

## Ad-Aware Pro Anniversary Edition - PC

Will this keep you free from malware?

by Paul Lester published on 13 February 2009

Ad-Aware has been an old favourite of ours for a while, being one of the first free utilities designed to help scan for and remove malware and protect you against incoming threats through its Ad-Watch component.

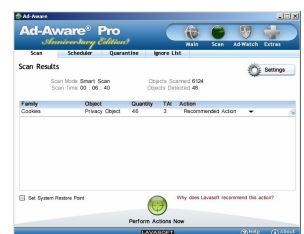
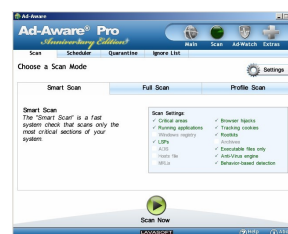
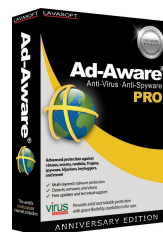
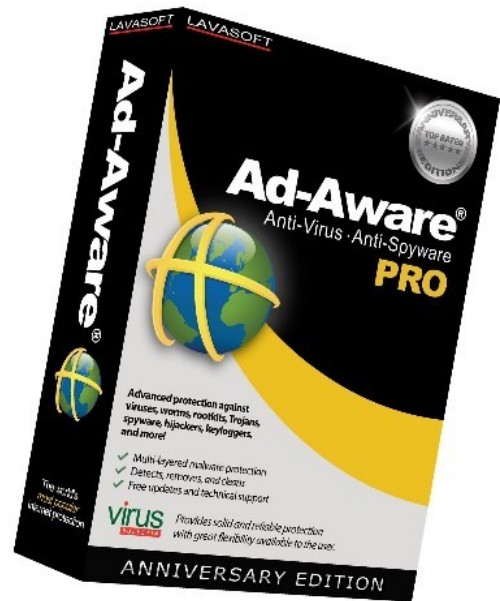
In recent times it has fallen from grace somewhat, though this more down to the increasing efficiency of rivals than any particular slackness of Lavasoft's part. The anniversary edition attempts to redress the balance by offering a number of new features and new look, which now sees the Ad-Watch component integrated directly into the main interface. This is a far tidier setup and underlines the increased efficiency of the software, which includes less load on the CPU during scans and 70% less memory usage.

An initial update runs when the software is installed and registered and from this point on, regular pulse updates keep the software bang up-to-date with the latest definitions.

From here you can run a full or "smart" system scan or create a custom scan of your own by selecting any of a number of specific threats. Each of these can be scheduled to run at specific times and scans were generally quite fast and efficient.

Problem files are allocated a recommended action by Lavasoft, which will be sufficient for most users, but manual options are available to allow, block, remove or quarantine files, either as a group (e.g., cookies) or on an individual basis.

The Ad-Watch component protects processes, critical areas of the registry and network access either automatically or by requesting action on your part, and seemed to strike the right balance between bugging you for user input and sorting problems out by itself. There's also a customisable "TrackSweep" utility here that will



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remove any traces of activity from IE, Firefox or Opera.

We tested the "Pro" version of the software, which differs from "Plus" by adding network drive scanning, command line support and the Lavasoft toolbox. This includes a process and startup manager and a host file editor to block pop-ups and control exceptions to internet navigation.

While there's not as much on offer here in comparison to more comprehensive antivirus/malware suites, Ad-Aware does what it does very well, and effectively detected, removed and prevented a range of threats quickly and efficiently. There are enough notable improvements in this new version to warrant an upgrade if you're already a fan, and if it's straightforward malware protection you're after in a security package the new anniversary edition could consider itself up there with the best around.

## VERDICT

We were impressed by the usability and performance on offer from the new anniversary edition of Ad-Aware, which is faster, more efficient and very effective and detecting and protecting you from the latest threats. The improvements to the new version are well-warranted and whether you opt for "Plus" or "Pro", should offer peace of mind to anyone looking to shore up holes in their system security.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

The latest edition of Lavasoft's anti-malware suite

### Good

Comprehensive protection, low CPU-load, well integrated

### Bad

Not a lot of "extras" included

### Verdict

As an anti-malware solution this new very is easy to use, unintrusive and very effective at blocking and removing threats

**Price** £24.99

**Our score**

**8/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**