

VIRUS PROTECTION CHART

*"When a fool has cast a stone into the river,
ten sages cannot bring it back"*

Chinese Proverb 5th century BC

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Do-It-Yourself Virus Protection

If you use a computer you are at risk from computer virus infection and attack. Your hard disk is the target. A hard disk crash caused by a computer virus can be a complete catastrophe. A hard disk can contain data unrecovered from any other source. A computer virus attack can destroy in seconds the work of years.

A computer virus is a computer program written as a prank, joke or as malicious sabotage. They don't belong in your computer. Like biological viruses, many of them replicate themselves. They all are started and spread by humans. It doesn't require great genius to write virus programs. Viruses are typically simple programs, though there are very ingenious ones. Creating a new virus can require as little as slightly modifying an existing virus. This can make the new virus undetectable to scanning detection packages.

The damage done by viruses is limited only by the warped imagination of their creators. They damage data by erasing it, losing it, hiding it, bloating it, or even encoding it. An example: one virus is WordPerfect specific: as text files are processed the virus destroys itself, taking the key to the code with it. The files left are garbage, as are the back-ups, and all the word processing work is lost.

WHAT IS A COMPUTER VIRUS ?

The effort you put into anti-virus security should depend on your level of risk. If you use a computer isolated from other machines, a hard disk loaded with commercial shrink-wrapped software only, if you never transfer files electronically, and you never, never, use anything but new, virgin diskettes, then you are as safe as you can get. At the other extreme: if you are involved in a large organization where diskettes are constantly swapped between many computers, where files are transferred to and from hard disks, and different people switch between different machines, then you are at very high risk. Schools and government offices are like this. If diskettes are going back and forth from your personal computer and a situation like this you are at risk.

Virus protection is a problem of probabilities. Nothing can make you and your disks 100 % secure. But each anti-virus measure you adopt cuts down your risk. The list of computer virus Do's and Don'ts lists the things you can do to protect yourself. You decide how much effort you want to expend.

COMPUTER VIRUS HISTORY

Computer viruses come from all over the globe. Wherever PC computers combine with technical ability and malicious intent, computer virus programs are written. Bulgaria is the computer virus capital of the world. There, a population of well-trained, socially disgruntled and chronically underemployed computer programmers organize themselves. Through a

WHERE DO COMPUTER