



A security suite is a must if your PC runs the Windows operating system. In addition to keeping viruses and malicious software at bay, a good security suite also protects you from accidentally visiting webpages with malicious content and even offers a variety of utilities for protecting privacy and optimising system performance.

These include a startup program manager, file shredder, registry cleaner and so on. The case is a bit different with Android smartphones that have been around for a couple of years now. Viruses and malware aren't a big threat, but what's more important is to provide an all-round package that includes handy features such as backup, app locker, task killer and an anti-theft utility. Hence, most antivirus apps for Android smartphones and tablets combine basic protection with a bunch of useful stuff.

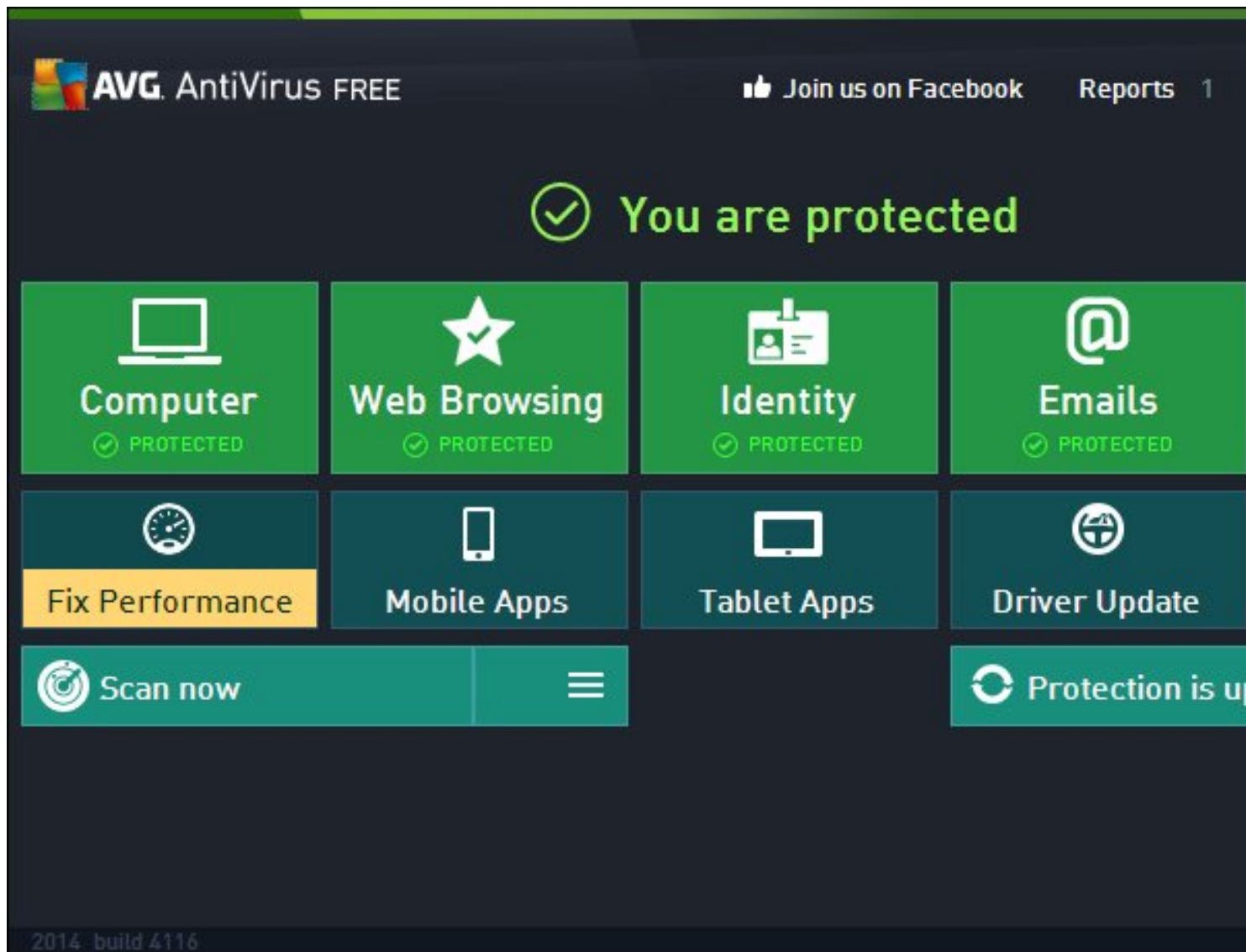
AVG AntiVirus Free for Android is no different from the rest. Let's find out what kind of protection and usefulness this app offers.

Layout and Features : 7.5/10

The main interface of the app comprises four main components—Protection, Performance, Anti-Theft and Privacy. The protection status is displayed at the bottom of the interface along with a bold icon, which when touched, displays the unresolved issues.

By default, the Protection module automatically scans newly installed apps and incoming text messages in real time and protects the user from suspicious websites. There's also a file

scanner with which you can scan files on the memory card and commonly used folders such as Pictures, Music, and Video. A big drawback here is that selecting files you wish to scan can be quite painful as there's no option for selecting all files or an entire folder—files have to be selected one-by-one using checkboxes. The app can also be set to perform an auto-scan once a day or once a week. Lastly, just like antivirus programs for PC, this one too has a virus database that needs to be updated to detect the latest threats.

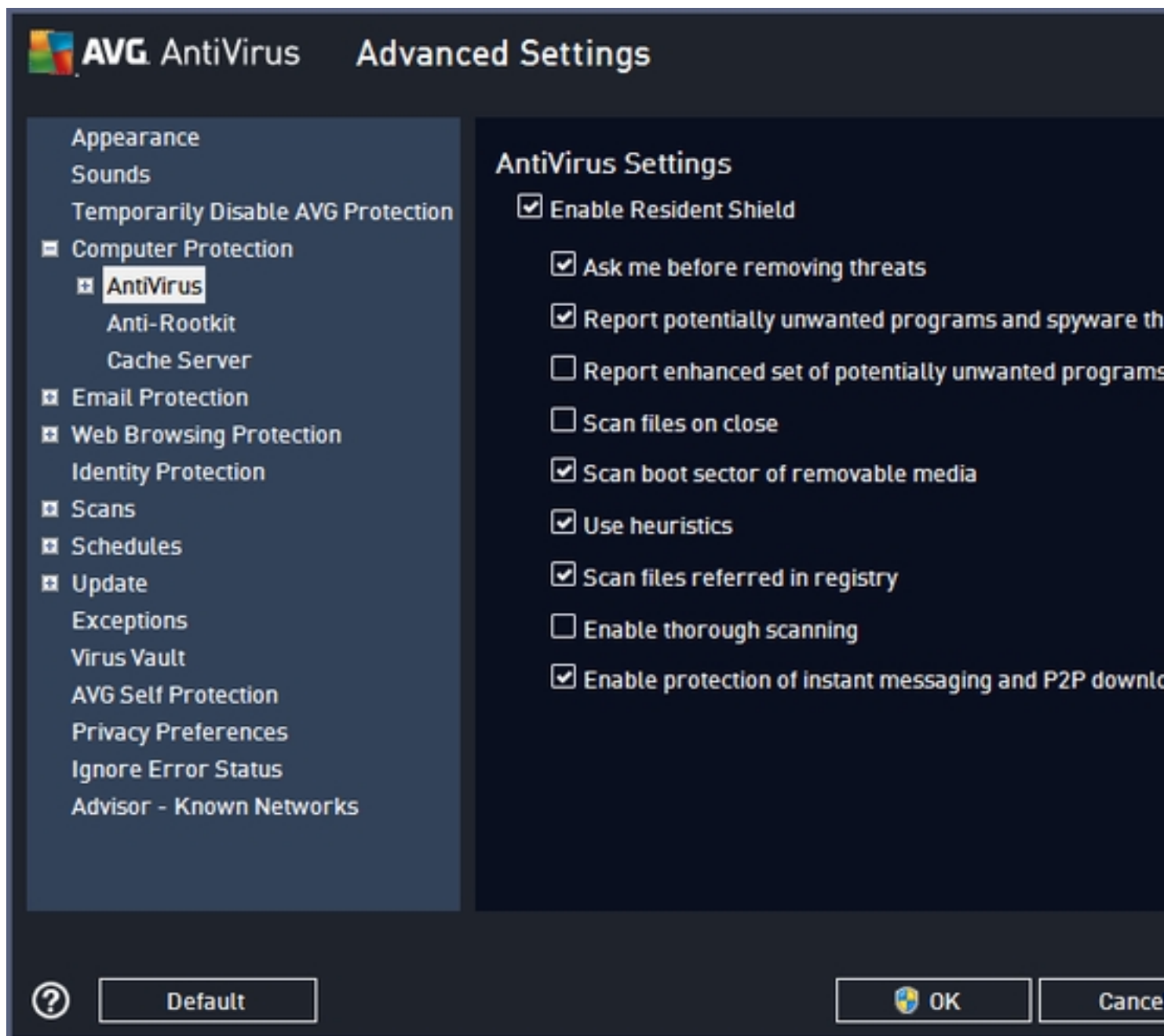


Installation : 5/10

On exactly two of my twelve malware-infested test systems AVG installed and scanned without any problems. The installer crashed on another two, but worked OK when I retried the installation. In several cases the full scan halted with an "unspecified error"; trying the scan one

or two more times fixed most of these.

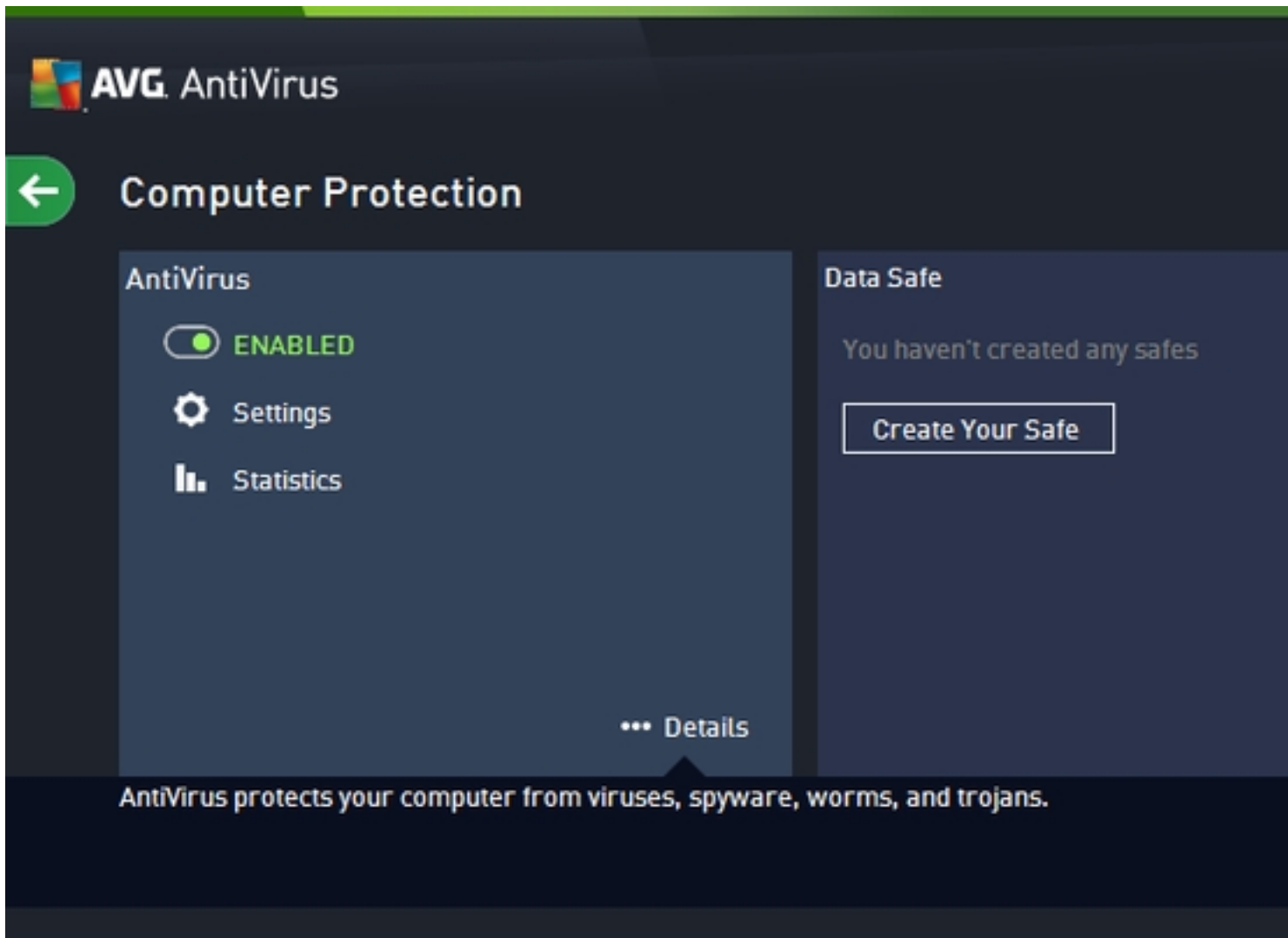
Like most security companies, AVG offers a Rescue CD for situations where the antivirus can't install. The Rescue CD is a blast from the past, with a totally text-driven interface, but it offers a full collection of tools, not just an antivirus scan. It wiped out ransomware on one test system and cleared up a malware infestation that actively blocked the installer on another.



Malware Blocking Performance : 7.5/10

If you can install AVG on a system that's already clean, or perhaps one that's been cleaned by Malwarebytes, my tests suggest you'll have smooth sailing. As soon as I opened a folder containing my malware samples, AVG started wiping them out. Within a few minutes, it had eliminated over 80 percent of the samples. And when I repeated the test using hand-modified versions of the same samples it wasn't fooled at all.

Continuing, I launched those samples that weren't eliminated in the initial malware massacre. AVG wiped out almost all of those at some point during the installation process. One way or another, it detected 97 percent of the samples, more than any other product tested using my current collection of samples.



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