

Safe Computing

Securing a student owned computer

To protect your computer from worms, viruses, and other vulnerabilities, follow these precautions:

- [Configure your machine to install Windows Updates Automatically](#)
Operating systems are very complicated and large pieces of software. Because of this when they are developed, the programmers will often miss or overlook problems which can lead to security holes which hackers can use to break into your computer or just annoying bugs which cause your computer to crash periodically. Microsoft regularly releases fixes, called patches, which will remedy the associated problem.
- [Install and Configure Virus Protection Software](#)
Anti-virus software works by looking for patterns of known worms and viruses in files you download and programs that are running on your computer. Since the virus writers are always creating new worms and viruses, your software needs to be updated daily to recognize the latest threats.
- [Install Spyware Protection Software](#)
Spyware is software that is installed on your computer without your knowledge and can cause your Internet connection to become excessively slow and/or stop working. It can also cause information about how you use your computer or even more personally identifiable information from being transmitted to unknown third parties.
- [Disable file sharing](#)
Filesharing is a tool that allows you to share files with other users on the network. Unfortunately this can also allow hackers to have access to your files as well as act as a launching pad for attacks on other vulnerable systems.
- [Use Strong Passwords](#)
All accounts, including the Administrator account should use strong passwords. Assigning a difficult to guess passwords is an important step in protecting your computer from unauthorized (mis)use.
- Exercise Caution when Downloading
Not everything you download does what it says it will do.
- [Backup your data](#)
Periodically you need to backup your data to protect you from unexpected failures. This is particularly important when you are working on assignments that have not been turned in.
- [Install a firewall](#)
A firewall can offer your computer extra protection by limiting or preventing Internet access to application and preventing unrequested data from the Internet reaching your computer.
- [Prevent Unauthorized Use](#)
When you're away from you computer, you're leaving it open for use by anyone who walks by.
- [Use safe computing practices](#)
Our recommended practices only protect you from what is known. Using safe computing practices can help limit your exposure to new things that appear on the Internet before the makers of our recommended products can produce updates to protect you.

Need more help? Please contact the [Help Desk by email](#) or by phone at **651-523.2220**