Clearing web browser's cookies, cache and history

About cookies, cache and history

A cookie is a file created by a web browser, at the request of a web site, that is then stored on a computer. These files typically store user-specific information such as selections in a form, shopping cart contents, or authentication data. Browsers will normally clear cookies that reach a certain age, but clearing them manually may solve problems with web sites or your browser. For more information regarding cookies you can also visit: http://www.microsoft.com/info/cookies.mspx

Each time you access a file through your web browser, the browser caches (stores) it. By doing this, the browser doesn't have to newly retrieve files (including any images) from the remote web site each time you click Back or Forward. You should periodically clear the cache to allow your browser to function more efficiently.

A browser's history is a log of sites that you visit. When you use a browser's Back button, you are moving back one entry in the history log. Browsers will normally clear the history at regular intervals, but you may want to clear it manually for privacy.

If you have ever been faced with wanting to delete your browser cookies, cache or history, you know that the path to the browser dialog where this can be done involves a number of steps. However, there is a simple keyboard combination that will get you there faster.

Hold down all three keys: ***Ctrl + Shift + Del***

This shortcut works for Internet Explorer 8 and higher, Google Chrome and Firefox 3.6 and up. The graphics below show the dialog that opens in each of the three types of browser software when the shortcut is used.

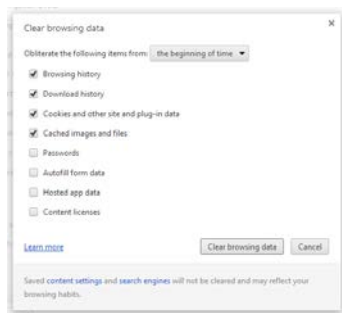## Microsoft Internet Explorer 8.0 and higher
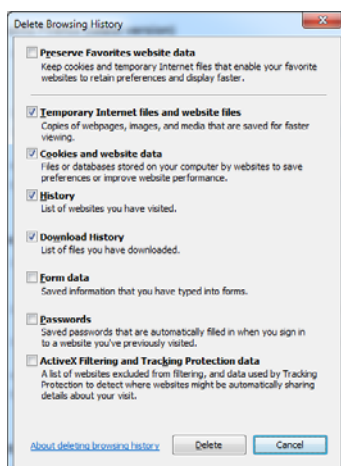
1. Confirm that the correct checkboxes have been ticked.

2. Click on the ***Delete*** button.

3. Exit (close all browser windows) and then restart Internet Explorer for the changes to take effect.

Mozilla Firefox (Latest version)
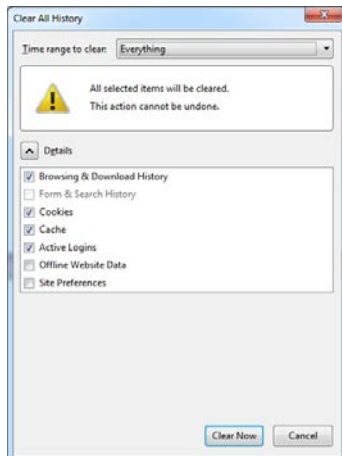
1. From the drop-down menu at *Time range to clear*, select *Everything*.

2. If you do not see the list of checkboxes, click on the button next to *Details* (should have an arrow on it) to display the checkboxes.

3. Confirm that the correct checkboxes have been ticked.

4. Click on the *Clear Now* button.

5. Exit (close all browser windows) and then restart Mozilla Firefox for the changes to take effect.

Google Chrome (Latest version)

1. From the drop-down menu at *Obliterate the following items from:*, select *the beginning of time*.

2. Confirm that the correct checkboxes have been ticked.

3. Click on the *Clear browsing data* button.

4. Exit (close all browser windows) and then restart Google Chrome for the changes to take effect.

Other Browsers

Use one of the following methods to clear any other browser cookies, cache and history. Please note that we have not included all browsers but merely focused on the mostly used.

Safari

1. From the *Safari* menu, select *Reset Safari....*

2. From the menu, select the items you want to reset, and then click *Reset*. As of Safari 5.1, *Remove all website data* covers both cookies and cache.

Mobile Safari for iOS (iPhone, iPod touch, iPad)

1. From the home screen, tap *Settings*, and then tap *Safari*.

2. Close to the bottom of Safari's settings screen, tap *Clear History*.

3. Confirm when prompted.

4. Just below the history, tap *Clear cookies and data*.

5. Confirm when prompted.

Android

1. Start your browser.
2. Tap *Menu*, and then tap *More*.

3. Select *Settings*.

4. Under "Privacy settings", select *Clear cache, Clear history*, or *Clear all cookie data* as appropriate, and then tap *OK* to accept (or *Cancel* to cancel) the deletion.

Opera

1. From the Opera menu, select *Settings*, and then *Delete Private Data....*

2. In the dialog box that opens, select the items you want to clear, and then click *Delete*.

Windows Phone 7/8

1. In Internet Explorer, tap *More...* then *Settings*.

2. Tapping the *Delete History* item will allow you to erase browser history, cookies, stored passwords and temporary internet files.