

REDUCING the ODDS of a COMPUTER DISASTER Part 1

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NOTE: “Reducing the Odds” is a seminar created out of all the problems our members bring to us in HWSIG and was designed to literally keep you out of trouble! It evolved from a few notes and memories as to what worked to solve similar problems in the past. A side benefit is that it has become an excellent framework for setting up a new computer or one where a “clean install” of the operating system has become necessary. Use these suggestions and we will see you less often.

Now, let us take a look at staying safe while using our computers.

There is no way to protect your computer 100% from all viruses, malware, spyware, rootkits and other nasty exploits. You can, however, make it so difficult the hackers will look for easier targets. If you continually follow these suggestions and keep all programs updated, your computer should run clean and fast.

The contents of this seminar are derived from years of weekly troubleshooting computer hardware and debugging computer software in the Hardware Special Interest Group (HWSIG) by both authors.

Goal of this Seminar

Before attendees leave they will understand the importance of, and how to, download and install the latest and most effective “anti” malware programs and how to keep them all current. Malware encompasses viruses, worms, Trojan horses, and spyware and is the general term for malicious software.

Types of Programs

Every computer should have one anti-virus (maximum), one firewall (minimum) two browsers (minimum), as well as several anti-malware and anti-spyware programs. Keeping Windows Update current minimizes hackers’ access to install nasty programs on your computer. Other computer utilities to clean up the hard drive and registry may be installed for use by advanced users. At least one anti rootkit program should be installed and kept up-to-date.

Two of the most valuable programs you will ever use: [Ninite](#) and [Revo Uninstaller](#)

1. [Ninite](#) (Installs Multiple Programs Simultaneously)
www.ninite.com

One must be careful with installing FREE programs which attempt to include “unwanted” toolbars” and other “tag-along-software”. A solution to this problem is resolved by utilizing a free program entitled “Ninite”, which avoids this “tag-along-software”. It installs multiple programs with just a few clicks.

Ninite has over 85 programs available. The user simply checks the tiny white box of the program(s) you wish to install, scroll to the bottom and click Get Installer. Save to the desktop, Run, and it downloads and installs all the programs you selected.

No clicking Next, Next, Next. Ninite says no to Toolbars and other “junk” programs. The latest version of the program is always installed along with matching the bittedness (32 or 64 bit) of your computer.

2. Revo Uninstaller

http://www.revouninstaller.com/start_freeware_download.html

Revo Uninstaller uses the uninstall program of the program being uninstalled. Then it searches for, and removes, remnants of the program files missed by the uninstall program. It is far more complete than Add/Remove Programs in Control Panel.

Anti-Virus

The very first steps you should take to protect any computer are to (1) install one anti-virus program, (2) install a firewall (simply check a box when initially setting up Windows 7 or type “firewall” into the search box, under Control Panel choose “firewall” and check “turn on Windows firewall) and (3) run Windows Update.

There are many free anti-virus programs from which to choose such as Microsoft Security Essentials, Avast, Avira, AVG and McAfee (free from Cox Cable) and Threatfire. Norton is the most popular paid anti-virus. (Some can be installed using the utility program - Ninite*)

Security Essentials *

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/security-essentials>

Avast *

<http://www.avast.com/en-us/free-antivirus-download>

Avira *

<http://www.avira.com/en/free-download-avira-free-antivirus>

AVG *

http://download.cnet.com/AVG-Anti-Virus-Free-Edition-2012/3000-2239_4-10320142.html?part=dl-avg_free_ww&subj=dl&tag=button

McAfee

www.mcafee.com

Free with Cox Cable 383-4000

Threatfire

<http://www.threatfire.com/download>

Norton (\$40-\$48/year)

http://antivirus.norton.com/norton/ps/3up_us_en_navnis360t2.html?om_sem_cid=ho_sem_sy:us:ggl:en:e|kw0000003601|8477249476&country=US

Browsers (Free)

No downloads and installs are possible without the use of a browser which is necessary to access the Internet. Once you are connected to the Internet, you will be able to reach any web site as well as to establish an email account. A computer should have two or more browsers installed and updated. In the event one browser fails, the user can still connect to the internet

Internet Explorer is included as a part of all Windows Operating Systems and cannot be removed. It is automatically updated through Windows/Microsoft Update. IE, along with Chrome, Firefox, Safari (Apple), and Opera, are the five most used browsers.

You can download the browsers through www.ninite.com *

Firefox*	19.0.1	http://www.mozilla.com
Chrome*	2.0.1324.152	http://www.google.com/chrome
Opera*	12.14	http://www.opera.com
Safari (Apple)		http://www.apple.com/safari (for MAC and PC)

Windows Update

Perhaps the single most important step you can take to protect your computer is to keep windows up-to-date.

This is how to do it.

Updating Windows 7 Operating System (Includes anti-virus, malware & spyware)
http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/Windows_7_Updating_Seminar.pdf

Anti-malware and Anti-Spyware

Several anti-malware and anti-spyware programs can be installed without conflict. These programs must be installed, before using the computer to browse the Internet because many forms of malware and spyware will not let the “anti” programs be installed after infecting a computer.

Three of the most effective anti-spyware and anti-malware programs used weekly in the HWSIG are:

Malwarebytes* (Recommend installing and using in Safe Mode)

Download through <http://ninite.com>

Superantispyware*

Download through <http://ninite.com>

Spybot-Search & Destroy

Download through <http://ninite.com>

Run these programs along with an anti-virus scan weekly and your computers should remain free of malicious intervention.

How to operate these programs: (See Tutorials below.)

1. Open, Select update (Always do this first)
2. Perform Quick Scan
3. Remove any bad files: Check each “Objects” box, Remove Selected

Utilities (Updating all your programs except Windows)

1. Secunia PSI (Updates Programs)

If you are tired of manually updating each and every one of your programs, Secunia PSI is a time-saving utility. Install Secunia in start up and it will automatically show the status of each program. Each program is noted as end-of cycle (no longer being supported), patched, needs updating or just click on the “solution” and the program does the work!

http://secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal/

Instructional video for Secunia

<http://www.youtube.com/user/Secunia#p/a/u/0/t1rQib1Y-Pc>

2. CNET’s Tech Tracker. Awaiting news of updated or a new program.

Paid vs. Free Programs

No computer should have more than one anti-virus program or each will identify the other as a possible virus. This one antivirus can, however, run with several anti-malware/spyware programs.

The most significant differences between paid (businesses) and free (home use) anti-virus/malware programs are the former has technical support and operates in “real time” while the free programs do neither. Most antivirus and anti malware programs have a “Pro” version, with an annual or lifetime fee.

The signature-based definitions for a virus or malware/spyware are updated on the computer as soon as known. Free version users must wait until the company sends out the updated data. The basic “anti” engine is the same for both types. The free programs are not so apt at preventing malware from installing but are very good at detecting and removing, once infected.

Signature-based AV programs are reactive and can only update once a new strain is discovered. Until the strain is downloaded you are not protected. Behavioral-based analysis is proactive and attempts to prevent malware from being installed on your computer. This “software analyzes the behavior and characteristics of programs running on the computer and shuts down activity that looks suspicious”.

These recommendations we suggest have proven to provide excellent protection from viruses, malware, spyware and rootkits/bootkits and to keep your computer running without interruption.

In case you have been wondering, “How much do these programs cost? If you register as a personal or home user, during installation, there is no charge.
Stay safe out there and happy computing!

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Browsers (continued)

Web of Trust (WOT) – KNOW WHICH WEBSITES TO TRUST.

Helps avoid Malware, Scareware and Ransomware. Web of Trust is downloaded and installed as an add-on to your browsers. (Internet Explorer, Chrome, Opera, Safari and Mozilla Firefox) When you browse the web WOT marks the web site with either a red (dangerous), yellow (caution) or green circle (safe) to show the safety or danger in opening the site. The following address shows how to download WOT and a series of tutorials portrays how to use it.

<http://www.mywot.com/en/download>

Keep Away from Risky Websites (WOT)

Review of WOT & Download via Softpedia.com

<http://www.softpedia.com/reviews/windows/WOT-Web-of-Trust-Review-118246.shtml>

Firewall

Every computer should have one firewall either hardware or software based. See <http://www.scscbkk.org/Firewalls--Software%20&%20Hardware.pdf>

Your Firewall: Is it doing its job?

<http://www.scscbkk.org/Your%20Firewall-%20Is%20it%20doing%20its%20job.pdf>

If you have a wireless router, you have a hardware firewall.

Software firewalls that are recommended are:

Zone alarm for 32 bit computers (Download)

<http://www.zonealarm.com/security/en-us/trialpay-za-signup.htm>

Comodo for 32 or 64 bit

<http://www.comodo.com/home/download/download.php?prod=firewall>

How To Check A Drive For Errors (Windows-all versions)

<http://www.eightforums.com/tutorials/6221-chkds-k-check-drive-errors-windows-8-a.html>

Restart: Will automatically run Check Disk (black screen, white type)
5 Stages (allow one hour), Will pause at Stage 4 at 10-15% complete

MS Office 2007 Compatibility Pack SP3 (Word, Excel and Power Point)

This is needed to allow the user to view and use earlier versions of these programs.

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=27836>

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=27838>

Ccleaner

Ccleaner is a system optimization, privacy and cleaning tool. It removes unused files from your system - allowing Windows to run faster and freeing up valuable hard disk space. It also cleans traces of your online activities such as your Internet history. Additionally it contains a fully featured registry cleaner. But the best part is that it's fast (normally taking less than a second to run) and contains NO Spyware or Adware! Download from;

www.piriform.com/Ccleaner

“Ccleaner to Optimize Your System” from SCSCC BKK and can be downloaded at:

<http://www.scscbkk.org/CCleaner%20to%20Optimize%20Your%20System.pdf>

ANTI-ROOTKIT & ANTI-BOOTKIT

If you have any indication a rootkit has been installed on your machine, STOP USING IT and immediately, take your computer to the technicians at HWSIG.

TUTORIALS

Cleaner

Ccleaner

<http://www.howtogeek.com/forum/topic/ccleaner-tutorial>

Video (5:16)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kh_xbeYxF04

Antivirus

Security Essentials

http://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/protect/forum/mse-protect_start/mse-introducing-microsoft-security-essentials/28d93d23-4b5f-4077-9cd3-d90d1f63af98

Video (4:09)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48n9kT3EC48>

Avira Free AntiVirus

<http://www.avira.com/en/support-videos-for-home>

http://www.avira.com/en/download-start/product/avira-free-antivirus?x-origin=SEM&x-SEM=SEM_AV13

Video

<http://www.avira.com/en/support-videos-for-home>

Malware & Spyware

Malwarebytes

<http://library.dickinson.edu/technology/Training/Tutorials/General/malware.pdf>

(Video 4:41)

<http://www.bleepingcomputer.com/virus-removal/how-to-use-malwarebytes-anti-malware-tutorial>

Superantispyware

<http://www.bleepingcomputer.com/virus-removal/how-to-use-superantispyware-tutorial>

Video (1:17)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qk8N_ss0Dcs

Spybot-Search & Destroy

<http://www.bleepingcomputer.com/tutorials/using-spybot-to-remove-spyware>

Uninstaller

RevoUninstaller

<http://www.howtogeek.com/79926/completely-uninstall-programs-and-more-with-revo-uninstaller>

Video (2:32)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plVMtgSHsm4>