

Independent Software Reviews

Pop-up advertisers have become the telemarketers of the internet age, sneaking up on their victims when it's most inappropriate. We've all seen them and, at one time or another, we've all been bothered by them. Sometimes they appear quietly, once in a while, like a slight itch that can be relieved by a quick click of the mouse. At other times, pop-ups will rain down upon your desktop in droves, crippling your browser and wasting your time. Sometimes pop-ups are harmless, offering free mortgage quotes or new investment opportunities, while others riddle your screen with offense or lewd content that is often inappropriate in most any setting.

The World Wide Web has become a haven for purveyors of the pop-up plague and they seem to be getting worse every day. If you're like the millions of other Internet users out there, your time on the Internet is precious and those pesky pop-ups just don't seem to care. Whether you surf for business or pleasure, pop-ups usually don't have a place in your schedule and using a pop-up blocker is the best way to maximize your time and get the most out of your browsing experience, while protecting your computer.

Many leading software companies have heard your cries and, in response, they have come up with excellent software solutions to block this unwanted behavior. Like any software product, some are better than others. Some are easy to use, while others can be daunting; some block unwanted content better than others; and some are affordable, while others do nothing more than whack you where it hurts – in the wallet! So how do you pick the product that's right for you?

We've taken the guesswork out of choosing a pop-up blocker. Through extensive testing and research, we have provided a comprehensive review of nine of the most popular popup blocking software solutions on the market today. Our reviews are based software performance, versatility, cost and support, as well as consumer and expert evaluations. Each product is given a rating from 1 to 10, with 1 being the worst choice and ten being the best.

Please scroll down to read our reviews, please note that all website addresses are linked.

Pop-Up Stopper & SpamWasher

Pop-Up Stopper & SpamWasher

Panicware, Inc.

<http://www.panicware.com/popupstopper-popupkiller.html>

As a consumer, if you were to put together a wish list of all the features you would look for in pop-up and spam blocking software, chances are, *Panicware's Pop-Up Stopper and SpamWasher* would fit the bill. The functionality, versatility, and ease of use, have helped these award-winning products gain worldwide recognition and have made them

helped these award-winning products gain worldwide recognition and have made them darlings of the media, as well as the retail software industry.

Panicware offers three software choices to suit your needs. *Pop-Up Stopper* gives users full control over pop-ups through advanced pop-up and pop-under controls, while allowing pop-ups based solely upon user approval. *Pop-Up Stopper* also logs pop-up statistics, closes error dialog boxes automatically and integrates into your browser. *Pop-Up Stopper* also even comes with a variety of different sounds to make your pop-up stopping experience even more fun and exciting.

Pop-Up Stopper also integrates a complete browser, windows history and file cleaner, along with a pop-up blocker and a hot links/bookmarks system. Best of all, it works with all browsers, including AOL, MSN, Opera, Netscape, Mozilla, Campus Serve, SBC Yahoo, NetZero and Juno. It blocks windows, messenger ads, spyware ads and desktop pop-up ads. It blocks those annoying pop-up ads that try to sell you pop-up desktop pop-ups. It even blocks those annoying pop-up ads that block your blocking software.

Panicware's SpamWasher is an e-mail filter, which allows users to block spam and inappropriate spam. *SpamWasher* is in any POP3 filter, including Outlook, Outlook Express, Eudora, Netscape Mailer, Mozilla and works with Hotmail and MSN. Each of the programs comes with a 30-day money back guarantee. *Panicware* also offers both programs for \$49.95, giving you the best bang for the buck. *Panicware* also offers a money back guarantee on all three packages, as well as free 24-hour technical support and free updates for up to one year.

Panicware's pop-up and spam blocking software has garnered praise from an array of trusted publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Wired*, *Time*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *Forbes* and *Time Magazine*. *PC World Magazine* named *Pop-Up Stopper and SpamWasher* the Best Internet Security Download in September 2003 and the software won the "Best Pop-Up Stopper & SpamWasher" award. *PC World Magazine* named *Pop-Up Stopper and SpamWasher* the "Best Choice" for Windows XP. In fact, it is the only software that has been accepted for sale at retail outlets like CompUSA, Best Buy, Wal-Mart, Fry's, Office Depot and Office Max.

Both programs require Windows 98, Windows 98SE, Windows ME, Windows 2000 or Windows XP. If you are a Mac user, *Panicware* suggests that you contact them prior to purchasing any software.

With its affordable price, reliability, money back guarantee, and free 24-hour technical support system, *Pop-Up Stopper and SpamWasher* are hands down the best pop-up and spam blocking software solutions available on the market today.

Pop-Up Blocker 3.0

Pop-Up Blocker 3.0

AirSpell, LLC

<http://www.airspell.com/popup-blocker/>

For those internet users who want to maximize their surfing experience on a minimal budget, *AirSpell's* affordable **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** can certainly get the job done. While it may not have all the bells and whistles of the other pop-up blocking software programs offer, **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** has all the bells and whistles of a user friendly interface and will hide itself behind your browser, suffering in Pop-Up Blocker 3.0's name before they surprise you! Once you order **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** from *AirSpell's* website, the program will be available for immediate download. Within seconds you will be able to surf the internet without having to figure out any of those subtle nuances often associated with new and unfamiliar programs. The program opens automatically in the background, closing pop-up and pop-under windows before they can get to you. Since there are no complicated menus or features, you'll only know the program is there when you realize that those annoying pop-ups aren't. If there are pop-ups you wish to see, simply press "control" on your computer's keyboard, click the link, and the window will appear.

Pop-Up Blocker 3.0 works with *all* major browsers, including Internet Explorer, AOL, MSN, Netscape, Blockbuster, and many other internet providers and blocks pop-ups seamlessly with any type of internet connection. Best of all, **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** counts all of the pop-ups it blocks so that you can keep track of how the program is working for you. **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** costs just \$19.95 and comes with free lifetime upgrades, an unconditional, no-questions asked, 90-day money back guarantee, and 24-hour customer support. *AirSpell* promises to answer all technical support e-mails the same day. 90-c

support. *AirSpell* promises to answer all Although this program may not have the award winning recognition or press coverage that other pop-up blockers have enjoyed, *AirSpell* touts an ever-growing list of satisfied customers who found relief from pop-up advertisements quickly and easily with **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0**. The company's website offers potential help the opportunity to read testimonials from these other customers. In addition, one user's testimonial was spared from 117 testimonials from these other customers pop-ups in just 11 days.

Pop-Up Blocker is compatible with Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows

Pop-Up Blocker is compatible with Windows NT, Windows 2000 or Windows XP.

While **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** may not have those extra options and features that advanced users look for, **Pop-Up Blocker 3.0** is an affordable and simple solution, particularly for those who surf the net for pleasure. It does just what it claims to do – block pop-up ads those who surf the net for pleasure. It doesn't get in their way or dead in their tracks!

Exit Killer & Exit Killer Pro

Exit Killer & Exit Killer Pro

<http://www.exitkiller.com/>

If you consider yourself a savvy web user, but pop-up advertisements are making you feel like you have lost control over your Internet experience, **Exit Killer 4.0** may be the software for you. More appropriate for those who take pride in their familiarity with the programs they use, **Exit Killer** offers a full range of options to block out the annoying charge of exactly what pop-up advertisements actually reach their intended audience. **Exit Killer** offers its users a wide range of precise control over pop-ups and pop-unders through its user interface, allowing all some of pop-ups, and allowing exactly what kinds appear in your browser, that all **Exit Killer** leaves it all up to you. Even if you're a novice, **Exit Killer** has a simple user interface offering all of the basic features you expect from pop-up blocking software.

Exit Killer allows users to control known, unknown and unwanted pop-ups and allows a 100% block of all unwanted pop-ups. The program keeps users informed of each block, allows for editing of blocks and is integrated into popular web browser's toolbars. Unfortunately, **Exit Killer** is useless to consumers who prefer to surf using less popular browsers, as it is only compatible with Internet Explorer, Netscape and AOL.

Although there are better and more affordable pop-up blocking programs out there, **Exit Killer's** control and ease of use makes it worth the investment. At a price tag of \$49.95, you can get even more control over your web experience using **Exit Killer Pro 2.0**. **Exit Killer Pro** offers the same great features as the cheaper version, but adds unprecedented privacy protection that is important to many Internet users. With **Exit Killer Pro**, users can clean their browser's cache, cookie and history files and delete them. **Exit Killer Pro** also automatically deletes addresses, secret index.dat files and recent file lists, allowing for complete privacy while freeing up space on your computer for faster PC operation. It is indisputable that more than 650,000 people have downloaded **Exit Killer** since 2000 and the testimonials found on the site appear to be that more than 200,000 people have downloaded **Exit Killer** since 2000 and the testimonials found are sincere.

Both versions come with a money back guarantee as well as web-based tech support via e-mail and require Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 98SE, Windows ME, Windows NT, Windows 2000 or Windows XP.

While **Exit Killer 4.0** is worth the investment and can certainly do the trick while keeping you in control, **Exit Killer Pro 2.0** is a more advanced program that can do the same job. However, **Exit Killer Pro 2.0** makes perfect sense for users who want to surf the Internet cleaner, faster and more securely. It is definitely worth the price.

Popup Nuker

Popup Nuker

<http://www.popup-nuker.com/features.php>

When shopping the internet for an affordable pop-up blocker that is easy to download and easy to use, **Popup Nuker** should definitely be high on your list. While it may not be the best pop-up blocker out there, **Popup Nuker** allows consumers to view a full demonstration of its capabilities, through comprehensive cut-and-paste **Popup Nuker** blocks of its own, to demonstrate of its capabilities, through comprehensive tutorials, screenshot to use control panel, and a free trial of the \$19.95 software product.

Popup Nuker will automatically block unwanted pop-ups without any user configuration and is capable of automatically blocking the windows that you want to open. In fact, **Popup Nuker** even includes a powerful "white list" which offers users the ability to specify pop-ups that **Popup Nuker** should never block, such as online banking sites that often use pop-up to send important alerts. **Popup Nuker** also blocks Windows Messenger pop-ups as well as many toolbar and spyware pop-ups. **Popup Nuker** notifies users when pop-ups have been blocked or allowed through a system tray icon and optional sound alerts.

However, some of **Popup Nuker's** best features include automatic browser history and temporary file cleaning. **Popup Nuker** also features automatic program updates, so that you will always be running the most current version of this software. With its detailed performance log, users can track exactly how many pop-ups have been blocked.

Unfortunately, **Popup Nuker** is only compatible with Internet Explorer, version 2.0 or higher. The software is currently compatible with Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows NT 4.0, Windows 2000 and Windows XP.

It may be limited in compatibility, but **Popup Nuker's** basic, easy to use interface, makes it a reasonable choice for reliable pop-up blocking. **Popup Nuker** has a no-guarantee associated with this software, its informational website makes it easy to make an educated decision. The website's new FAQ forum is also useful, but be aware that technical support questions will only be entertained if you can furnish your order number and original order date.

Also, read the fine print if you considering on of **Popup Nuker's** limited time offers. For example, the software is currently on promotion where only \$20, a CD version of **Popup Nuker** will be sent via mail so that you always have a backup and you will be entitled to a **Popup Nuker** software program and games if all you really need is a spam blocker, the extras don't seem to be worth the additional investment. If it is a spam blocker, the extras don't seem to be worth the additional in

Pal Popup Eliminator

Pal Popup Eliminator

Pal Solutions

<http://www.palsol.com/popup-eliminator/>

PAL Solutions has built its **PAL Popup Eliminator** using award-winning technology and, although the company itself says **PAL Popup Eliminator** praisegon reviews for its pop-up blocking software, other PAL Solutions products, such as the spyware removal evidence eliminator and keyboarding software and programs, have been featured in PC's Forum Magazine and Personal Computer World. However, at \$19.95, the **PAL Popup Eliminator** is an average pop-up blocking program with a few extras.

Eliminator is an average pop-up blocking program with very few extras. PAL Solutions touts its **Popup Eliminator** as the latest in "intelligent popup blocking" software that promises to **Block Stop and pop-ups** for a more enjoyable and less frustrating browsing time. **Popup Eliminator** features sophisticated popup blocking technology combined with privacy protection tools in a basic, easy-to-use package.

Popup Eliminator works only with Internet Explorer, Netscape and Mozilla, and is compatible with **Popup Eliminator** provides blocking with popup and popup windows that may come your way. It smartly intelligently blocks only unwanted popup windows and cookies, while allowing useful ones to appear and its must safely and quietly in the background so you never have to worry. Once you have **Popup Eliminator**, you appear at the back and safely, and browsing experience, not having to stop what you're doing. These features make it the **Perfect Program** for the novice PC user, but it may not have enough of the power and control that most advanced users look for in popup blocking software.

Some added bonuses of PAL Solutions **Popup Eliminator** include a customizable "black list" of advertisements and databases, which protects you from **Popup Eliminator** advertisements you don't want to see and you can even set **Popup Eliminator** to disable distracting and annoying GIFs to see and you can even set **Popup Eliminator** to disable distracting and annoying images.

PAL Solutions **Popup Eliminator** requires Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows NT, Windows 2000, or Windows XP. It offers a 30-day money-back guarantee, immediate download upon purchase and limited tech support via e-mail.

The problem with **Popup Eliminator** is that it is simply a basic run-of-the-mill popup blocker and although the **Popup Eliminator** has received high marks from critics, the jury may still be out on this program. In fact, the PAL Solutions website gives very little information about the use of the product and few details about its **Back Guarantee** or technical support system; two things that are essential when deciding which blocking software is right for you. Perhaps if PAL Solutions piggybacked its **Popup Eliminator** with its popular spyware program, for an additional freight would be worth it. However, if PAL Solutions piggybacks its **Popup Eliminator** approach to blocking unwanted window generation, **Popup** fee, it would be worth it. However, who want a hands-off approach to blocking unwanted window generation, **Eliminator** is a good bet.

StopPops

StopPops

StopPops, LLC

<http://www.stoppops.com/index.php>

StopPops, from StopPops, LLC, is yet another simple, easy-to-use pop-up program that just does what it says on the tin. It's a simple, yet powerful, pop-up blocking software. Of course, like other blocking software, StopPops eliminates annoying pop-up ads and windows while you surf the web, optimizing your internet connection and allowing you to determine just what content should be blocked and which should be let through.

While some pop-up blockers open on start-up and have the capability of stopping off-line pop-ups, StopPops pops when Internet Explorer is opened and will show itself through an icon in the system tray. Every time the program loads, whenever StopPops kills a pop-up window, the system tray will show a brief animation so that you know the program is working and StopPops will retain a count of all the pop-ups that have been stopped, showing you exactly how effective the program is. You will also configure StopPops to play a sound when a popup is killed and you can set the volume at any time.

You can also play a sound when a popup is killed and you can reset the volume. Unfortunately, StopPops has very limited capability and can only run using Internet Explorer. It requires Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows NT, Windows 2000, or Windows XP. In fact, StopPops will not work on Windows 98, actually works on Windows 98. The website notes that users have had issues with the program using Internet Explorer Version 5.0, as well as a couple of other minor bugs. The company suggests that the program is best paired with Internet Explorer Versions 5.5 and 6.0.

There isn't a whole lot of meat within this particular pop-up blocking program. Although simple and easy to use, it's still a bit limited for the \$25 price. However, StopPops does come with a 60-day money-back guarantee. All for technical support, if you can't find an answer to your question on the site's FAQ or help section, you can contact the company's support team with any problems.

There's good news on the horizon for StopPops, as program developers are currently building upgrades that will be compatible with the StopPops browsers and they will be offered to existing users at no cost. But then again, why would you don't surf using Internet Explorer?

Pop-Up Commander

Pop-Up Commander

<http://www.popupcommander.com/>

Easy-to use and effective software programs are a great find, but not when you have to break the bank to pay for effective software. **Pop-Up Commander** should not only stop pop-up ads from hindering your internet experience, but it should **Pop-Up Commander** right out of your monitor and head the day light out of them in the desert front of you. Unfortunately, this software does not give nearly that much gusto.

Unfortunately, this software doesn't give nearly that much gusto. In **Commander** is quite basic and, not surprisingly, easy to use.

Like most other pop-up blockers, **Pop-Up Commander** will block pop-up and pop-under ads, freeing up your desktop and allowing **Pop-Up Commander** will block pop-ups can choose to allow pop-ups from particular sites through a simple context window opened easily from your windows menu or taskbar. **Pop-Up Commander** can be split to begin installation, and it offers easy installation and help for users in instructions. **Pop-Up Commander** meets the most basic requirements a consumer should look for when shopping for pop-up blocking software and, with such a high price tag, **Pop-Up Commander** is just a basic for when shopping for pc software and, with such a high price tag, **Pop-Up Commander** is just Although **Pop-Up Commander** is compatible with Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows NT, **Pop-Up Commander** Windows XP, it is limited in browser compatibility, working only with Internet Explorer 4.0 or better and it does not offer any of those other extra helpful perks that come along with similarly priced pop-up blocking products like defaulting options and spam email blocking perks not included in this software package and the company offers no guarantees or any real options or support. Their website gives the program's easy to use instructions and easy download, but without any technical support, technical support. Their program's easy to use instructions and easy download, but without a what good is it?

There are no upgrades offered with the software, which brings up concerns of bugs that can often hinder the user and of duplicate software files, which **Pop-Up Commander** doesn't offer much of anything and it's hard to trust software that doesn't offer much of anything and it's hard to trust software that does not come with any real structure behind it.

The site features testimonials from some of the "tens of thousands of internet users who use **Pop-Up Commander** to stop pop-ups from annoying them," even the pictures seem a bit suspect. The **Pop-Up Commander** users look strangely familiar as if they could be any one of thousands of websites to think of similar programs. In fact, a closer look at the **Pop-Up Commander** website reveals that the program may be more of an MLM scheme than a

Commander website reveals that the program may be more of an MLM serious software program aimed at bettering your on-line experience. Affiliates of the site are promised \$31.64 commission on each sale made as a result of their referrals and that means this program will earn \$31.64 and that sounds about right. It would make more sense to market the product than to actually sell it and that sounds about right. It would make more sense to market the product than to actually

NoPops

NoPops

Trek Blue

<http://www.no-pops.com>

Trek Blue's NoPops website is flashy and the company makes some very serious claims about their software. NoPops says that they have spent years developing this product, which has been extensively tested. Trek Blue says that it beats all other popup blocking software on the market. First of all, if it took years to develop, NoPops would be a much better program and, as for the claim that it is the best of all, few should speak for themselves. In fact, NoPops may not be the worst, but it's pretty bad. Consumers who purchase the \$19.95 NoPops program for immediate download are buying blind because the company's website is packed with nothing but advertising hype. A peek at the on-line demo also reveals very little about the product and looks more like a

A peek at the on-line demo also reveals very little about the product and looks more like a dance video than a software demo.

Although Trek Blue is developing software that will be compatible with many other browsers and operating systems, NoPops has limited compatibility, working only with Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher. It requires Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows NT4, Windows 2000 or Windows XP. In fact, it seems that there may be many bugs associated with the program and consumers should be aware of the potential for conflicts that can occur between this and other programs that may be running on your computer.

NoPops does come with a money back guarantee and the company says that their "current plan" is to offer an upgrade at no cost for regular users. The fact that this is called their, "current plan," and not their policy, however, is quite suspect. NoPops may be basic and simple to use, but there are much better products on the market.

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AdCrusher

Winning Stretch Software

<http://www.winningstretch.com/adchome.html>

AdCrusher, from Winning Stretch Software, is the worst of the worst. Don't be fooled by the company's "thousands of satisfied users," or its claim that you're getting \$111.00 worth of software for just \$16.95. Not only will Winning Stretch Software give you a bunch of extra programs you don't need – some of them may not even work with your operating system.

For example, AdCrusher is designed to work with Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows ME, Windows 2000, and Windows XP and it supports Netscape and Internet Explorer Browsers. Unfortunately, the built in IP messenger blocker (which blocks off-line pop-ups) works only with later versions of Windows.

Along with AdCrusher, Winning Stretch Software will give consumers a free Internet Explorer cookie and history eraser, a picture gallery maker, a file destroyer, a file splitter, password manager and password creator, all for one price. It's hard to imagine that Winning Stretch Software can have much faith in their product when they have to have to soup it up with a bunch of other "free" Software. If Winning Stretch put that much effort into the AdCrusher program itself, perhaps it would be worth the money.

It's safe to say that AdCrusher doesn't offer much to users in functionality or in bonuses. There is no money back guarantee and, although Winning Stretch's website offers a free trial download, it is noted that the download is no longer available. In addition, those who try the free trial version are also offered additional programs once they purchase AdCrusher, in addition to the programs mentioned above. Nevertheless, with no free trial available, it's hard to say exactly what you're going to get when you purchase AdCrusher.

With so many pop-up blocking programs on the market, it would be a shame to choose this program just to save yourself a few bucks.

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