

Today's topics:

1. Browsers with the best security and privacy in 2021
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## Browsers with the best [security](#) and [privacy](#) in 2021

In a November [Ask Woody article](#), Brian Livingston made these observations:

- Most of us use a web browser on our personal computer or smartphone every day, but very few people truly know what their browser is really doing for them – or to them.
- There are many review sites that rank browsers, but the reviews weigh a browser’s security against unrelated features – e.g., ease of use, speed, memory usage – producing only a composite score.
- But even if you scrutinized every rating in the world, no browser is ever 100% malware-proof.
- The fact is that advertising pays for most of the “free” stuff on the internet. There's lots of information on the web, but what we see is skewed by advertisers' desire to know as much about each of us as possible.

In an [IEEE white paper](#), Douglas Leith of Dublin’s Trinity College captured all the raw data transmitted to/from each of the most popular browsers on computers and cell phones and noted how much information was sent to ad trackers, consumer databases, and more.

Findings:

- Both the desktop and mobile versions of **Brave** do not use any identifiers allowing tracking of IP address over time, and do not share details of web pages visited with backend servers.
- On the other hand, **Chrome**, **Firefox**, **Safari**, and **Edge** all send details of web pages visited with 3<sup>rd</sup> party backend servers. Additionally, Chrome, Firefox and Edge all share long-lived identifiers that can be used to link connections together and so potentially allow tracking over time.
- In addition, Edge makes connections to a number of Microsoft administered domains as well as to the ad tracking domain scorecardresearch.com.

Based in the IEEE white paper findings, Livingston created the following chart, ranking the five most popular browsers from the lowest to highest number of data leaks.

Browser	Issue count	Cookies shared	Device ID	Fire-base	Hardware ID	Instance ID	Prefetch sets IDs	Telemetry	User URL history
Brave	0	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊
Safari	2	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊
Firefox	2	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊
Firefox Mobile	3	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊
Chrome	3	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞
Chrome Android	4	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	yes 😞	no 😊	yes 😞
Chrome iOS	6	yes 😞	no 😊	yes 😞	no 😊	yes 😞	yes 😞	yes 😞	yes 😞
Edge	5	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	yes 😞	no 😊	yes 😞	yes 😞
Edge Mobile	6	yes 😞	yes 😞	no 😊	no 😊	yes 😞	yes 😞	yes 😞	yes 😞

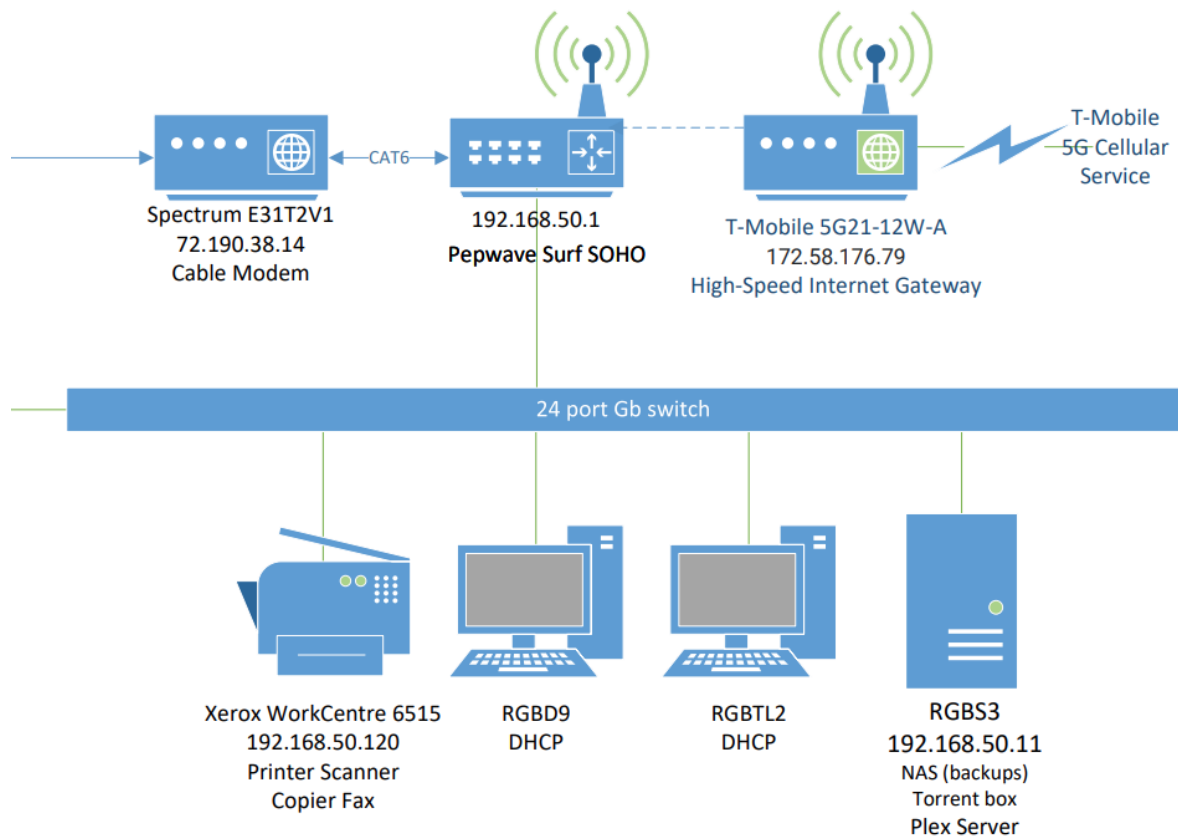
Livingston’s conclusion:

“Considering all the above research, I know what the answer will be for the dozen-odd devices, large and small, that quietly hum throughout my office and in my pockets. *They're all getting a fresh install of the Brave browser.*”

### First look at T-Mobile 5G Home Internet

Read all about it [here](#).





## Windows 11 Update

My advice regarding upgrading to Windows 11 has not changed:

- Install it on a computer you do not need for everyday work
- It is still in the “wet paint” stage: some things are missing, some things don’t work or are difficult to locate, there are no compelling new features, and there are driver issues that may keep you from using all your hardware
- It will get better over time, but now is not a good time to upgrade

[Command Prompt in Windows 11 to be replaced by Windows Terminal as the default experience](#) [ghacks.net]

[Top Feature Requests of Windows 11 users](#) [ghacks.net]

[Bitdefender Free will be retired on December 31, 2021](#) [ghacks.net]

[Windows 11 Insider Preview Build 22518 brings Spotlight wallpapers for desktop, Voice Access commands](#) [ghacks.net]

Recommended reading:

Nextcloud vs. OneDrive, Slack vs. Teams: [EU companies issue formal complaint against Microsoft OneDrive Windows integration](#)