

Meet reCAPTCHA v3: Google ditches annoying challenges

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Could your reCAPTCHA instructions get any more annoying? Relax. They just got far less annoying. The history-making day was October 29. Can you just imagine. No tests, no interactions, for Google's reCAPTCHA.

The Google Webmaster Central Blog carried the announcement on October 29. Let's hear it for reCAPTCHA v3. It's a new way to sniff out abusive traffic on websites. How big a change is reCAPTCHA v3? Very big. It is "fundamentally changing how sites can test for human vs. bot [activities](#)."

PC Tech Magazine said that "site users no longer need to squint at [distorted](#) text or click on streams of a school bus or traffic light images in order to prove that they're not a robot."

Instead of interactions the new version depends on adaptive risk analysis to pick up suspicious traffic. "The new [version](#) runs in the background of a website, producing scores from 0.1 (bad) to 1 (good) for interactions and behaviors with that site," said Rachel England in *Engadget*.

reCAPTCHA uses an advanced risk analysis engine and adaptive CAPTCHAs to keep automated software from engaging in abusive activities on your site. It does this while letting your valid users pass through with ease.

So, with reCAPTCHA V3, users aren't asked to do anything; instead, interactive challenges are replaced with scores, which are based on user interactions with a website. A "good" score is 1.0 and a "bad," bot-like interaction scores 0.1.

Abner Li in *9to5Google* explained more about the score. The score [ranks](#) "how suspicious an interaction is." The goal is to minimize the "need to interrupt users with challenges at all." The score is based on interactions with your site and enables you to take an appropriate action.

The reCAPTCHA developer documentation is available; the new system works by placing reCAPTCHA v3 on more pages—not just the login box—and running the adaptive risk analysis in the background to alert you.

Rob Thubron in *TechSpot* apparently will not shed tears at the departure of the old interactions. He wrote, "The famously irritating reCaptcha v1 asked site visitors to identify and input distorted text, which in some cases was almost impossible to decipher. reCaptcha v2 was a significant improvement as it only asked users to click a [box](#), but if it suspected you were a bot then a series of image challenges ... was presented."

Meanwhile, reCAPTCHA v3 has introduced "Action." This is a tag you can use "to define the key steps of your user journey and enable reCAPTCHA to run its risk analysis in context." Translation: "Developers can add a new 'action' tag to their pages to run [risk analysis](#) on visitors," said Thubron.

If you are running a site, you get to see how

suspicious the traffic was on pages via the reCAPTCHA admin console. The console provides an overview of reCAPTCHA score distribution and other information.

What happens when the scores are made known? "Site admins can decide how their website should react based on these scores, and can use them in one of three ways," England said.

Li spelled out the three ways that version 3 is customizable,

"First, you can set a threshold that determines when a user is let through or when further verification needs to be done, for example, using two-factor authentication and phone verification.

"Second, you can combine the score with your own signals that reCAPTCHA can't access—such as user profiles or transaction histories.

"Third, you can use the reCAPTCHA [score](#) as one of the signals to train your machine learning model to fight abuse."

It is evident that Google is pleased and tech watchers predicted that site owners will like the change, too. Rachel England in *Engadget*: "Google first launched its bot-detection reCAPTCHA system in 2007, which means that for over 10 years we've been deciphering garbled text, identifying street lights and clicking tiny boxes in a bid to prove we're human and subsequently access the sites and pages we want to view."

England also wrote that "most website owners will appreciate taking back control over the way their sites react to traffic without leaving Google to make the decision on their behalf based on garbled images."

Said one comment-giver on *TechSpot*: She always felt that fear of bots should not be the user's problem. Why should we have needed to struggle with a curlicue v and cut-off chunks of road signs?

Thubron said on Oct. 31 that reCAPTCHA v3 has been in beta since May "and will become widely available later this week."

More information:

webmasters.googleblog.com/2018...a-v3-new-way-to.html

developers.google.com/recaptcha/docs/v3

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