

Domain-Joined Windows 11 VM with Microsoft Edge Lockdown for Lab Use

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Category: Windows 11 / GPO / Domain Lab Hardening

Backlink: [Bypassing TPM, Secure Boot, and Microsoft Account During Windows 11 VM Setup](#)

Overview

This VM is domain-joined to `library.local` and intended to simulate a public-access or library-style machine for a generic user (`libraryuser`). Group Policy was used to lock down Microsoft Edge and restrict system-level access.

Environment

- **OS:** Windows 11 VM
 - **Domain:** `library.local`
 - **Domain Controller:** Windows Server 2022
 - **OU:** `LibraryLabUsers`
 - **User:** `libraryuser`
 - **GPO:** `Library User Restrictions`
 - **Template Type:** Classic ADM (no ADMX available at the time)
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GPO Settings Applied

Control Panel & Program Access

- Prohibit access to Control Panel and PC settings
- Remove Add or Remove Programs

Microsoft Edge Configuration

- Clear browsing data when Edge closes
- Clear cached images and files on close
- Disable saving browser history
- Enable Do Not Track
- Enable insecure download warnings

Edge Extensions & Downloads

- Block external extensions from being installed

Startup / Homepage Settings

- Configure homepage URI
- Action on Edge startup: Open list of URLs
- Sites to open:
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- Set new tab page as homepage

Start Menu and Taskbar Restrictions

- Disable context menus in Start Menu
- Remove Run from Start Menu

Ctrl+Alt+Del Restrictions

- Remove Change Password
- Remove Lock Computer
- Remove Logoff
- Remove Task Manager

Results

Logging in as now:

- Edge launches directly to the approved URLs

- All Edge settings and customization options are blocked
 - Control Panel and system tweaks are locked down
 - User cannot access Run, Task Manager, or make profile/system changes
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Next Steps

1. Prevent Edge Settings Access

- If not already enabled, locate:

Prevent access to the settings page in Microsoft Edge

→ Set to **Enabled**

2. Add AppLocker Rules

- Restrict `.exe` launches outside of `C:\Program Files` and `C:\Windows`

3. Enable SmartScreen & SafeSearch Policies

- Protect against malicious or adult content
- Optionally configure DNS-based content filtering (NextDNS/OpenDNS)

4. Redirect Known Folders

- Use Folder Redirection to isolate documents and desktop paths per user

5. Add User Logoff Timer / Idle Policy

- Use Task Scheduler or GPO to log off inactive users after X minutes
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