

How and Why Do I Clear a Web Browser's Cache?

When a web browser (e.g. Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Chrome, or Safari) is used to visit a website, the browser “caches” (stores) information regarding the site (e.g. items or pages viewed, listened to, or purchased), so the browser doesn't have to retrieve the information from the original location every time the same page or file is accessed. This helps speed a web search.

IMPORTANT TIP:

It is important to “clear the cache” and, sometimes, a web browser's “history” in order to avoid error messages when accessing sites or loading software. Now that many applications, such as Datatel UIWeb, WebAdvisor, and Live 25, used here at WSU are web-based, this has become an occasional issue. Web browsers usually are set to allow only a specific amount of storage for the cached “temporary Internet files”. If the specified limit is reached, error messages might prevent a user from accessing a desired site or web-based application.

While visiting a web site, a “cookie” is created by the browser and stored on a user's computer. Cookies store information about the user, such as login information for the site, selected shopping items, and provides the information to the website visited.

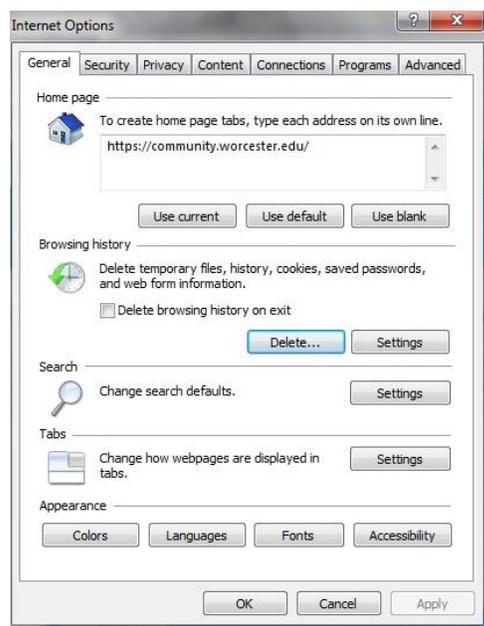
Each visited web address is stored in the web browser's “history”. The user can return to a site from the browser's history list (log) or create a bookmark to easily return to a site.

Browsers usually clear a computer's cache and history, periodically, **but it is good idea to clear cache, cookies, and history, manually when having a problem with a browser or when installing certain types of computer software** if you don't already do this procedure on a routine basis.

If this document does not provide instructions for the browser version you are using, access your selected browser and search for Help on “Clearing temporary Internet files” or “Clearing Cache”.

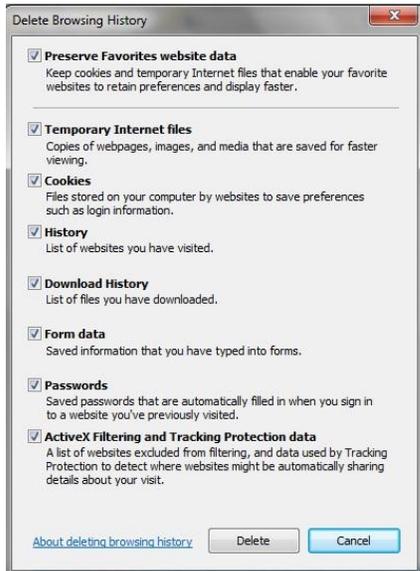
Internet Explorer 8 and above for Windows

1. **From the Tools menu, select Internet Options.**
2. Make certain the **General** tab is active, and in the Browsing history area, click the **Delete** button.



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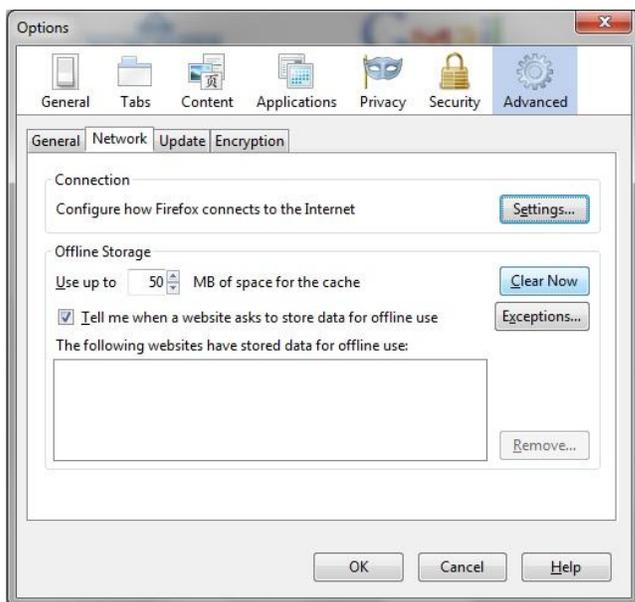
TIP: Before deleting browsing "History" it's a good idea to save sites you wish to visit again as Internet Explorer "Favorites". That way, you easily will be able to return to them by choosing the site name from the Internet Explorer Favorites menu. . . When the site is active, just select the Favorites menu and choose **Add to Favorites**. You can click the **Add** button to add the web address to Favorites or click the Folder button to create a folder under Favorites in which to store the selected web address.



3. Click the **Delete** button to clear all of the checked items.
4. Click **OK** after the process is finished (It usually takes a minute or so).

Mozilla Firefox 3.6 and Above for Windows

1. From the **Tools** menu, select **Options**.

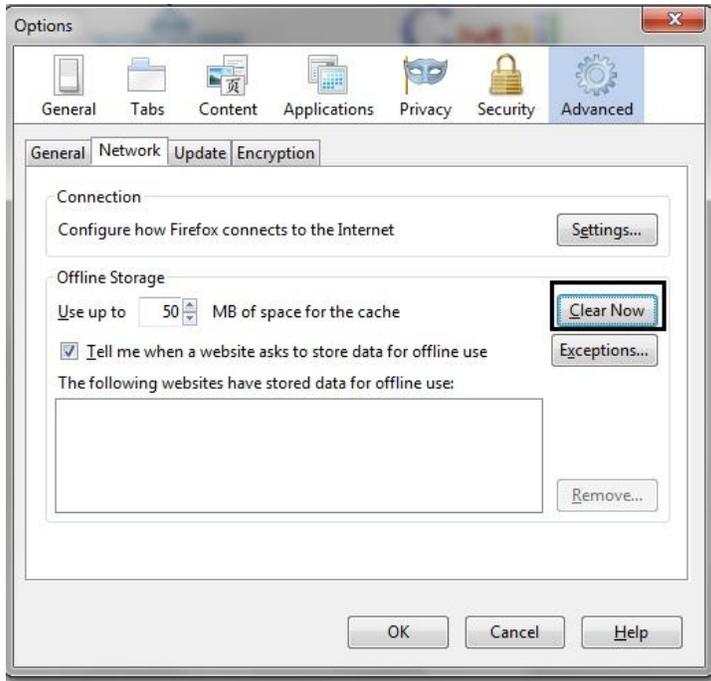


2. At the top of the Options dialog box, click **Advanced**.

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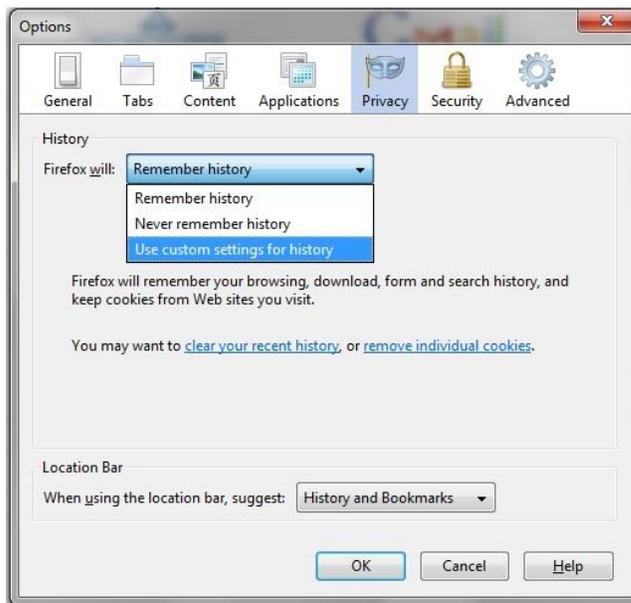
3. With the Advanced option selected, click the **Network** tab to bring it in front of the other tabs.



4. Choose the **Clear Now** button and click **OK**.

Mozilla Settings can be set to automatically clear the browsing history.

1. From the **Tools** menu, select **Internet Options**.
2. At the top of the Options dialog box, click **Privacy**.

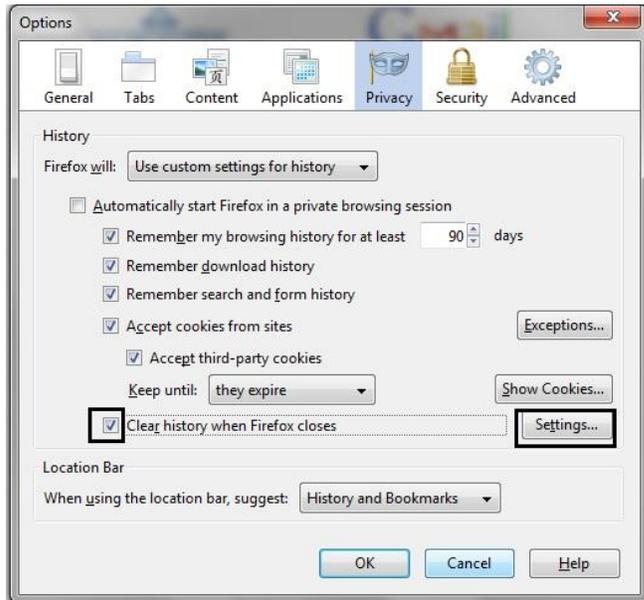


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3. On the Privacy Options dialog box, select **Use custom settings for history**, from the **Firefox will: drop-down menu** (See the expanded menu in the graphic on Page 3).

The following dialog box displays with active options designated with a checkmark.



4. To the **right** of “Clear history when Firefox closes”, click the **Settings** button.

The button only will be active (available) if the option has been marked with a check.



5. Options you wish to clear automatically should be marked with a check and click **OK** to **accept** the changes and return to the previous dialog box, and again to return to the Mozilla Firefox web page designated as the “Home” page.