HOW CAN YOU TELL IF A LINK IS SAFE WITHOUT CLICKING ON IT?

Even the best security software can't protect you from the headaches you'll encounter if you click an unsafe link. Unsafe links appear to be shortcuts to funny videos, shocking news stories, awesome deals, or "Like" buttons, but are really designed to steal your personal information or hijack your computer. Your friends can unknowingly pass on (forward) unsafe links in emails. You'll also encounter unsafe links in website ads and search results. Here are some link-scanning tips to check suspicious links. All of these solutions are free, fast, and don't require you to download anything.

Hover Over the Link

Sometimes a link masks the website to which it links. If you hover over a link without clicking it, you'll notice the full URL of the link's destination in a lower corner of your browser.

Use Internet Explorer's SmartScreen Filter

Before you move too far into an unfamiliar Webpage, from within Internet Explorer, click on Tools, then SmartScreen Filter. This action will check for dangerous sites and tell you whether or not you should proceed.

The SmartScreen Filter is turned on by default in Windows 10 Edge.

Use a Link Scanner

Link scanners are websites and plug-ins that allow you to enter the URL of a suspicious link and check it for safety. There are many free and reliable link scanners available; but you should try http://urlvoid.com/ This tool should be placed in your Favorites Bar.

Copy a Link--Safely

Services like URLVoid require you to type in or paste a suspicious link—but how do you quickly and safely grab the URL without opening anything? Just right-click the link to bring up a context menu, then click. The URL is now copied to your clipboard and you can paste it into any search field.