

Internet Security Suggestions

Antivirus Software

Many computers today come with some sort of antivirus software already installed when you purchase your computer. If not you can purchase antivirus software and install it yourself. Just having an antivirus program installed is just not enough. You also need to keep your antivirus software up to date.

Important: If you have antivirus software installed but want to install a new product from a different company, be sure to uninstall your current product before installing the new one. Having two different antivirus programs installed can cause problems on your computer.

Is my antivirus software up to date?

Installing antivirus software will only protect you against previous security issues. To help ensure your computer is safe, you need to keep your antivirus software up to date. Most antivirus companies offer subscription services to ensure you get the latest updates.

To check if you have up-to-date software: Open your antivirus program from the Start menu or the taskbar notification area, and look for update status. If you still aren't sure if your antivirus software is up to date, contact your antivirus software provider.

Update your Operating System software

Another way to help protect your computer is to make sure all your software is updated. First, visit Windows Update web site to confirm that you've downloaded all the latest critical and security updates for your Operation System.

Use a firewall

While most spyware and other unwanted software come bundled with other programs or originate from unscrupulous Web sites, a small amount of spyware can actually be placed on your computer remotely by hackers. Installing a firewall or using the firewall that's built into Windows XP provides a helpful defense against these hackers.

Adjust Internet Explorer security settings

You can adjust your Internet Explorer Web browser's security settings to determine how much—or how little—information you are willing to accept from a Web site. Microsoft recommends that you set the security settings for the Internet zone to Medium or higher.

To view your current Internet Explorer security settings, click "Tools" in the top tool bar, then click Internet Options. Once the Internet Options box has appeared Select the Security tab.

Surf and download more safely

The best defense against viruses, spyware and other unwanted software is not to download it in the first place. Here are a few helpful tips that can protect you from downloading software you don't want:

- Only download programs from Web sites you trust. If you're not sure whether to trust a program you are considering downloading, please contact us and we can talk about your concerns.
- Read **all** security warnings, license agreements, and privacy statements associated with any software you download.
- Never click "agree" or "OK" to close a window. Instead, click the red "x" in the corner of the window or press the **Alt + F4** buttons on your keyboard to close a window.
- Be wary of popular "free" music and movie file-sharing programs, and be sure you clearly understand all of the software packaged with those programs and the license agreement.