

Ask Jon...

Dear Jon,

My virus protection software came with a firewall and now I get all kinds of annoying pop ups asking me for permission. I don't know what to allow and what to deny. Help!

Dear Reader,

Those annoying pop ups are performing a very important function. Let me help demystify this a little so you can start looking at those pop ups as your friend.

Rather than go into all the details of what a firewall is and how it works let me just give you a couple rules to help you navigate those pop ups.

First, when a firewall notification pops up, think about what you were doing just prior to the pop up. Did you ask your computer to execute a function that may require it to connect to the internet? If so, you want to allow that function. So click allow, or yes, or accept, etc. so your computer can continue executing the task you have set for it. If you select "always allow" your firewall will know that this is always okay and will not ask you again.

Second, if a firewall notification pops up for no apparent reason TAKE HEED. Carefully read the popup and when in doubt CLICK DENY. Your virus protection software can't prevent infection of a virus if you have specifically (all be it unwittingly) allowed it onto your computer.

If you'd like more detailed information about firewalls you should consult the user manual for your specific virus protection software. We use and recommend Norman. Here is a link to the manual for the very popular [Norman Security Suite](#).