

Tips for keeping Windows XP "alive and well"

As we all know (hopefully) Microsoft stopped supporting Windows XP earlier in 2014. That can lead to security issues. What we need to think about is just how your computer with Windows XP can be hacked or attacked with malware, trojans, or viruses.

Install and keep your antivirus updated!

There are some good free antivirus softwares out there. NOTE: Read carefully and make sure you are getting the "free" versions! Also, read as you install so you don't get unwanted "toolbars"! Free AVG, Avast, and others are good. The paid versions of some of the big names actually do a poor job of protecting you! Consider using Malwarebytes on your system to keep out malware.

Ways you can get attacked:

Email attachments

As for email, consider checking your email through your ISPs online interface instead of using a software based email system (such as Outlook or Thunderbird). Using the online interface allows you to view your email without downloading it to your hard drive. That way if you see something suspicious, you can delete and it can never attack your system.

Internet "popup" windows

If you have a window to "popup" while you are browsing, a good bet it isn't something friendly. Do these steps immediately:

- DO NOT click anywhere in the window, including the close button. Again, DO NOT click!

- On you keyboard, hit Ctrl, Alt and Delete at the same time.

- Click Applications, and select your browser, and tell it to End Task. Do it as many times as you have to so that your browser closes!

- Disconnect your computer from the Internet (unplug the network cable if you have to!).

- Immediately run your antivirus scan and follow it up with Malwarebytes.

If the above doesn't stop the attack, seek help! Find a professional! You ARE in trouble.

Installing software from CDs, DVDs, Flash Drives or Downloads

Before you install any software, scan it with you antivirus!

Fixing Windows XP

There are some simple things you can do that will help keep you from being attacked. As stated above, use the online interface for email. Also, DO NOT use Internet Explorer! Instead, install and use Firefox browser. Make it your default browser. Keep it updated. Also, turn off Java while on the Internet. Here's how:

- Go to Start & Control Panel. Double left click Java.

- Click on the Security tab at the top of the window.

- Uncheck the "Enable Java Content In Browser" box.

- Click Apply, then OK.

You have now turned off Java in your browser. If you are on a trusted site that requires Java, you can re-enable it, however, most website that you would do business with know Java is not a good choice.

Of course the ultimate fix is update to or install another browser, if that is an option. There are a lot of Linux versions out there that are free, and if all you do is email and surf the Net, after a week or two, you won't miss Windows.

A note on Windows 7 and up... if you are on a limited Internet connection, such as a mobile wireless service that limits you to 5GB per month, be aware that the pretty splash screen that has all the icons on it constantly updates from the Internet! Some users have found that screen can use the entire 5GB in ONE DAY! There are ways to turn it off, but you will have search the Internet for how to do that.