

Computers today hold more than just the capability for word processing and number crunching. On top of these, it has become the repository for photos, videos, emails, important documents and other things that essentially make up our entire lives. A personal computer has certainly become just that-personal. And such cases, it's clear that we have to ensure its safety against virus attacks.

Malicious attacks online are so prevalent these days and it can actually cause everything from slowing your computer down to destroying years of collected data inside your computer. The simplest and easiest way to protect against any kind of attack online is to install an antivirus program that is capable of providing complete defense against harmful cyber attacks.

The sole purpose of an antivirus software is to protect your entire system and safeguard personal computers from hundreds of viruses that are out online. Failure to do so leaves your computer vulnerable to attacks that can range from bogging systems down, which while it's easy to sort out can cause hassles for users to identity theft, which leaves computer owners with years of bad credit reputation simply because they didn't install an antivirus software.

Choose only the trusted antivirus program

There are almost as much antivirus software out there as there are viruses-how then do you choose which one will be the most compatible with your system's software? Start with assessing your hardware and online habits-what kind of PC or laptop do you use? Are you a frequent online shopper and therefore will require total online integrity as you conduct business online? The best antivirus software for you should be able to provide custom-fit defense against possible virus attacks.

Whether you are installing a free antivirus software or intend to use one that you have purchased, remember that the reason why you are getting one is to protect your system and everything in it. Free antivirus will be able to save you money and are now easily downloadable online. For basic protection while surfing online and opening emails, this is an ideal option for you. Remember that the most common virus entry point is through our emails. As much as we would like to say that we continue being vigilant of what we open through email, an antivirus program takes the guesswork out of it and readily scans everything that we open.

Trojans, worms, root kits, spy wares, key loggers-these are just some of the most prevalent virus names that an antivirus software can take care of. Provide complete protection for your PC with complete security defense online and remember to choose based on what you need.

Computer Viruses & Free Antivirus Software

Let's face it, over the past 10 years, personal computers have become an integral part of our lives. Many households have computers in home offices, living rooms, kitchens and even bedrooms. We see the technology as something useful, friendly, and even precious and fragile at times.

Regrettably, the very technology of personal computing we seem to rely on is subjected to virus infections, email SPAM, Spyware/Adware, Trojans etc. As a result, your computer performance starts degrading, applications run slower than usual and in some instances; you are getting constant pop-up ads on your screen.

Worst-case scenario, your computer "crashes", well not literally, and you have to spend a significant amount of time and money on hiring a professional and re-installing the operating system along with all the software applications originally installed on your computer. But what about your data, the most precious personal information that may include your emails from family members, friends and colleagues, your personal documents, financial information and finally, family photos.

When your computer is infected, and the operating system needs to be re-installed, unless done by a professional at a significant cost to you, your personal information may be lost forever. You may ask, "Why is this guy painting such a grim picture?"

The answer is; "This is an unfortunate reality", and unless you are fully equipped and prepared to deal with the issue on your own, with a very little help, you may lose your valuable information permanently.

Computer Viruses and Antivirus Software

As I mentioned earlier, computer viruses may destroy your computer's operating system and disable access to your personal information. Computer viruses are generally distributed through email, Internet sites, instant messaging (chat software), and physical media such as CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, USB or floppy disks.

The best preventative strategy is to have a full-featured antivirus software installed on your computer.

Most of the personal computers purchased today are already equipped with the antivirus software. "So, what's the catch?" you ask me. The catch is that every commercial as well as non-commercial antivirus software requires frequent updating. Many people think that if the antivirus was installed on their computer by the vendor, they are protected for life. Wrong!

To give you an example, when a new computer virus is discovered, large teams of software developers work night and day to come-up with an antidote, a "pill" that would destroy a virus and will inoculate your personal computer. Once available, the antivirus update or "signature", will be available on the vendor's website for download. If your antivirus software is up-to-date, and is configured to update automatically over the Internet, you have very little to worry about. But what if I told you that millions of computer users out there have outdated antivirus software.

Believe it or not, it is true. It means that even though they think that their computer is protected, in actuality their, and any computer with outdated antivirus software may be easily infected by a virus.

You have to be cognizant of the fact that most of the commercial antivirus software available today requires annual subscription, and if your subscription was not renewed on time, the antivirus would stop updating its virus signatures, thus exposing your system to a threat. The good news is that there are non-commercial, free antivirus software packages that can be downloaded and used absolutely free of charge on your home computer.

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