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**Dave McClure** • Aug. 19, 2013

It's a big scary world out there, with malware programs trying to attack your PC at every turn. And while you used to be safe using a Mac rather than a Windows-based machine, those days are long past.

At least you can take some solace in the fact that if you don't download apps from Russia or China, or ringtones from anywhere, your cell phone is safe from intruders.

Only it is not.

Almost any tech site you visit now quotes chapter and verse about the horrors of programs added to your cell phone without your knowledge. Scanners, viruses, programs that watch you through your camera and listen in on your conversations even when your phone is turned off. You may be safe if you use a Blackberry phone, because their market share is now so microscopic that it's not worth the effort of any self-respecting hacker.

Of course, you can protect yourself by using one of the half-dozen or more security applications for cell phones. Available from most of the big name vendors (Kapersky, Norton, Avast, Trend Micro, Sophos, McAfee, etc.), these are programs that should readily identify malware and help remove it from your cell phone.

Only they do not.

At least that is the claim of Josh Kirshner in a [post](#) on the Techlicious blog, and I would tend to believe what he says. He does a compelling analysis of smartphone security apps, and finds them all to be lacking in their coverage.

His post goes in to the methodology he uses, the results and his thoughts about why

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