

ACK Computing Recommendations

www.ackcomputing.com – 485 4352

This is an incomplete list – just the highlights here! Call or write with specific questions.

Remember that if you have an internet connection you can look up stuff on the net and perhaps get some idea of what a “thing” does and why it might be on your computer. There are some very evil sounding but harmless (even helpful) programs out there that you might want or even need to run your computer.

Google, ASK, Dogpile, Yahoo, and MSN are just a few of the available Search Engines on the Web. Use search engines to research your questions, they are easy to use and often offer several answer sources allowing for a comparison and verification of the results. – Or, CALL US!

The purchase of additional spy/mal/adware tools such as Spyware Doctor or SpySweeper to be used in conjunction with McAfee, Norton, or PC-ilion is recommended. (For the latest and best choice use a search engine for Consumer Reports of Computer Protection ...) The latter products should be used on a daily basis to protect your computer from viruses, spam, and pop-ups while products like Spyware Doctor should be used occasionally but regularly to guard against the more insidious Trojan type programs that tend to hide deeper in your system. These products will cost about \$30 to \$50 for a one year subscription that allows automatic updates as well as support calls. Please note that you can have too much of a good thing; one primary protection for everyday and one “run on demand” protection package is sufficient.

As a rule of thumb Defrag should be done at least twice a year. To find the Defragmentation tool go to: Start/All Programs/Accessories/System Tools/Defragmentation
*Choose Defragmentation and be prepared to wait quite a long time to use your computer.

Buy your computer with as much memory as you can afford - 512 Mb is a good place to start. Keep in mind that the new “Core 2 Duo” computers will require that you upgrade with two sticks of memory

If or when pop-up ads do invade your screen it is our recommendation that the user go immediately to the task bar at the bottom of the monitor and right click the pop-up button (assuming a right handed mouse) and close the pop-up here and not in the frame itself.

It is absolutely necessary to keep dust and dirt out of your computer. The purchase of “canned air” or some way of carefully blowing/vacuuming the dust out of your computer every six months or so is recommended. Never blow air into a fan that is running - these fans are not designed for this abuse. A word of caution: never perform this action with the power on. In fact, if you are going to blow air into your computer or even remove the case cover do so only after unplugging the power source. Be aware that static shock is not good for your computer so make sure to ground yourself before working on it.

It should go without saying that you should keep your Windows operating System up-to-date either automatically or by manually updating; go to your Start button and search for Windows Updates to do this manually or will on the internet click on the Tools button in the upper right corner and select the update option there.

Use the Pop-up blocker and the Anti Phishing services offered through Explorer 7. Be aware that older operating systems such as ME and Windows 2000 may not work well with Explorer 7.

Free Spyware Protection

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Spybot makes a great back-up protection system no matter what day to day protection you are using. You can find free products and download them from our “Freeware” web page; <http://www.ackcomputing.com/html/freeware.html>

Whether you pay for your protection or use a Freeware version, keep the program up-to-date for the best protection. There are NO products out there that are free from attacks by the “Bad People” which is why we recommend back-up protection that you can “run on demand” to clean up any loose ends.

ACK makes several anti Spyware / Virus tools available from our Web Site if we have installed one of these on your machine it is most likely the FREE version. These free versions should be updated regularly. MOST IMPORTANTLY, as with any scanning software do not assume that all of the stuff that gets labeled bad is in fact bad. Windows firewall will probably detect most anti virus downloads as bad but you should check the “Always Allow” option. These tools run continuously to protect your computer and e-mail. See the list below.

We might install SpyBot, Ad Aware, and/or Advanced WindowsCare for you to run manually. We can not stress enough that the user should research any unfamiliar program names before deleting, even if that means doing so from another computer. Do not delete any “Windows” programs – SpyBot will usually find three to six of them, just un-check them so that you do not “Fix” them. By not deleting, we mean “un-check” the box that precedes any of the following – or any other programs that you recognize and actually want to keep!

Incomplete list of good programs your spyware protection might find and you will probably want to keep:

Microsoft. WindowsSecurityCenter.AntiVirusDisableNotify
Microsoft. WindowsSecurityCenter.FirewallDisableNotify
Microsoft. WindowsSecurityCenter.AntiVirusOverride
Microsoft. WindowsSecurityCenter.UpdateDisableNotify

Do not install SpyBot using the “TeaTimer” option.

- 1) Double click (Open) SpyBot from desktop icon or your Program directory (Start / All Programs)
- 2) Perform updates – no need for Beta or other languages - just click on “Continue”
- 3) Immunize (we recommend that you do this twice back-to-back)
- 4) Check for problems
- 5) Uncheck any of the above list of programs or other programs you recognize and wish to keep
If you forget to uncheck any of the above programs this is not a problem because they will be replaced the next time your computer does an update.
- 6) Close the program

Do not install Ad Aware 2007 if you are using any other full time spyware / virus protection. The newest version of Ad Aware runs full time on your computer unless you have configured it otherwise

Ad Aware does not play (at all) with Norton.

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Advanced Windows Care is another Free product that we feel is very good and is quite easy to us.

Advanced Windows Care is a Manual Protection program that will not interfere with your current (Full time) protection. You do not need to turn off your current protection to run Advanced Windows Care. Run this program as often as you feel necessary; daily, weekly, monthly, semi-annually ... If your computer has slowed down recently – run this program, then after it is done turn it off and update your full time protection and force that to do a scan as well.

To start using Advanced Windows Care:

Download and Install the product from our Freeware Page of our web site: www.ackcomputing.com click, “Run” during the download process where appropriate.

Follow the start-up directions and if your current protection puts up a cautionary window asking if you want to continue the operation – not only should you say, yes, but you should check the box on that window that says, “Do not ask me again about this program”.

Click the Advanced Windows Care icon on the desktop to open it. Then click the “Care” button and wait for the program to finish. Say Yes or Okay to any windows that come up. You will know it is done when the buttons at the bottom of the window change. When they do, click the “Repair” button and unless you want to, you do not need to “View the Report”. After the repair operation has concluded click the “Close” or “X” to end the session.

You can run this utility as often as you want – it is free.