

# Pop-up Ads - What they are, red flags, and how to block the bad ones

Gridinsoft Help Center

## What it is

A pop-up ad is a small window or overlay that appears on top of the page you are viewing. It is a legit advertising format, but criminals also abuse it for fake alerts, scareware, malvertising, and bogus update prompts. For common examples and fixes, see our pop-ups explainer.

## Why it matters

Annoying at best, pop-ups can also trick you into installing malware, handing over card details, or turning on spammy browser notifications. On phones, they can hijack the screen and push aggressive redirects.

## Red flags

- "Your device is infected" or "Update required" pop-ups demanding urgent clicks
- Pages asking to Allow notifications for access to content
- Tabs that reopen themselves or trigger endless redirects
- Downloads that start without a clear, intentional click

## Quick fixes if you're stuck

- Close the tab or kill the browser - do not click inside the pop-up.
- In browser settings, remove unwanted notifications and extensions.
- Clear cache and reset the homepage/search to defaults.
- Run a reputable anti-malware scan and reboot.

## Prevent it

- Keep your browser and OS updated.
- Use a trusted ad blocker and DNS or web filtering.
- Avoid pirated streams, cracks, and shady download portals.
- Be cautious with Allow notifications prompts - block by default.
- Install software only from official sources.