

Quick Hints for Safer Computing

Anti-Virus and Anti-Malware

- Install and maintain anti-virus software. Below are some suggested vendors and products. All of these offer free versions of their software.
 - **Microsoft Security Essentials (Windows Defender)**

Windows Defender is antispyware software that's included with Windows and runs automatically when it's turned on. Using antispyware software can help protect your computer against spyware and other potentially unwanted software. Spyware can be installed on your computer without your knowledge any time you connect to the Internet, and it can infect your computer when you install some programs using a CD, DVD, or other removable media. Spyware can also be programmed to run at unexpected times, not just when it's installed.

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/using-defender#1TC=windows-7>
 - **AVG Anti-Virus**

AVG provides free and paid (subscription) anti-virus software. Their software has one of the smallest memory and disk requirements of the products available, and can protect your computer, email, and web browsing.

www.avg.com
 - **Kaspersky Laboratories Anti-virus**

Kaspersky is a leading Anti-virus developer. While not widely known in user circles, they are a driving force in the anti-virus software market. They provide a number of the leading known anti-virus vendors with the technology they use "under the hood."

<http://usa.kaspersky.com>
 - **Malwarebytes**

Previously a free product, Malwarebytes now offers a 14 day free trial for home users with the option to subscribe for an annual fee. Malwarebytes operates in the background and watches over your web browsing to insure that the links you visit are safe, and protects against unwanted downloads. It also performs regular system scans to detect malware and adware that your anti-virus solution can't.

<https://www.malwarebytes.org>
 - **Ad-Aware**

Lavasoft, the makers of Ad-Aware have come a long way in recent years. Growing from a free utility to scan systems for Adware, and the nasty bits it leaves behind, they have evolved to a comprehensive vendor of anti-virus and anti-malware software in their own right. Using only their free product delivers real time protection against adware threats and provides full system scanning to maintain and clean your system. These folks are worth checking out.

<http://www.lavasoft.com>

Password Protection

One of the best "password vaults" around is LastPass. Once you're signed in and set up, LastPass takes over all the management of your online passwords. You can also store secure notes and other information such as passport number, insurance account numbers and other secure information. LastPass offers free, premium and business accounts. With Premium and Business accounts, you can also incorporate two factor authentication systems such as YubiKey and RSA SecurID www.LastPass.com

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Safer Web Browsing

- It's important to know that most web sites (both good and evil) today download and run small bits of program code on your PC when you access them. 98% of this is harmless, but. . . that other 2% can be really nasty. Here are some tips to keep you from running into the ditch:



- **Pop Up Windows.**

These used to be a bit easier to handle. Just know that when you move your cursor over the buttons in the popup window – **ANYTIME** it turns to the Web Link Select "Hand" you'll be clicking on a link that will take you somewhere else, even if the button says "Close". Think of "Close" as "Close to trouble".

Know where your click will take you

Hover your cursor over a link in the web page. When it turns to the Link Select "hand" the address it wants to take you to will appear at the bottom of the web browsers screen. If it doesn't look like somewhere you want to travel, close the web page.

- **Keep your browser and add-in software updated**

Now, Microsoft does a pretty good job of updating automatically, but if you use, Chrome or Firefox, you'll need to make sure they are setup to update automagically. When installed out of the box, they are not. Make sure your add-ins, like Adobe Flash (for playing video) and Java are updated also. Hackers use these to exploit your system.

Email Hygiene

- Phishing and Spam Emails can usually be easy to spot. You just have to keep your guard up. **Remember that no reputable source is going to ask you for personal information over the net.** Here are a few hints to remember to make your email life safer;
 - **Links in Emails**

Treat links in an email just like you would those on a web site – but with even more suspicion. Phishing and spam rely on you to click on links embedded in email. If you do, your journey has just begun. . .
 - **Attachments**

Never, **Never, Never** open an attachment to an email **UNLESS** you know it's clean. Just because the attachment has a semi-legit title like "Invoice", it can easily contain a virus or Trojan horse payload designed to compromise your system. If in doubt, delete. Your anti-virus software should be able to scan the attachment before you open it. There's always the Help Desk. Checking in with them first is the safest approach.
 - **Know where the email is REALLY from**

Phishers and spammers know that spoofing the "Reply To" field is one of the simplest and most ignored exploits around. Oftentimes, Spam will seem to come from someone you know, someone who is a contact of yours. Often this means that they've been hacked, and you're just getting some of the Spam Backscatter. While it's not the easiest thing to do, you CAN figure out who the email is REALLY from. With the email open, go to your email menu and look for the email properties and you can dissect the email header. Since email readers differ by version, it's beyond the scope of this handout to give all the details, but your IT folks should be glad to show you.



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To Learn More:

United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team

Securing Your Web Browser

<https://www.us-cert.gov/publications/securing-your-web-browser>

Browser Security Settings for Chrome, Firefox, and Internet Explorer:
Cybersecurity 101

Veracode - <http://vera.cd/1gjYNQW>

Phishing Protection Through User Awareness

KnowB4 www.knowb4.com

Phishlabs www.phishlabs.com

Intriguing Little Devices

Raspberry Pi www.raspberrypi.org

Arduino www.arduino.com