

Browser Cache & Cookies: What They Do & Why They Matter

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Have you ever noticed a website loading slowly or displaying outdated content, even after refreshing the page? Your browser cache and cookies may be the reason why. These small files store data on your device to make browsing faster and more convenient. However, if they're not periodically cleared, they can have the opposite effect. We'll explore what they are, why they matter, and when it's time to clear them.

What is a browser cache?

A browser cache is a temporary storage space for the websites you visit. It stores elements such as images, fonts, and code to help pages load faster in the future. Ultimately, it improves the performance of websites so you can have a more seamless browsing experience, especially when switching between tabs or refreshing pages.

What are browser cookies?

Browser cookies are small data files that help websites remember your device and preferences. They prevent repetitive tasks when you visit sites, such as logins, site preferences, and site continuity across multiple devices. However, browser cookies can also be used to track

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"So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today."

Matthew 6:34

your browsing habits, interests, and purchases.

There are two types of cookies, first-party cookies and third-party cookies. First-party, or essential cookies, are necessary for websites to function properly, enabling logins, and secure navigation. Third-party, or tracking cookies, are used to track your activity across sites and may even cause privacy risks to your data.

When prompted to accept cookies, it's important to choose specific settings to ensure the sites you visit perform properly while still protecting your information. We recommend allowing essential cookies while denying third-party or advertising cookies. While you're not required to accept even essential cookies, doing so may prevent certain websites from performing properly or restrict access to certain features or content.

Why is it important to clear your browser cache and cookies?

Periodically clearing your browser's cache and cookies helps prevent slow websites, internet bugs, and security risks to your personal data. It helps you maintain better control of your privacy and overall browsing experience.

Below are important reasons to clear your browser cache and cookies:

Improve Privacy & Security

Cookies can store browsing habits and personal information. Clearing them regularly helps reduce the risk of unauthorized access to your data and limits how websites and advertisers track your online behavior. This gives you more control over the types of ads you see.

Boost Browser Performance

As cached files accumulate up over time, they can slow down your browser or cause pages to load incorrectly. Clearing the cache removes outdated files so websites load faster and function more smoothly.

Free Up Storage Space

Cache and cookie files can take up a noticeable amount of space on your device. Clearing them helps free up storage space and improves overall system performance.

Ensure Website Function Correctly

Old data that's stored in your cache or cookies may interfere with website updates. Clearing them ensures you're viewing the most current version of a site and allows forms and features to work properly.

When should you clear your browser cache and cookies?

If you're experiencing any of the following, it may be time to clear your cache and cookies.

A website isn't loading correctly. The browser cache saves files that may eventually conflict with the website's code, causing pages to display incorrectly. Similarly, outdated cookies can cause the site to interfere with the browser.

Pages you're visiting seem broken or outdated. Sometimes the cache will load older website pages instead of the newest version available. Cookies may also retain old versions of data, making the site perform incorrectly.

You're having issues logging in or submitting forms. Outdated cookies and cached pages can prevent

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login pages and forms from loading correctly, making it difficult to sign in or submit information even when it seems correct.

You're troubleshooting performance problems. Slow pages, unexpected redirects, or incomplete pages may indicate that stored cache or cookie data is causing issues.

You're concerned about your privacy and security. Long-term storage of cookies and cached data can create security and privacy risks.

You want to free up space on your device. Browser cache and cookies store data on your device, which gradually takes up storage over time.

You can quickly clear your browser cache and cookies through your browser's settings, typically under the privacy tab. The specific steps may vary depending on the browser you use.

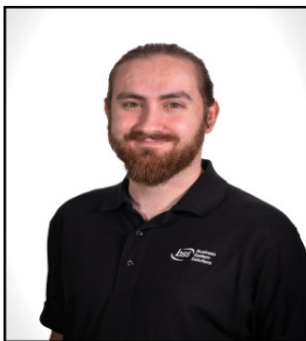
While clearing these removes temporary website data, it does not delete files, documents, or other important information on your device.

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By understanding what browser cache and cookies are, why they matter, and when to clear them, you can experience a more seamless browsing experience, improved device performance, and greater data security. Periodically clearing your browser cache and cookies can make all the difference. □

STAFF Q&A

What's your go-to coffee or drink order?



DEREK

LEADER OF OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

"I usually order a matcha with different flavorings. A raspberry matcha is pretty tasty!"



STEPHANIE

HELP DESK SUPPORT MANAGER

"I love anything caramel or vanilla! Iced, hot, frozen, I love it all. I love going to local small shops rather than the big chains as often as I can."

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Bryce Stamper (Technology Recyclers) and
Kern Darbyshire (Tippecanoe County Recycling &
Solid Waste Management District)

TENNESSEE

Jon Hoscheit & Julia Graby (Data Suites Murfreesboro),
John Laccheri (Murfreesboro.com & Rutherford County
Breaking News), and Charles Satchwell (Tri-Star Recycling)

With the help of our communities, we recycled **5,591 pounds**
of electronics in Indiana & **6,675 pounds** in Tennessee!

Thank you for helping us keep electronics out of landfills.

