Delete them.

- **MANUALLY DELETE EVERYTHING IN THE SANDBOX:**
 - ✓ Double-click the “Sandboxie Control” system tray Icon, then; (*click Sandbox > Default Box > Delete Contents*). Close the Sandboxie Control window.
 - ✓ If the yellow “Sandboxie Control” system tray Icon has little red dots in it, that means there is still something in the sandbox that should be deleted. It could be programs or files.
- **SAVE (RECOVER) DOWNLOADED FILES:**
 - ✓ Sandboxie offers you the opportunity to save “for real” any downloaded files both after you download the file and when you close the browser. If you do not save them, they disappear when you close Sandboxie (but by default stay in the sandbox for you to recover or delete later). Saving for real is called Quick Recovery.
 - ✓ Each time you download files to the Desktop, you are usually (but not always) prompted to “Quick Recover” that file (save for real).
 - ✓ If you download files to anywhere other than the Desktop, you will NOT be prompted for “Quick Recovery”. Later, you can get to the Quick Recovery (save for real) screen by double-clicking the Sandboxie Control Icon in the notification area, then select (*Sandbox > Default Box > Quick Recovery*). Click on the desired Item/s (to highlight them), then click either “Recover to Same Folder” or “Recover to Any Folder”.
 - ✓ Last resort: If you are still having trouble saving a file “for real” AND if you trust the download website AND if you trust the file: Close sandboxie, browse to that site without Sandboxie, and download your file. Scan it for malware before using.
- **EXPLORING DOWNLOADED FILES**
 - ✓ It is best to explore downloaded files that are in the sandbox by using the “Sandboxed” version of Windows Explorer:
 - 1) Open the Sandboxie Control program by double-clicking its Icon in the System Tray.
 - 2) Click (*Sandbox > Default Box > Run Sandboxed > Run Windows Explorer*).
 - ✓ Now as you explore the system using Windows Explorer in sandboxed mode, you will see your downloaded and sandboxed files right along side regular files in the same folder where you downloaded them. *This can be confusing so hang in there.*
- **CHECK DOWNLOADED FILES FOR MALWARE**
 - ✓ There are two ways to scan downloaded files for malware:
 - 1) You can get to the file using the sandboxed Windows Explorer shown above, then right-click the file and run your normal Anti-malware program scan on it to make sure it is safe before “Saving it for real”.
 - 2) Everything that is sandboxed is actually hidden in a folder called C:\Sandbox. Your antivirus scanner can be run against that folder and will inspect all the files in it for malware. It should then be safe to save those downloaded files “for real”.
- **HOW DO YOU KNOW IF ARE RUNNING IN THE SANDBOX? Two ways:**
 - ✓ Look for # (pound signs) before and after the Browser’s name in the Title Bar.
 - ✓ Hover the mouse pointer near the top of the active browser window. If you are running in the sandbox, the window frame will be outlined in a YELLOW border.
- **MAKING E-MAIL LINKS OPEN IN A SANDBOXED BROWSER:**
 - ✓ My preferred way is to first open your default browser in the sandbox. Then if you click any links in your e-mail, they will open in the sandboxed browser.
 - ✓ If the default browser is not already open in the sandbox when you click an e-mail link, then the link will open the default browser WITHOUT being sandboxed.

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- **RUN A DIFFERENT BROWSER “SANDBOXED”**
 - ✓ The Sandboxie Icon (Free version) always uses the system’s “Default” browser. You cannot specify different browsers for the Sandboxie “Sandboxed Web Browser” Icon. (*The paid version of Sandboxie has more flexibility*).
 - ✓ If you want to use a different browser with Sandboxie, you have two choices:
 - 1) Right-click the desired browser Icon (*Context Menu*), then select “Run Sandboxed”.
Note: Depending on your Operating System, the context menu option for Sandboxie may not show up. (IE: Quicklaunch Icons or the Start Menu Favorites Icons). It does always work with the Desktop Icons.
 - 2) Change the Default browser:
 - a. Close the sandboxed browser.
 - b. Change the default browsing program to the one you desire. *The method varies for different operating systems.*
 - c. Double-click the Sandboxie “Sandboxed Web Browser” Icon. The new browser should now open.
- **CHANGES TO THE BROWSER:** (Includes adding/removing/updating “add-ons”, browsing history, added bookmarks, etc)
 - ✓ With Auto-Delete turned ON:
 1. **BROWSER CHANGES:** Sandboxie will NOT save your Browsing History or any added Bookmarks, or any other changes to the Browser when Sandboxie closes.
 2. **“ADD-ON” UPDATES:** When you open a browser in Sandboxie and you see that one of your add-ons has auto-updated, note that it will update over and over each time you open the browser via Sandboxie. You need to open the browser without Sandboxie so the update can permanently install itself.
 - ✓ With Auto-Delete turned OFF:
 1. **BROWSER CHANGES:** Your Browser changes will be remembered, but only within the Sandboxie browsing sessions. If you open the Browser without Sandboxie, the changes will not be visible.
 2. **“ADD-ON” UPDATES:** When you open a browser in Sandboxie and you see that one of your add-ons has auto-updated, note that it is NOT permanently installed. It will only show up inside the Sandboxed browser. You need to open the browser without Sandboxie so the update can permanently install itself.
 - ✓ **TO MAKE PERMANENT CHANGES:** Any Browser customizations such as (Add-ons, Favorites, Bookmarks, Toolbars, etc.) that you want to be permanently changed in your Browser must be installed by opening the Browser WITHOUT using Sandboxie, and then making the changes. *Otherwise, any changes you make will be sandboxed and will disappear.*
- **PRINTING:** Yes, you can print stuff as usual from your Browser (even PDF’s from the sandboxed Adobe Reader).
- **BROWSER IS SLOW TO CLOSE:** This is normal from time to time. Make sure there are no open windows hidden behind the main browser window awaiting user action.
- **DESKTOP “INTERNET” SHORTCUT ICONS:** If you like to use various different browsers to go on the internet, be aware that your regular Desktop Internet Browser Icons do NOT use Sandboxie to open them. To create new Desktop Internet Icons that WILL use Sandboxie to open a specific Browser program, try this:

- ✓ Open the Sandboxie Control program by double-clicking its Icon in the System Tray. Click (*Configure > Windows Shell Integration > click the "Add Shortcut Icons" button.*)
- ✓ Click OK a couple times until you get to the window titled "Sandboxie Start Menu Default box" and select "Desktop".
- ✓ Click to highlight the desktop Icon you want to duplicate. The new Icon will immediately appear on the Desktop.
- ✓ Be sure to rename each Icon after you create it. This is so Sandboxie will not overwrite it when you create another Icon.