… Created by Mike Bloomfield

'Totally Secure your P.C.'

May 2004

Here are the basic security checks that we use to set up a single home computer connected to the Internet.

This article is effective for Microsoft Windows XP, XP Pro, Windows 2000, NT, ME, 98 and 98SE.

1. Firstly, contact your Internet Service Provider and ask if they have a service to stop viruses and spam email. This will do some of the work!

2. Always thoroughly back up all your critical data regularly. Back up, means you can show me *all* your data on a CD, DVD, tape or floppy disk. See our article, 'How to Totally Backup Your Computer'.
   Do not attempt these steps before addressing this preliminary requirement.

3. Go to Microsoft Windows Update and download all the critical updates and service patches *See our article regarding Microsoft Windows XP Service Pack 2 before installation please.
   If you did just this one step regularly, you would have avoided all the recent 'scare' viruses such as Blaster Worm and Sasser.
   On the Internet, visit http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com or left click start and look for "windows update" there - otherwise you might find it in the Control Panel at the top left hand side.

www.apcgenius.com   1300 PCFAST

4.   Here are some free software links. I've added a few footnotes. These are some of the programs that our senior software technicians and myself use on our own home P.C. set-ups, which have totally protected us.

Software Links

www.zonelabs.com Zone alarm (free) (Firewall)

Download the Free edition and set it up in silent mode. Otherwise just accept the defaults (You know... 'Next, next, yes, finish' type of thing). If you see a little box pop up in the bottom right corner, I always tick the 'remember always' box and answer 'Allow', as this is asking for one of my programs to access the Internet. A NO answer could stop my email or Internet browser from working.
This software is tricky to set-up on a network, but not impossible. Make sure the network is set-up with all systems communicating before installing the firewall.

www.grisoft.com A.V.G. Free Edition and Version 7

I prefer to use one good anti-virus program like AVG 7.0 on it's own, rather than two. AVG has an almost 100% success rate in my opinion. Please disable system restore before scanning on Windows XP and ME (See HELP!). If you're the curious type, leave your current anti-virus there and download one of these German anti-virus versions and see just how effective it has been! The trial version of AVG 7 is particularly effective in my opinion and light on resources. Destroys Trojans! For about $30 per year, I would even register the software.
If AVG highlights a Trojan in a certain folder and does not delete it, don't be afraid to go and delete it manually! The value of this program is that it CAN identify a problem and will prevent the problems in the first place!!!
AVG also sport a FREE edition, which is also excellent!

www.free-av.com Antivir (Manual update Anti-virus)

As an alternative to AVG, try Antivir. Efficient free protection and you can schedule updates if you have a permanent Internet connection. Have noticed a few slip through recently though!

www.mailfrontier.com Matador (Anti-Spam)

This is a great piece of software for people being driven insane by unsolicited email. Does the job the I.S.P. could have done.
It used to spit the dummy with outlook, but I think they've fixed this now!

www.apcgenius.com   1300 PCFAST

http://www.spybot.info/ http://www.javacoolsoftware.com/
(Anti-spy) SPYBOT Search & Destroy and SPYWAREBLASTER
Will locate and destroy many Trojans and programs that are monitoring your Internet use for supposed commercial gain. Please download, then update, then run the search – or just protect all in the case of Spywarelaster. You can use these two programs together.

http://www.lavasoftusa.com/support/download/
(Anti-spy)
This is an alternative anti-spy solution to the above combination. Just install and run.

http://www.majorgeeks.com/download1287.html
(Temp File Cleaning Utility)
This is a temp file cleaning utility for our purposes.
Some programs use the temp file area, which would be clever if it didn't slowly grind your system to a halt. You can redirect a program's working area to a different folder somewhere else if it was using the temp folder in most instances.
Be careful using this program. Please only use the 'Super cleaner' in the clean menu and apply the anti-spy settings unless you really know what you are doing and are selective with registry and duplicate file areas!
You can also do this manually. Again be warned, in rare cases, some software applications legitimately use the c:\windows\temp area for temporary storage.

www.we-blocker.com
(Internet Filter for safe family Internet use)
Stops Porn and bomb making sites. Filters most weird websites!
You can program this one to knock out certain sites or keywords and it has preset levels of security for different age children and adults. There are many other commercial applications available. Try a search for Internet Filter in your favourite search engine!
I find the update function does n't work right away. Still a great piece of software.

Instructions

If you wish to set-up your computer for no more attacks or expense from viruses, I recommend downloading one of each of the above utilities, one at a time and setting them up on your PC.

For example, I use A.V.G. 7.0 with Zonealarm, Spybot and Spywareblaster and clean my temp files with the Hdcleaner and manually.

This gives me the protection of a world-class firewall, which can be closed down if it stops any useful activities that rely on I.P. address; an anti-virus

www.apcgenius.com   1300 PCFAST

that will catch Trojans and email attacks and allows me to run my computer without spyware and finally maintains my system speed by keeping temp files to a minimum.

These software programs are not for business machines, commercial use or to be used on several machines – please respect the licence agreements; they are not for networked computers.

They are to give you peace at home, to give you more time, more money and a trouble free PC.

Our document on business security will be released in conjunction with that section on 2UE if there is enough demand for it!!!

Conclusion
This is a plan to totally protect your PC!
Viruses today most commonly attack through…

1. **Direct I.P. or through the Internet just because you are connected. This affects dial-up, ADSL and Cable connections.**

2. **Email – traditionally as attachments i.e. rubbish.scr, silly.exe often with a heading to motivate you to open them!**

3. **From an executable file (Program) that was within a download – i.e. music or a program. This includes hidden files downloaded from just being on a dodgy web page.**

Therefore, we need a Firewall. This stops other computer systems from gaining access to our Operating System to change files etc.

We need an effective and up to date anti-virus application. At this point in history, the free and paid versions - from West Germany in particular - are powerful and effective! Update them every 2-3 days!

www.apcgenius.com   1300 PCFAST

Anti-spam software stops emails from unsolicited sources, which in itself can defeat self-propagating strains of email virus (i.e. viruses from people we don't even know!!!) and is therefore in the toolkit!
Much better still is to find an intelligent Internet Service Provider who stops Spam and email viruses rather than just letting them flow through and actually passing them on to you, like TPG Internet!

Anti-spy software finds programs that have been sown within our computer and are monitoring where we go on the Internet and our habits and trends and can also gain access to private data. It is good to remove this kind of intrusive invasion.

Hdcleaner will clean the temp file areas of your system to totally speed it up and make sure there is nothing hiding there. Please be aware that if you have programs that legitimately use the temp file area for storage, they may loose data in this process

Finally, I have included some links to software that protects family members who are having trouble with offensive Internet sites. We-blocker has a particularly good reputation and I notice schools are starting to use it too.

Please support Murray Olds and 2UE for letting us give you this advice for *free*. Every time you ask for me back, I promise I will give you a free article.

Kind Regards,

Mike Bloomfield

www.apcgenius.com   1300 PCFAST