

PC and Internet Security ¹

First and MOST IMPORTANT, MAKE BACKUP COPIES OF YOUR COMPUTER FILES.

Then, there are four kinds of products that help protect PC security for the Internet and email user. You can search the Internet for products available and for more information on each.

1. Anti-virus software

- A utility that searches a hard disk for viruses (An often destructive program or piece of code that is loaded onto your computer without your knowledge and runs against your wishes.) and removes any that are found. Most antivirus programs include an auto-update feature that enables the program to download profiles of new viruses so that it can check for the new viruses as soon as they are discovered.
- Some of the products available are listed below.

| | Selected Products ² | Base Cost | +Annual |
|---|---|-----------|---------|
| 1 | Trend Micro PC-cillin Internet Security 2005 | \$50 | \$25 |
| 2 | Kaspersky Lab Anti-Virus Personal 5.0 | 35 | 30 |
| 3 | Softwin SRL Bitdefender 8 Std | 30 | 15 |
| 4 | Symantec Norton AV 2005 | 50 | 30 |
| 5 | Alwil Avast! Antivirus | free | free |
| 6 | McAfee VirusScan 2005 9.0 | 50 | 25 |
| 7 | Panda Software Titanium AV 2005 | 50 | 40 |
| 8 | Computer Associates eTrust EZ Antivirus 2005 | 30 | 20 |

2. Anti-spam software

- Spam is "Unsolicited Commercial E-Mail."
- There is no "easy" way to get the spam stopped. Generally if you reply (unsubscribe) this confirms that your e-mail address is "live" and just gets your e-mail address sold to other spammers. Spam has to be dealt with one at a time.
- The "easiest" way to stop getting spam is to change your e-mail address and only give your e-mail address to people you absolutely trust, and never allow the e-mail address to be posted anywhere on the Internet.
- Use your email system's anti-spam filter to help identify spam in your mail box.
- You can purchase anti-spam software.

3. Spyware

- Any software that covertly gathers user information through the user's Internet connection without his or her knowledge, usually for advertising purposes. Spyware applications are typically bundled as a hidden component of freeware or shareware programs that can be downloaded from the Internet; however, it should be noted that the majority of shareware and freeware applications do not come with spyware. Once installed, the spyware monitors user activity on the Internet and transmits that information in the background to someone else. Spyware can also gather information about e-mail addresses and even passwords and credit card numbers.
- Download and install Microsoft Antispyware – a free product – or any other product you might select from a search of the Internet for products and information.

4. Firewalls

- A system designed to prevent unauthorized access to or from a private network. A firewall is considered a first line of defense in protecting private information.
- At a minimum, turn on your Windows firewall.

¹ Definitions copied from Webopedia

² From Consumer Reports 12/2005

Outline
PC Security - Avoiding Catastrophic Failures

- Backups
 - Protect your data
 - Devices include CD, DVD, Flash Drives, External Hard Drives
 - Store critical items away from your computer

- Passwords
 - Choose wisely
 - Have a scheme of item/number combinations you'll remember
 - Don't use pets, child's name, ssn or other 'guessable' items

- Anti-Virus
 - Get something & keep it updated
 - Email is often scanned by your ISP. Check.

- Anti-Spam
 - Check your ISP's filters
 - Don't open and absolutely don't reply

- Anti-Spyware
 - Cookies aren't bad
 - Free software is available

- Firewalls
 - At least turn on the Window's firewall
 - The more exposed you are, the more you need one (e.g. always on-line, having a wireless home network)

Materials for this session are available on the Internet at <http://cyberlynxoregon.org>