This is an beta website by Inclusive Bytes CIC, The aim is to create one location for digital resources in Oldham.

Scanning files and websites with VirusTotal

How to use VirusTotal to check if a website or file is malicious.

VirusTotal is a website that allows you to scan files, websites and IPs against a large number of antivirus scanners, each with unique algorithms for detection. This allows the user to be able to see if something could be malicious or benign.

Using VirusTotal is simple. Firstly, visit https://www.virustotal.com. You should see a page like this (without the red markings).

In the bar at the top marked as “1”, you can input a websites URL, a file hash or an IP address, and press enter to scan it.

In the middle at the section marked “2”, you can drag and drop, or press “choose a file”, to upload a file from your device to be scanned. Importantly, files uploaded are considering public, so you should **never** upload sensitive or private information.

Once either of these options are done, you should see a screen like this.

The section marked “1” shows the total number of detections. Here it is 0, which means that no antivirus has flagged this as malicious. It is important to note that some antivirses may incorrectly flag an item as malicious, when it is not, especially if it is new or uncommon. These are called false positives, so items with a small amount of detections are not guaranteed to be unsafe. You should be cautious with anything between 1 to 5 detections, and anything more should be taken with extreme caution.

The section marked “2” is the community tab, clicking on this shows other users who may have commented on and rated the sites safety. Popular websites usually have some of these, but less obscure ones may not have any. While these insights can be helpful, remember that comments might not always be reliable.

The section marked “3” shows the creation date and last analysys date. The creation date is only visible for websites, not files. Websites created recently could be more suspicious than long standing ones, though this isn’t always the case.

Sometimes, another user has already scanned something you are

scanning, so virustotal shows you those results. The last analysis date shows when this scan had occured, and if its old, you can press the “reanalyze” button (marked as “4”) to let virus total rescan the item.

Using VirusTotal, you can take steps to ensure any files you download or websites you visit are secure and safe. Always be cautious, and when it doubt, avoid interacting with suspicious files or websites.

Made with the help and support of Inclusive Bytes CIC

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