

Soft Lock 4.4.2

The most sincere apologies, but if you downloaded Soft Lock via CNET, information displayed there is a bit outdated (that is the fault of nobody in particular, it just happens). Thank you for your understanding. Also, this Quick Guide is not fully completed.

ABOUT SOFT LOCK

Soft Lock is a security program, designed on the Delphi programming environment for the Windows operating system.

Soft Lock can be used alongside most of other security programs, without any conflicts between them. Also, it is extremely light-weight, so it is in no way likely to have some negative effect in your system.

Best results are achieved if Soft Lock runs alongside with an anti-virus program and probably behind some basic firewall (the windows in-built firewall or the router firewall clearly suffice). In such a case, the computer is bound to have a very high protection level.

Its basic principles are very straightforward and easy to understand, but powerful all the same.

TASK MANAGEMENT

To view the task management options click on the Task Management tag. Task management by default does not do anything special, except allowing the user to view and kill all active (visible or not) tasks running on their machine. However, you can always enable any of the things mentioned bellow.

SECURITY TASK MANAGEMENT

To enable security task management, just click on the 'Enable New Task Kill' button and press 'Yes' in the dialogue that appears. Note that this button does not actually make new tasks to be killed, unless silent mode is activated.

Task management monitors all running tasks in the computer. These include hidden tasks, which run silently at the background. Unlike other security programs, Soft Lock recognizes each task independently, regardless of the fact that it may be part of some bigger task or program, already marked as safe. Clearly, this has both advantages and disadvantages.

The main advantage is that Soft Lock is aware of even the tiniest activity going on in your computer. That naturally contributes to greater security, for no new process can start running without Soft Lock identifying it. On the other hand, it means that opening some big program with many tasks can require more than one permissions to be given. To this, the

only thing that can be said is that the whole process of giving permission to a task is summed up to just one click, so there really should be no problem. But in case you do not wish for this to happen, just disable security task management, open the required program and then enable it again.

Soft Lock differs to other security software in other things as well; mainly, regarding the security policy towards other programs. The Soft Lock policy is quite a more lax one than ordinary. When some unknown task is found, Soft Lock does not try to interfere with its work. Instead, it displays a warning to the user, along with a question about what action should it take. Only after this will Soft Lock try to interfere with the program, according to the user's wishes.

TASK MEMORY USAGE WARNING

Checking the 'Check if task uses over...' option while Security Task Management is taking place will monitor the memory each active task consumes. This way, if over a fixed size of memory is consumed by a task, Soft Lock notifies the user and asks for an appropriate action to take place. This way, you can make sure that no running program will use more memory than you are willing to spend.

Note that there is also an option, so as to include notifications about even safe list items. This results to even better and absolute control over all tasks.

SILENT MODE

This quite lax security may seem a little too risky to some people – although it really poses no great risk at all. However, they can still find that Soft Lock can adjust to their wish. Running in silent mode (press the 'Enable Silent Mode' button to do so) will cause Soft Lock to kill all new tasks appearing in their computer, save those that can be found inside the safe list. Note that a program outside the safe list would almost instantly be terminated under these conditions. So, the way to use this feature is by firstly opening all applications you wish to work with and afterwards enabling the security task management and the silent mode. Be careful however that, in this case, under certain conditions, security may be too strict for your liking.

LISTS

Soft Lock has two additional lists, besides the active tasks; the safe and the kill lists. Tasks in the safe list are allowed to run, never being questioned or terminated (killed) by Soft Lock. On the other hand, tasks in the kill list are tried to be killed whenever they are detected. Since tasks are recognized by a number of characteristics, the most prominent of which is their name, Soft Lock may sometimes be puzzled, not knowing which list a task belongs to. In these cases, the Kill List has higher priority and the task is killed. Such situations however, exist only theoretically and will practically never cause even a glimpse of a crash to your system.

Also, sometimes a new task already put in the safe or kill lists may not be recognized, for it may start with a different name and a different windows handler. (If at least one of those things is the same, the task is successfully recognized.) However, there is no cause to worry for this, for it really rarely happens.

SECURITY ISSUES

Soft Lock has only a miniscule amount of things that could be considered as security issues in security management mode, which are summed up into two.

The first one is the pre-mentioned quite lax security policy towards new processes (although, as mentioned before, besides this not being anything to worry about, it can be eliminated by enabling the silent mode too).

The second one is that Soft Lock starts monitoring task behavior *after* it starts running. This means that if something not wanted is already running, Soft Lock cannot do anything towards that end. Of course, if the unwanted task is in the kill list, Soft Lock will kill it immediately. And you can always kill a task yourself, through the Kill Task button.

TECHNICAL ‘INTELLIGENCE’

Soft Lock can become smarter when recognizing if new tasks are already in the safe list. By checking the ‘Try to detect safe list item changes’ option, the program will automatically renew the safe list items, as they change during the time those tasks run. For example, if a media player changes its name according to the song, this will automatically be detected and altered in the safe list.

Also, by checking ‘Smart text recognition’ option, the user may choose the way the program recognizes task names as being the ‘same’. So, by choosing, let’s say, 65%, a task in the safe list and a task running are identified as ‘the same’ if either one has a 65% part of it into the other. In case you want best text recognition, it is recommended to use: 3 total.

Checking the ‘Try to detect safe list item changes’ option may require too much processor power. So, all program detections and kills can be slowed up and performed during bigger intervals. Those intervals are bigger than the original if the ‘Safe list slower detection’ option is checked and the amount they are bigger is the selected number next to it.

There are some other options to this feature, but they are sufficiently self-explanatory.

RAM MANAGEMENT

To view the RAM management options click on the RAM Management tag. RAM management by default only shows your RAM status. More advanced options are available though.

CONSUME RAM

Almost all RAM management options concern RAM consuming and are based on the Consume Memory Bytes option. First, let's have a look at this feature alone.

Consuming memory bytes makes Soft Lock to hold some memory locations in your physical RAM memory. Doing so has no short-living practicality. However, in the long run, if you choose to free the consumed memory bytes, they will be available at once and will be running very smoothly – as if you just booted your computer. This happens, as when consuming memory bytes Soft Lock also resets them to their starting conditions. This way, consuming memory bytes enables you to make your computer run more smoothly when they are freed.

To consume memory bytes, select how much you want to consume and press the GO button. The result will be for the space you declared to be consumed and some other options appearing. These options about rewriting RAM will be mentioned below.

By pressing the FREE button (that is the GO button, which has changed name when consume memory bytes was enabled) the consume memory bytes option will be disabled.

OVERWRITING RAM

When consuming memory bytes is enabled, you can check the Overwrite Every... option (it is checked by default). This will make Soft Lock to overwrite and enable for smooth running the amount of memory consumed. This happens periodically, once in every amount of time you choose. The Rewrite Now button forces an immediate overwrite of consumed memory.

Generally, overwriting RAM ensures that the memory consumed will be really accessible and running smoothly when freed. Also, it secures the consumed memory space against access that could only derive from unauthorized behavior.

OPTIMIZE FREE MEMORY

Optimize Free Memory automatically and quickly consumes and then instantly frees all RAM not used by other applications. Naturally, this cancels also all RAM overwrite and consume options. The result though, will always be a very smoothly-running RAM, with no corrupted or useless data on it.

You can also choose to perform a free memory optimization once in a fixed period of time. Finally, it is recommended not to alter the safety memory cap size.

INTERNET

Up to this point, not much internet code is written in Soft Lock.

RETRIEVE IP

Soft Lock allows the user to retrieve their IP address from some website of their choice, if this is possible. Of course, permission must be given by any other firewalls first.

Retrieving the IP address regularly can help to ensure that energy star routers do not automatically disconnect from the internet. Therefore, such an option is available in Soft Lock.