

CLEARING CACHE AND COOKIES

Are you getting an error messages? Is a website refusing to load and you don't know why? You probably just need to clear your cache and cookies. In this user guide we will review the following:

- What is cache? What are cookies (besides delicious baked goods)? What is a download history?
- Why do I want to clear cache and cookies?
- How can I quickly clear cache and cookies?
- How can I delete cache and cookies in Chrome, Edge, and Firefox?

DEFINITIONS

Before we begin, here are some basic definitions you will need to quickly understand the process of clearing the cache and cookies on your computer:



Cache: Cache, pronounced *cash*, is a mechanism that stores a subset of frequently accessed data temporarily for quick retrieval. It is designed to improve system performance by reducing the time it takes to access data.

Think of cache as a filing cabinet. In it are files that have copies of web pages, images, text, and other pieces of media that you have recently been viewing. Its purpose is to quickly load and pull up the web pages that you are currently referencing.



Cookies: Cookies are small text files that are stored on a user's device by a web browser. They are used to store information related to website preferences, user interactions, and browsing sessions.

So, if cache is like a filing cabinet, think of cookies as a type of file- but one that specifically records your personal preferences. Cookies are primarily used to provide a personalized browsing experience, remember login information, track user activities, and enable features like shopping carts on e-commerce websites.



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Download History: Download history, is a record of files that have been downloaded by a user while using a web browser or other applications. It maintains a list of the files' metadata, such as file names, URLs, download dates, and locations. The download history serves as a reference for the user to track and manage their downloaded files.

Download history is simply a list, remembering where you downloaded the files that you have been using.

Quick Review:



Cache is a filing cabinet; filled with files that you have been recently accessing.



Cookies are specific files containing your personalized preferences.



Your **download history** is a record and list of your downloaded files.

WHY?

Why do I need to clear cache and cookies? Many reasons:

- **Updates** - We update websites all the time. Clearing your cache forces your browser to retrieve the newest copy available from the website.
- **Error messages** - Nobody wants them! There are many types of errors but the most common are 404 errors or 502 errors. This may indicate that your browser's cache is corrupted.
- **Malware** - Malware is software intentionally designed to cause disruption to a computer to leak private information, gain unauthorized access to information, or to deprive access to information. Unbeknownst to you, it can be dropped into cache or program installations. So routinely clearing cache creates an opportunity to delete malicious files.
- **Free up space**- If cache is essentially a filing cabinet, routinely go through and clean out what you don't need. Over time, cache can grow huge in size, so clearing it will recover some of that space.



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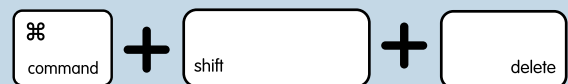
HOW?

The best way to clear cache and cookies can be determined by two things: the web browser that you are using (Chrome, Edge, Firefox, etc.), and the type of device that you are using (mobile, tablet, desktop). However, if you are on a PC, you can usually use the following keyboard shortcut commands to quickly clear your cache.

If you are using Windows:



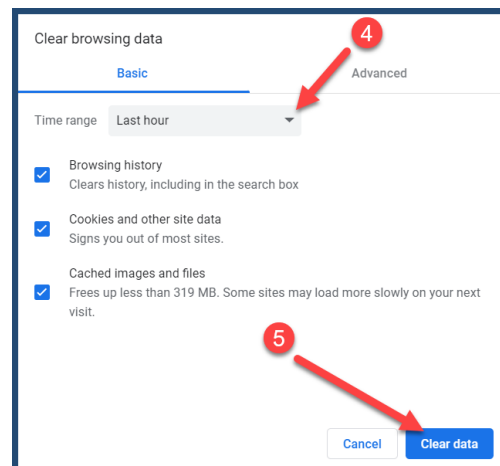
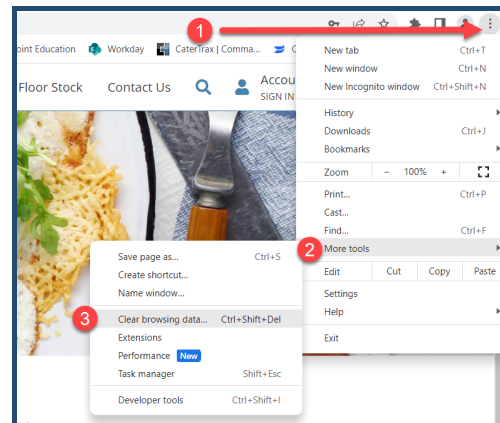
If you are using Mac:



Not Working? Can't use the keyboard shortcut? Need more specific information? We can look at what you need depending on the browser that you are using.

CHROME: CLEARING BROWSER DATA

1. Select the **three-dotted menu button** in the upper-right corner of Chrome.
2. Select **More Tools** in the drop-down menu.
3. Select **Clear Browsing Data**.
4. Use the drop down to choose the **Time Range** of how far back you would like your browsing data to be deleted. (Choose **Everything** from the time range to clear options, assuming that is your intent.)
5. Make sure that all of the boxes are checked. Click the **Clear data** button.

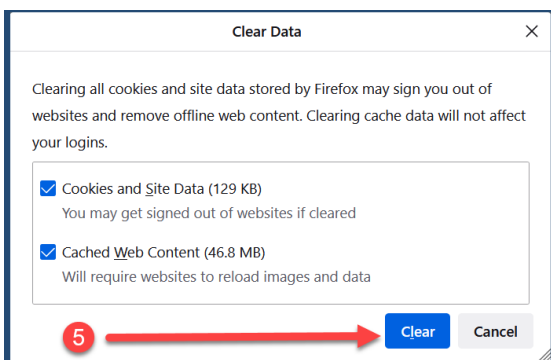
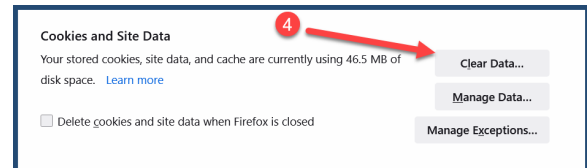
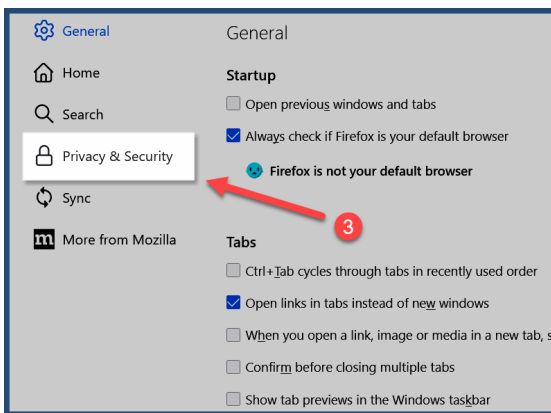
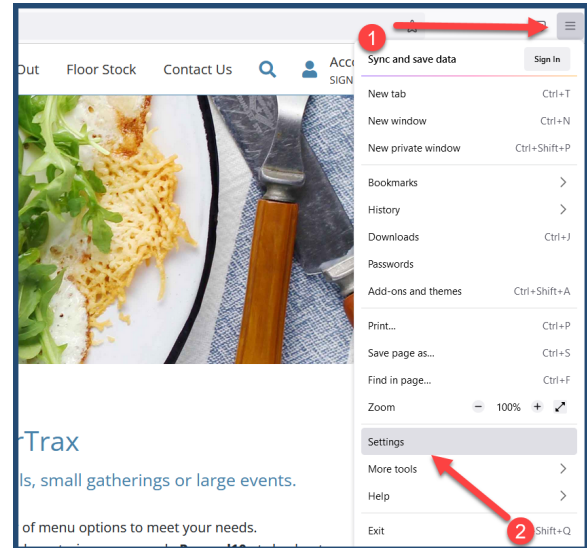


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FIREFOX: CLEAR RECENT HISTORY

1. Start by clicking the **hamburger menu** icon in the top right.
2. Select **Settings**.
3. Next, go to the **Privacy & Security** section.
4. Scroll down to select **Clear Data** in the **Cookies and Site Data** section.
5. Make sure that the "Cookies and Site Data" and "Cached Web content" boxes are selected. Click the **Clear** button.

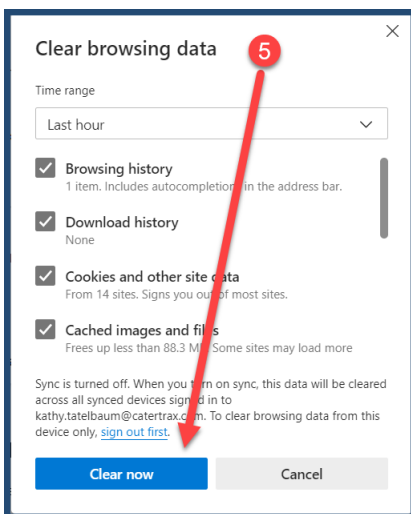
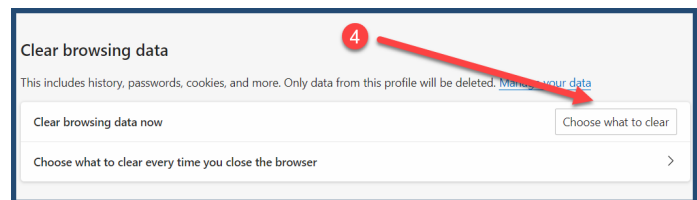
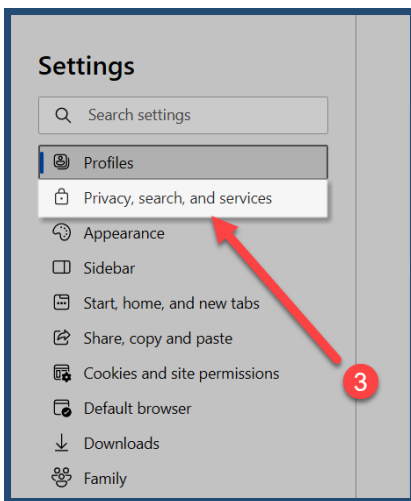
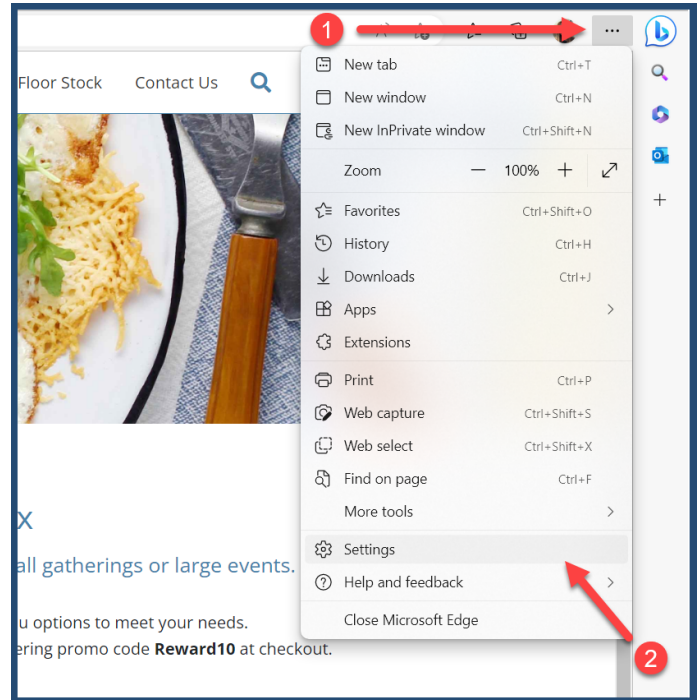


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EDGE: CLEAR BROWSING DATA

1. Start by clicking the **three dots** icon in the top right next to the Edge icon.
2. Select Settings.
3. Next, go to the **Privacy, search, and services** section.
4. Scroll down to select **Choose what to clear** in the **Clear browsing data** section.
5. Make sure all of the boxes are selected. Click the **Clear now** button.



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