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## How to Configure Advanced Filtering Policies

<https://campus.barracuda.com/doc/78810197/>

With *BCS Plus*, you can either use preset filtering policies or create customized policies for a particular user or group, and base policies on either categories, domains, or URLs.

### Configuring Local or LDAP Users and Groups

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You can either manually add local users and groups, or synchronize your LDAP / AD services with the BCS service - this enables you to apply policies by users and / or groups. To connect to your LDAP, see [LDAP Active Directory and BCS](#). For manual entry, see [Manually Configure Local Users and Groups](#).

### Creating Rules

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See **Best Practices for Creating Rules/Policies** below. Before you create policies, make a list of the most important policies, and try to keep the policy compact - too many rules can render the entire policy almost useless and result in slower performance of the BCS agent. If you can, choose category policies over domain and URL-based rules.

1. From the **ACCOUNTS** page, click **Manage** in the table for the account for which you want to configure rules/policies.
2. Click on **Advanced Filtering** in the left pane.
3. On the **Advanced Filtering** page you can either:
  - Click **ADD RULE**. Click in the text box at the top of the popup to select one or more users or groups. OR
  - Scroll down to an existing user or group in the table and, in the **More** column, click on the 3 dots ( **⋮** ) and click **Create Rule**.
4. Select an **Action** of *Block* or *Allow*.
5. Select a rule **Type** of either *Categories*, *Domains*, or *URLs*.
6. Check each category for which you want the rule to apply, or enter the target domain or URL in the pop-up. When you enter a domain name, a wild card is automatically applied to include subdomains and the TLD (for example, .com, .org, .net, . us, .de., etc.) BCS validates domain or URL inputs is as follows:
  - For domain-based rules, you cannot add a URL. For example, you could enter `redfin.com`, but `https://www.redfin.com/zipcode/95123` would not be accepted.
  - You cannot enter and save an IP address for a domain/URL based rule.
  - Wild card masks are not accepted when entering a domain/URL based rule, e.g. `*.microsoft.com`, because wildcards are automatically included as stated above.

7. Click **Save**.

- **Domain look up:** To find out which category a domain belongs to, go to the **ACCOUNT SETTINGS** page and use the **Look For Domain Category** feature.
- Updates to policies may take up to 15 minutes to go into effect.

## Best Practices for Creating Rules/Policies

1. Pay attention to policy precedence when you create user and group policies: policies above others in the table take precedence.
2. Barracuda recommends beginning by creating a baseline policy for *Everyone* with a default action of *Allow*. This prevents you from accidentally blocking newly discovered websites that may be important to people in your organization, such as new competitors, local government alerts, or breaking weather events. You can later add exception policies as needed. This policy would end up at the bottom of the table, so all policies created after that, or placed above it in the table, would take precedence and/or be exceptions to the *Everyone* policy.
3. The next policy you create should be an *Everyone* policy that blocks a broad set of categories. You can start with the default categories that are set up in the account at activation, or check categories or supercategories you want to block. **Important:** Be sure *NOT* to block the **Content Delivery Networks & Infrastructure (CDNs)** category under the **Security** super-category, because thousands of websites rely on CDNs to deliver critical website content.

After you create these two policies, you'll see the second policy you created *above* the first policy in the table. This means that the higher level policy (block) takes precedence over the one(s) below it. See **How Rules Are Applied (Order of Precedence)** below for more information.

4. Finally, create your group and user specific policies. These should be in the table **above** the first general *Everyone* policies you created, and represent exceptions to those policies. Barracuda recommends placing *user* policies at the top of the list (table) and *group* policies near the bottom for easy policy precedence.
5. When changing an AD group policy, restart the agent to make sure it gets the latest policy updates.

### To create this set of policies:

Step 1: Create an *Allow* policy for *Everyone*.

1. On the **Advanced Filtering** page, click **ADD RULE**.
2. In the **Select one or more users or groups this rule should apply to** drop-down, select *Everyone*.
3. In the **Action** drop-down, select *Allow*.

4. In the **Type** drop-down, select *Categories*.
5. Check the box for each supercategory you want to *allow* (recommended: check **all** of them, and then create your block policy).
6. Click **CREATE** to save the policy.

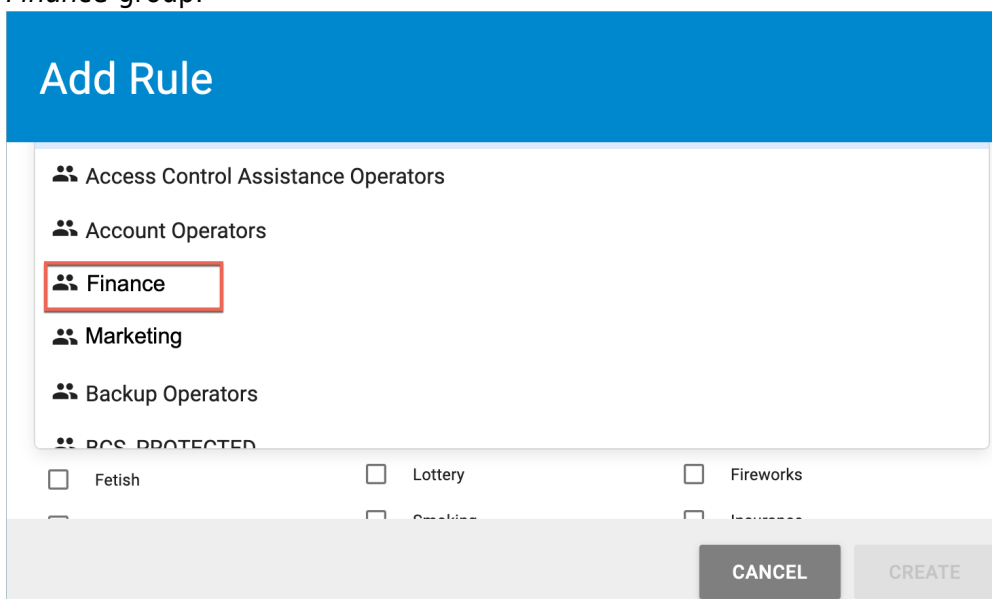
Step 2: Create a *Block* policy for *Everyone*, as needed.

1. On the **Advanced Filtering** page, click **ADD RULE**.
2. In the **Select one or more users or groups this rule should apply to** drop-down, select *Everyone*.
3. In the **Action** drop-down, select *Block*.
4. In the **Type** drop-down, select *Categories*.
5. Check the box for each supercategory and/or category you want to *block*. As noted above, be sure *NOT* to block the **Content Delivery Networks & Infrastructure (CDNs)** category under the **Security** super-category, because thousands of websites rely on CDNs to deliver critical website content.
6. Click **CREATE** to save the policy.

Step 3: Create exceptions to the policy for specific users and/or groups.

In the following example, say you have blocked the *Commerce and Shopping* supercategory, but you want staff in the Finance department to be able to visit domains categorized under *Financial Products* in that supercategory.

1. Click **ADD RULE**.
2. In the **Select one or more users or groups this rule should apply to** drop-down, select the *Finance* group.



The screenshot shows the 'Add Rule' dialog box. The title bar is blue with the text 'Add Rule'. Below the title bar is a list of user groups, each with a person icon and a name: 'Access Control Assistance Operators', 'Account Operators', 'Finance' (highlighted with a red box), 'Marketing', 'Backup Operators', and 'PCS PROTECTED'. Below the list are several categories with checkboxes: 'Fetish', 'Lottery', 'Fireworks', and others. At the bottom right are 'CANCEL' and 'CREATE' buttons.

3. In the **Action** drop-down, select *Allow*.
4. In the **Type** drop-down, select *Categories*.
5. In the *Commerce and Shopping* supercategory, check *Financial Products*. Domains in this

category will be allowed for members of the Finance Department.

6. Click **CREATE**.

You could do the same for a specific user, or by domain or URL. Make sure that this new rule is placed **ABOVE** the *Everyone* policies in the table so that it takes precedence.

**Important:** When you create a URL policy for a user or group, BCS intercepts SSL traffic in order to view the URL contents, which can require additional processing resources on the endpoint machine. For this reason, make sure to *only create URL policies for specific users*, not for entire groups - unless everyone in the group has a machine that can handle the additional resource usage.

## Syntax for policies by domains and subdomains

When entering a domain for a policy, do not use wildcards (\*), or include protocols, such as http:// or https://. When you enter a domain name, a wild card is automatically applied to include subdomains and the TLD.

Correct	Incorrect
mydomain.net	https://www.mydomain.net
www.mail.barracuda.com	*.mail.barracuda.com
google.com, www.google.com	http://www.google.com
yourdomain.org	*.yourdomain.org

All subdomains of the domain you enter are automatically included; in other words, subdomains inherit policies applied for a domain, *UNLESS* you create an exception. If you want to create an exception for a particular subdomain, *you must specify that subdomain explicitly*. For example, if you create a *Block Traffic* exception for **google.com**, all subdomains are included and blocked. If you want to allow subdomain **mail.google.com**, create an *Allow Traffic* exception for the subdomain **mail.google.com**. Here are more examples of how exceptions work with domains and subdomains:


Policy	Results
BLOCK google.com ALLOW mail.google.com BLOCK server1.mail.google.com	http://google.com/ BLOCKED (matches google.com) http://inbox.google.com/ BLOCKED (matches google.com) http://mail.google.com/ ALLOWED (matches mail.google.com) http://server1.mail.google.com/ BLOCKED (matches server1.mail.google.com) http://server2.mail.google.com/ ALLOWED (matches mail.google.com)
BLOCK www.abc.com	http://abc.com ALLOWED (doesn't match www.abc.com)

BLOCK abc.com	http://www.abc.com BLOCKED (inherits policy from abc.com domain)
ALLOW abc.com BLOCK z.abc.com	http://z.abc.com BLOCKED (matches z.abc.com) http://y.abc.com ALLOWED (inherits policy from abc.com)

## How Rules Are Applied (Order of Precedence)

Rules are applied in the order in which they appear in the table. Each rule takes precedence over the rule(s) listed *below* that rule. For example, you may create a *group* rule that blocks YouTube.com for *Everyone* or for a specific group of users. If you want to create a separate policy allowing one user to access YouTube.com, and that user is part of the group for which you created the *block* rule, you must place the rule for the user above the rule for the group. If you place the policy for that user *below* the group policy, then YouTube.com would be blocked for that user as well.

After you have created rules for users and/or groups, you can create a new rule:

- By clicking More Options (  ) in the table row for a user or group, and then clicking **Create Rule** in the drop-down. This adds another rule for that user or group.
- By clicking **ADD RULE** to create a new rule for a different user or group.

Traffic that is affected by advanced filtering policies is logged in the [Web Filtering Logs](#).

Barracuda recommends testing your initial selection of block/allow policies using various domains that you know you want blocked, and/or that you know your organization needs to access, and then make updates to your policies as needed.


## How Domains Are Categorized

Barracuda Networks uses one of the most extensive web content definition databases, covering some of the highest risk websites on the Internet. The websites in the Barracuda Networks database are organized into content categories (subcategories) which are grouped by supercategories. When you create rules that block categories of websites, you can choose a supercategory to block, or you can drill down and block websites at the subcategory level. See [Web Use Categories](#) for a list of content categories.

## Viewing Configured Filtering Policies

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If you have already configured Advanced Filtering policies by user or group, the following displays in a table on the **Advanced Filtering** page in a separate section for each user or group. You can click the blue chevron to expand or hide the policies for each user or group.

- Order – The order in which the rule is applied, relative to other rules you have created. (0=first, 1=second, etc.). You can click More Options (  ) in the table and select *Move to Top* or *Move to Bottom* to change the order in which the rules are applied.
- Action – *Block* or *Allow*
- Type – How the rule is defined; either by categories, domains, or URLs
- Rule – Lists values included in the rule

## Modifying, Moving or Deleting a Group or a User Policy

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The policy includes a set of one or more rules, and the policy is assigned to a user, a group, or to *Everyone*.

- To edit a policy: At the right of a table row for a policy, click More Options (  ) for a drop-down and click **Edit**. You can then change the name of that policy to be under some other group, user, or set to *Everyone*.
- To edit a rule within a policy: Below the bar in the table with the user or group policy name, click in a row to select a rule and click More Options (  ) for a drop-down. Click **Edit** to change the Action, Type and Domain, Categories or URLs.
- To delete a user or group policy: At the right of a table row for a particular policy, click More Options (  ) for a drop-down and click **Delete**.
- To delete a rule: In a row inside the policy, click More Options (  ) for a drop-down and click **Delete**.
- To MOVE a policy up or down in the table to change order of precedence: You can do this for a user/group policy to move above or below other user/group policies in the table to change the order of precedence. Use the More Options (  ) for a drop-down and click **Move To Top** or **Move To Bottom**.
- To MOVE a rule row up or down within a policy to change order of precedence: In a row inside the policy, click More Options (  ) for a drop-down and click **Move To Top** or **Move To Bottom**. This moves rules above or below other rules so that one takes precedence over the other(s). So, for example, you may have an overall *Allow* rule for certain social media sites, but a *Block* rule for just Instagram.com. You would want the *Block* rule to be above the *Allow* rule so that it takes precedence.

## Adjusting Policies for Users and Groups

After you have created and tested Advanced Filtering policies, you may need to adjust settings according to the needs of your organization based on the following (or other) reasons:

- Changes in browsing or business policies of your organization
- Need for access to some domains that are included in a category that you need to block, in general

See also:

- [SafeSearch](#)
- [Full URL Logging](#)

## Figures

1. 3Dots.png
2. FinanceDept.png
3. dots.png
4. dots.png
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