

TIPS FOR COMPUTER SECURITY – SIMPLIFIED

Install quality anti-virus and perform regular scans

There are many anti-virus tools available that work in a similar way. So pick one and install it and make sure it is performing real time scans (usually the default). In addition, run a virus scan on a regular basis. Remember don't run two anti virus tools at the same time.

Here is a **partial list** of anti virus software:

FREE	PAID
Windows Security Essentials (I use this one)	Norton (Symantec)
Avast (Also paid version)	MacAfee
Avira (Also paid version)	Vipre
AVG (Also paid version)	Kaspersky

Install anti-spyware protection

Download, install and run Malwarebytes and Spybot Search and Destroy.

Be careful as the sites will try to get you to install other tools!!!! I also download and use Ccleaner which is not an anti virus tool but may help clean up your system before running the Malware and Spybot programs. I run them monthly or if I suspect a problem. (suddenly slower system).

Use a Firewall

Windows 7 and Vista the Firewall is on by default. Leave it on!!

With XP go to the Start Menu>Control Panel>Security Center> Make sure Firewall is on.

Back up your Data

Back up any important data to an external media such as CD, DVD or Flash Drive. If the data is important to you consider an external hard drive and backup software. Windows 7 and Vista have backup software built in. Remember those important pictures.

Don't click on unknown email links or attachments

When checking e-mail, delete any items from unknown people or which contain unknown attachments. If an e-mail with an attachment comes from a known contact, but seems out-of-character or unusual, the recipient should not open the attachment until they contact the sender to verify its authenticity.

Surf smart and Use Common Sense

To browse the internet safely, it's best if you do so by using common sense. Do not click on advertisements; they probably will try to lure you into downloading or buying something you don't want. They may even harm your computer, and stay away from sites that promise "free" items, cash or other services simply by entering your personal information. Just because a website looks official, this does not mean that it can't harm your computer.

Clear History in your Internet Browser

The April Flyer will have detailed instructions to do this but here is the Quick Tip: While in Internet Explorer click Tools>Internet Options>General Tab make delete History box is checked.

Be careful when installing software

One place where bad things can happen is that free software that someone offers. This can be from the internet or from a friends CD or flash drive. Be sure you check these carefully. Only download and install from reliable sites. Examples of some known good sites:

Microsoft

Adobe

All Major Companies – Apple, Dell, Sony, HP, Toshiba etc.

All the sites from the Anti-Virus products mentioned above

Sun / Oracle (Java)

Download.com (Cnet)

Major Geeks

File Hippo

There are many others – Just be careful

RELAX

The internet should be a useful and enjoyable place. Don't let fear of virus or ID theft keep you away. Just be careful, observant and NEVER give out personal information unless you are absolutely sure who you are dealing with.