

## Spear Shield – Cookie Policy

### What are cookies?

A cookie is a small file containing a string of characters that is sent to your computer when you visit a website. When you visit the site again, the cookie allows the site to recognise your browser. Cookies may store user preferences and other information.

Cookies provide a convenience feature to save you time or tell the web server that you have returned to a specific page.

Cookies set by the website owner (in this case, Spear Shield Ltd) are called “first party cookies”. Cookies set by parties other than the website owner are called “third party cookies”. Spear Shield only use first party cookies. Third party cookies enable third party features of functionality to be provided on or through the website (e.g. like advertising, interactive content, and analytics.) The parties that set these third-party cookies can recognise your computer both when it visits the website in question and when it visits certain other websites.

### Why do websites use cookies?

Web pages have no memory. If you are surfing from page to page within a website, you will not be recognised as the same user across pages. Cookies enable your browser to be recognised by the website. So cookies are mainly used to remember the choices you have made – choices such as the language you prefer and the currency you use. They will also make sure you are recognised when you return to a website.

### Do all cookies do the same thing?

No, there are different types of cookies and different ways of using them. Cookies can be categorised according to their function, their lifespan and according to who places them on a website. Please refer to our ‘What are cookies?’ Section to learn about the differences of first- and third-party cookies.

### How does Spear Shield use cookies?

Our website uses the following types of cookie:

**Necessary cookies:** These are essential cookies that are used to try give our visitors an advanced and user-friendly website that adapts automatically to their requirements. To achieve this, we use necessary cookies to show you our website and to ensure the website functions properly.

**Analytics Cookies:** These are non-essential cookies controlled by the cookie banner. Visitors can opt out of these cookies by not giving consent. We use these cookies to gain insight into how our visitors use the website, to find out what works and what doesn’t and to optimise our website content to ensure we continue to provide relevant and interesting content to our visitors. The data we gather includes which web pages you have viewed, which referring/exit pages you have entered and left from, date, timestamp, and session number.

Functionality Cookies: This is the cookie used for our chat flow tool. It allows our visitors to chat with a representative on the site.

**How long do Spear Shield cookies stay active?**

The cookies we use have varying lifespans. The maximum lifespan we set on some of them is 13 months from your last visit to our website. You can erase all cookies from your browser any time you want to.

**How can you recognise Spear Shield cookies?**

You can find our cookies in your browser settings.

**Does Spear Shield use third-party cookies?**

No, Spear Shield does not currently use any third-party cookies.

**What necessary cookies does Spear Shield use?**

Essential cookies are required for the operation of our website. You may disable these using your internet browser but this may affect website functionality.

List of essential cookies used:

**\_\_hs\_opt\_out**

- This cookie is used by the opt-in privacy policy to remember not to ask the visitor to accept cookies again.
- This cookie is set when you give visitors the choice to opt out of cookies.
- It contains the string "yes" or "no".
- It expires in 13 months.

**\_\_hs\_do\_not\_track**

- This cookie can be set to prevent the tracking code from sending any information to Spear Shields CRM.
- It contains the string "yes".
- It expires in 13 months.

**\_\_hs\_initial\_opt\_in**

- This cookie is used to prevent the banner from always displaying when visitors are browsing in strict mode.
- It contains the string "yes" or "no".
- It expires in seven days.

**\_\_hs\_cookie\_cat\_pref**

- This cookie is used to record the categories a visitor consented to.
- It contains data on the consented categories.
- It expires in 13 months.

#### **hs\_ab\_test**

- This cookie is used to consistently serve visitors the same version of an A/B test page they've seen before.
- It contains the id of the A/B test page and the id of the variation that was chosen for the visitor.
- It expires at the end of the session.

#### **<id>\_key**

- When visiting a password-protected page, this cookie is set so future visits to the page from the same browser do not require login again.
- The cookie name is unique for each password-protected page.
- It contains an encrypted version of the password so future visits to the page will not require the password again.
- It expires in 14 days.

#### **hs\_high\_contrast**

- This cookie is used to save a visitor's selected contrast choice on Spear Shields website.
- It is set when a visitor enables high contrast mode.
- It contains a boolean value of *True* if present.
- It expires in 180 days.

#### **hs-messages-is-open**

- This cookie is used to determine and save whether the chat widget is open for future visits.
- It is set in the visitor's browser when they start a new chat, and resets to re-close the widget after 30 minutes of inactivity.
- If a visitor manually closes the chat widget, it will prevent the widget from re-opening on subsequent page loads in that browser session for 30 minutes.
- It contains a boolean value of *True* if present.
- It expires in 30 minutes.

#### **hs-messages-hide-welcome-message**

- This cookie is used to prevent the chat widget welcome message from appearing again for one day after it is dismissed.
- It contains a boolean value of *True* or *False*.
- It expires in one day.

#### **\_\_hsmem**

- This cookie is set when visitors log in to a Spear Shield website page. (Currently no log-in pages active)
- It contains encrypted data that identifies the membership user when they are currently logged in.
- It expires in one year.

#### **hs-membership-csrf**

- This cookie is used to ensure that content membership logins cannot be forged.
- It contains a random string of letters and numbers used to verify that a membership login is authentic.
- It expires at the end of the session.

#### **hs\_langswitcher\_choice**

- This cookie is used to save a visitor's selected language choice when viewing pages in multiple languages. Spear Shield's website is currently only available in English.
- It is set when a visitor selects a language from the language switcher and is used as a language preference to redirect them to sites in their chosen language in the future if they are available.
- It contains a colon delimited string with the ISO639 language code choice on the left and the top level private domain it applies to on the right. An example will be "EN-US:spearshield.co.uk".
- It expires in two years.

#### **\_\_cfuid**

This cookie is set by Spear Shield's hosting providers CDN provider because of their [rate limiting policies](#). It expires at the end of the session. Learn more about [Cloudflare cookies](#).

#### **\_\_cf\_bm**

This cookie is set by Spear Shield's hosting providers CDN provider and is a necessary cookie for bot protection. It expires in 30 minutes. Learn more about [Cloudflare cookies](#).

**Who has access to Spear Shield's cookie data?**

Only Spear Shield has access to Spear Shield's first-party cookies.

**How can you manage your cookie preferences?**

Using your browser settings in, for example, Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox or Chrome, you can set which cookies to accept and which to reject. Where you find these settings depends on which browser you use. Use the "Help" function in your browser to locate the settings you need.

If you choose not to accept certain cookies, you may not be able to use some functions on our website. And opting out of an online advertising network does not mean that you will no longer receive or be subject to online advertising or marketing analysis. It means that the network from which you opted out will no longer deliver ads tailored to your web preferences and browsing patterns.

**Questions, Complaints and Subject Access Requests (SARs)**

Any questions or Subject Access Requests (SARs) should be sent to: [GDPR@spearshield.co.uk](mailto:GDPR@spearshield.co.uk).

You have a right to lodge a complaint in the event that you believe that Spear Shield has not upheld the rights, obligations and responsibilities set out in this Privacy Policy. Please send any complaints to: [GDPR@spearshield.co.uk](mailto:GDPR@spearshield.co.uk).

**Review of this Policy**

This Policy is reviewed regularly.