



## Learning to Update Devices - KRACK and Reaper

Maybe you've heard about recent wireless security issues, maybe not. Maybe you've heard about Internet of Things (IoT) botnets, maybe not. Either way, we're going to go over two big risks that are at the front of tech news this month and what you can do to protect yourself and your devices against similar issues in the future.

**KRACK** is short for Key Reuse Attack, and it's a security flaw in nearly every wireless device that is being used, especially mobile phones. The primary use cases of KRACK are to either capture data (collect credit card numbers, passwords, etc.) or infect client devices (install malware on phones, laptops, etc.) instead of affecting routers and access points themselves.

**IoT-Reaper** is a recently discovered botnet mostly affecting vulnerable routers, network camera systems and network storage devices. It is potentially similar in nature to the Mirai botnet that was used last year to disrupt Internet services in Europe and North America. It's currently unknown what Reaper's intended use is, but the most likely case is an Internet attack against a network target (Mirai targeted the network company Dyn which slowed down or denied access to many popular sites that rely on Dyn's infrastructure).

Both threats can be avoided by updating the firmware or operating software on affected devices (if the manufacturers have released patches). Depending on the type of device, getting these security updates happens in different ways.

**Laptops** - Make sure your operating system is set to automatically update, and run those updates when your computer tells you they're available. Microsoft has released a fix, Apple's update should be released shortly and Linux Debian builds have a patch available.

**Phones\Tablets** - Check for system updates and install them when available. Newer phones and tablets will definitely receive updates, but older devices, especially older Android devices may not be getting a patch. If you're not running one of the latest versions of Android, now may be a good time to get a new device that is receiving security updates.

**Routers\NAS** - Generally you have to download the latest firmware from your router or NAS manufacturer's website to a computer, log in to the device from a web browser, then find the section for firmware and update it that way. If you're not sure how to update but want to make sure you're protected, contact a computer pro. Some have a built-in update check, but you still have to log in to run the updates. You should also make sure to change the default username\password that shipped with your wireless router.

**Other** - This is the difficult category. Smart lightbulbs, switches, cameras, etc. are all over the place. If you have equipment from common or popular electronics manufacturers, you should be able to check their websites or manuals for update procedures, and some devices may update on their own. If you have a camera system from a brand you've never heard of, chances are it's not getting an update. It might be best to take it off your home network. While you're going through all the wireless devices in your home, it's also a good idea to make sure you change the default device passwords.



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## **Tech Tip: Your Computer Is Infected!**

Chances are if something has popped up telling you in bright, blinking letters that your computer is infected, it's trying to give you a virus. It's a good idea to know what your computer's antivirus program looks like and what the legitimate warnings look like. They should look professional and most likely pop up in your system tray near the computer clock.

If you're seeing a message that doesn't look right, reboot the computer or disconnect from the

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Internet. Often closing out of the browser or restarting the computer is enough to make the fake ad go away. Sometimes you may need to start your browser in safe mode to stop it from reopening the attack page.

If you're stuck for whatever reason, call a local expert. Never dial the phone number in the warning or go to any links you see on the message.

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