

## Computing Tips

Keeping your computer safe from viruses can seem overwhelming at times. However, if you follow some simple preventative steps, you can save yourselves many headaches and expenses in the future.

1. **Install antivirus software and keep it updated.** Just installing the program is not good enough. You need to check daily for new updates. Most virus software (Norton's, McAfee, etc.) can be configured to do this automatically (Live Updates) as soon as you log on to the Internet.
2. **Make sure all necessary Windows security patches are installed.** Visit the Windows Update Center ([www.windowsupdate.com](http://www.windowsupdate.com)), at least weekly, to check for any **critical updates** that are available for your computer. Not applying these patches leaves your system at risk for viruses and worms looking for vulnerable computers.
3. **Use a firewall.** No internet connection is safe without one, including phone connections. Finding one that monitors inbound and outbound connection attempts is essential. For more information see <http://www.firewallguide.com/>
4. **Secure your email.** Be sure the email program that you use is up to date and scans email for viruses and worms. Never open an attachment from someone you do not know. Check suspicious downloads <http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/vinfodb.html>, or <http://us.mcafee.com/virusInfo/default.asp>
5. **Beware of viruses hoaxes.** Before you delete files from your computer, visit a Hoax Encyclopedia <http://www.trendmicro.com/vinfo/hoaxes/hoax.asp> or <http://antivirus.about.com/library/blenhoax.htm> or <http://vil.mcafee.com/hoax.asp> or <http://www.f-secure.com/news/hoax.htm> to check for legitimacy.