

Computer Solutions

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Best tips for keeping problems at bay

Here are my best tips for keeping problems at bay. If you do these in this 'optimum' sequence on a regular day each week you will reduce to a minimum the possibility of nasty things happening to your computer.

Security – to reduce (as far as possible) vulnerability from threats (spyware, viruses and intrusion)

Update Microsoft products (e.g. Windows operating system, Internet Explorer, Office, Outlook, Outlook Express) – to ensure that known security holes are patched up

In the internet browser (e.g. AOL, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Mozilla) go to www.microsoft.com

If this is being done for the first time, follow the prompts to download necessary software

Click on <Microsoft updates>

Click on <Express> to see a list of available updates and follow the screen prompts to download and install **all** the files available

Some updates will not install together so repeat until there are no further updates

You may need to have your Office CD available

Update threat prevention software (e.g. Adaware, AVG, McAfee, Norton, Spybot, Windows Defender) – to ensure the program and database of virus signatures (against which files are compared for possible infection) are up to date

Some updates will not install together so repeat until there are no further updates

Update other significant software – to ensure you have the latest version

Housekeeping – to ensure (as far as possible) the computer is operating efficiently and effectively (Disconnect the computer from a network for these tasks)

Identify and delete redundant files on all hard disks – to free up hard disk space

To do this click on – <Start><All programs><Accessories><System tools><Disk cleanup><OK> Tick all boxes <OK>

Compact Outlook Express files – to free up hard disk space

To do this click on – <File><Folder><Compact all folders>

Defragment files on all hard disks – to free up space on the hard disk

To do this (for each hard disk) click on – <Start><All programs><Accessories><System tools><Disk defragmenter><Defragment>

Scan for threats on all hard disks – (e.g. Adaware, AVG, McAfee, Norton, Spybot, Windows Defender) to identify and deal with infected files

Please see separate notes on 'Threat prevention'

Make a backup

Check all hard disks for faults (every month)

To do this – click on <Start><Run> Type explorer Click <OK><My Computer><C:><File><Properties><Tools><Check Now><Automatically fix file system errors><Scan for and attempt recovery of bad sectors><Start>

If you have any further queries on this subject please contact me.