

Are You Being Watched Through Your Webcam?

Posted on [October 2, 2013](#) by [ZoneAlarm](#)



A few clicks of the mouse, and your webcam is activated and ready to be used. But have you considered the possibility that someone else could be watching you through your own webcam? The thought of this probably sends chills down your spine, and it should, as this is very real- and extremely creepy.

How Webcams Get Hacked

[Hackers](#) utilize a type of software called remote access tool (RAT) that allows them to remotely access a computer as if they were physically there. Though RATs were designed for legal purposes, like allowing a technician to remotely access a user's computer to troubleshoot problems without having to physically be there, hackers exploit this software for their own benefit.

Typically, a hacker lures an unsuspecting user into clicking on a link, opening a picture or email attachment, visiting a specific website, or downloading some software. After the user falls for one of these, the RAT software is secretly installed onto the user's computer. The hacker now has remote access to the user's computer.

Preventing Your Webcam from Being Hacked

Many articles recommend covering the lens of the webcam with a piece of paper to prevent hackers from spying on you. But doing that alone is brushing the real problem under a rug. Having your webcam hacked means your PC has been compromised by some malware, and you need to take immediate action to get rid of it.

Fortunately, here are some easy things you can do that can prevent your computer from being compromised in the first place.

Don't be click-happy

Hackers lure victims into installing RAT software onto their PC by disguising links, pictures, or email attachments as something desirable, such as free music, movies, or desktop wallpapers. Be wary of suspicious websites that

offer similar items. Also be cautious about clicking on shortened links you may find on social media sites.

Equip your computer with an antivirus and two-way firewall

Having an [antivirus and two-way firewall](#) is minimum security any PC should be equipped with. An up-to-date and active antivirus helps to detect and remove malware from infecting your computer. A [two-way firewall](#) monitors inbound and outbound traffic to-and-from your computer.

Be cautious of tech support offering remote assistance

Hackers may physically contact you by claiming there are problems with your computer. They'll try to persuade you to install a program that allows them remote access to your computer, so that they can "fix" the problem. Simply ignore calls from those who claim they are tech support.

Secure your wireless connection

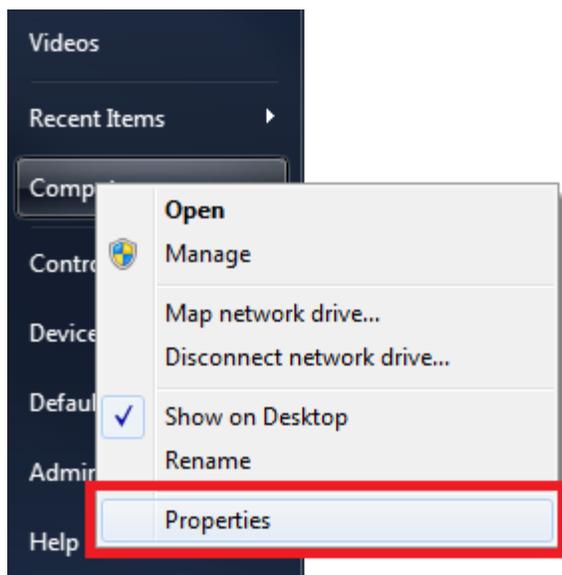
A hacker can easily hack into unsecure Wi-Fi networks with a laptop, antenna, and widely available software. Don't make it easy for them. Secure your wireless connection with a strong and complex password.

Disable Windows Remote Access

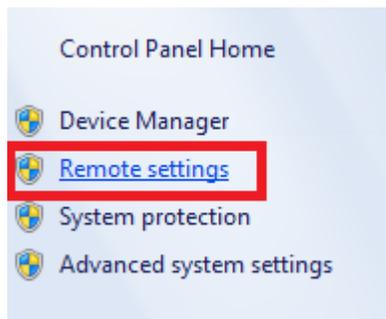
Though most RATs deployed by malware are custom tools, disabling Windows Remote Assistance and Remote Desktop is one thing you can do to prevent hackers from remotely accessing your computer.

To disable Remote Assistance and Remote Desktop for Windows 7, follow these steps:

1. Click on Start and find Computer
2. Right-click on Computer and select Properties

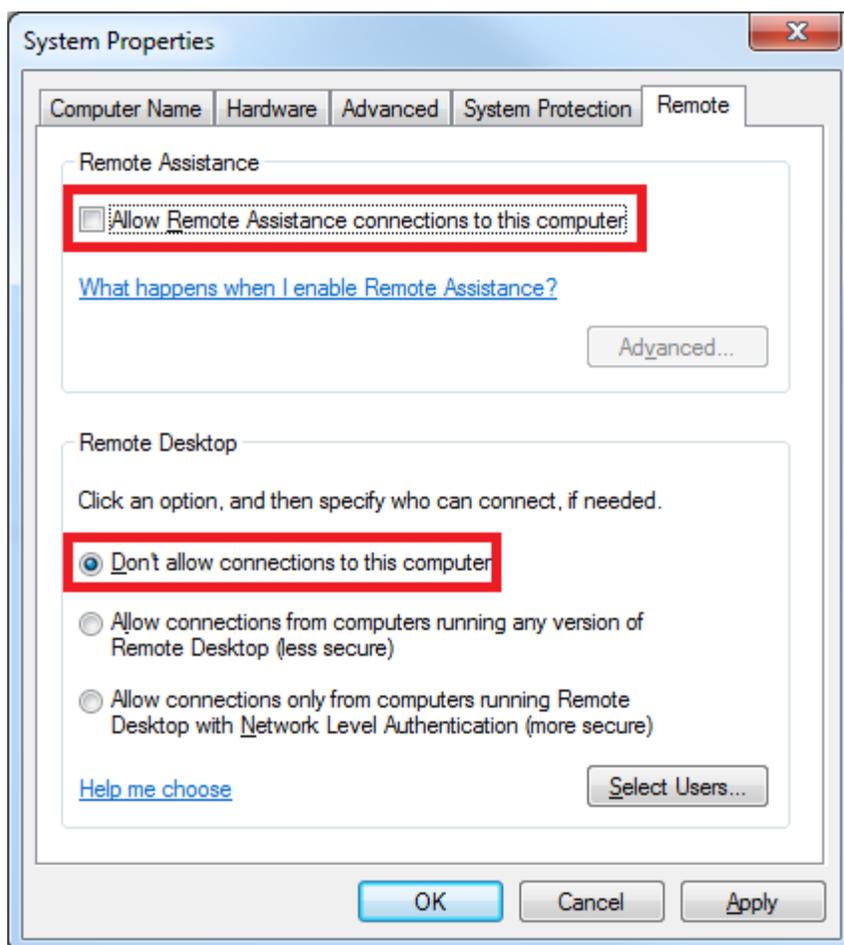


3. Click on Remote settings on the left-hand side



4a. Under the Remote tab, uncheck "Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer."

4b. Under Remote tab, click on "Don't allow connections to this computer"



5. Click OK

Share the knowledge!

[you-being-watched-through-your-webcam/](#) .

3 THOUGHTS ON "ARE YOU BEING WATCHED THROUGH YOUR WEBCAM?"



Cesar Figueiredo

on **October 2, 2013 at 4:50 pm** said:

I mean, I immediately disabled Windows Remote Access. All the rest is already part of my system and procedures. Thanks again.



G. Kelly

on **October 18, 2013 at 5:16 pm** said:

I had enabled mine some time back and forgot to reverse it. Thanks for the reminder.



Steve B

on **October 22, 2013 at 8:14 am** said:

With windows 8.1 upgraded on two separate laptops the remote desktop option is no longer here. Unsure of what options to change in the new standalone app.



ZoneAlarm

on **October 22, 2013 at 11:15 am** said:

Hi Steve. Accessing remote desktop should be the same as in Windows 8. Click start, find Computer, right-click on it,