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Keep your Computer Lean, Mean & Clean

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Main Points

- Care for your hardware
- Keep the system & software up-to-date
- Use antivirus, spyware, firewall & spam filter
- Get rid of unwanted or temporary files
- Keep wanted files tidy and accessible
- Adhere to best practices for surfing, email, file sharing and installing applications

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Care for the hardware

- Keep dust away from the area
 - Blow the keyboard regularly on portables
 - Remove interior dust at least every 2 years
- Keep wires tidy
- Ensure good ventilation and a firm base
- Don't eat (or drink) near the computer, printers, scanner or keyboard
 - Screen coated - to clean use water! - no cleaners - use damp soft cloth
- Don't move it when turned on

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Keep Windows and Software Up-to-date

- Windows Update
 - With so much use, so much attention and so many flaws
 - Set to automatic. Check manually every so often.
 - Mid month unless there is a big risk (Jan 7, 2006!)
 - XP has security in Service Pak 2
 - Older Windows are very near the end of their useful life
- Ensure other software is up to date – Office has flaws
- If on dialup ensure on long enough

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Keep the computer virus free & use a firewall

- Firewall
 - Every computer needs a 2 way firewall
 - 2 levels – with router (hardware)
 - – software – XP's is limited to inbound
 - www.Zonealarm.com is free
- Anti-virus
 - Keep it up to date – dats (2/wk) & annual subscriptions
 - Use auto settings and if dialup leave it on long enough
 - Scan your disk weekly – yes it takes a long time
 - AVG from www.grisoft.com is free and recommended

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Keep Spyware free

- PC runs slow – probably spyware
- “Tool bar”, Adware, Malware Protections Slow
 - Great free toolbar or utility may install a monitor, keylogger, worm or trojan
 - Spybot S&D free and good, MS Spam defender free til July, Adaware(?)
- Java and Active X flaws
 - Software when needed concept also software not wanted secretly
 - Keep administrator separate from users. Users not install
- Root kits
 - Playing Sony CD on PC changes Windows to stop piracy – opened door to hackers

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Dealing with Spam & Phishing

- Spam
 - Some providers provide filters
 - Some only work with web mail. AOL good.
 - Don't publish or allow posting of email address
 - Have several addresses -Internet, bank, friends
 - Never respond to emails from bank or online services or click on links in the email. Be suspicious - call
- Web bugs
 - View in text not HTML
 - Turn off email preview pane

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Suites or Best of Breed

- AOL is remarketing itself
- Norton and McAfee are perceived as bloated.
- Basic protection is available for free.

Firewall

- App Access
- Set rules
- In next Windows

Antivirus

- Files
- Scripts
- Root/App changes

Spyware

- Scripts
- "Toolbars"
- Cookies
- Features

Email

- Locate you
- Scripts
- Unsolicited
- Worms
- Rules

- Parental controls/filtering complete the "suite"

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Wireless Networks

- Cable and DSL Broadband
 - Modem with wireless router an option
- Laptops come wireless - detect neighbor out of box
- Default installation is without security
- Simple things
 - If file share on - set password
 - Change SSID (name of router) - turn off SSID broadcast
 - Turn off modem when not in use
 - Use WEP - easy but work - gen. hex based on word
 - Limit to specified MAC addresses

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Get rid of unwanted or temporary files

- 80 to 200 gb hard to fill
- Windows propagates files and often forgets to purge temp files
 - Disk Clean Up - Accessories>System Tools
 - Recycle Bin & Temporary Internet Files
 - Cookies, Temporary Internet Files, Internet History
 - \Internet options>General tab => delete
 - Add Remove Programs
 - Remove those no longer used – how many Adobe, Quik time?
 - Start Up – System tray has large number
 - Run>msconfig>Startup => unpicK unused

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Keep wanted files tidy and accessible

- Scan to check each hard disk for errors
 - Aged drive?
 - Scandisk – My computer>disk>file>properties>tools>error checking
- Defrag or not to defrag – now said to be of little benefit
 - OS has to work hard to find files, Freed sectors reused, new files=head skipping?
 - Takes forever on large drives. Turn off everything – safe mode!
 - Defrag - My computer>disk>file>properties>tools>defragmentation

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Backup



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Keep wanted files tidy and accessible

- Back up important files regularly – monthly!
 - Not your whole computer just your important files
 - Organize to find things. Organize to backup. MS provides the structure
 - CD – R and DVD +/-R make it easy
 - Backup to the Internet! Leave important email there. Notes to self.
 - Organize to restore your installed software.
 - Make restore/recovery disks on new computer after AV instal
 - Keys, software & updates
- Create restore points before installing software

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Adhere to best practices

You and everyone who uses your computer should follow a consistent set of safe practices.

Prepare	Create users with limited access privileges for day to day Reserve administrator rights for installation & configuration Keep keys, restore disks, application software – Do Backups
surfing,	Safe sites – avoid Adult content, gaming,..... Set to prompt for ActiveX and Java scripts Change passwords regularly – different for different risk levels
email,	Text only, don't open attachments, links from untrusted
file sharing	scan everything – save to a temp folder first Unprotected wireless network shares all – like open door
installing applications	If free what is the catch? Create a Restore Point before software installation