

Top 10 Rules for Running a Home PC and Mac

The following are a set of guidelines for securing your home workstation. It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive list of items that one must have prepared, but some of the most basic in order to increase your odds of avoiding disaster.

Software, Hardware and Configurations



If you own an IBM PC compatible computer, the recommended operating system is Windows 2000 or Windows XP (Home or Professional). Windows XP offers more options for the security and protection including having a built in firewall. If you are on Windows 2000 it is recommended that you purchase a hardware or software firewall in or purchase an external firewall.

For a hardware solution, many users seem to prefer the ease of use of the LINKSYS router/hub but there are many brands on the market. These units are most effective when using a broadband (cable or DSL) connection and multiple computers.

For a software solution the following companies offer personal firewalls:

[ZoneAlarm Pro](#) (Zone Labs)

[Tiny Personal Firewall](#) (Tiny Software)

[Outpost Firewall](#) (Agnitum)

[Kerio Personal Firewall](#) (Kerio Technologies)

[BlackICE PC Protection](#) (Internet Security Systems)

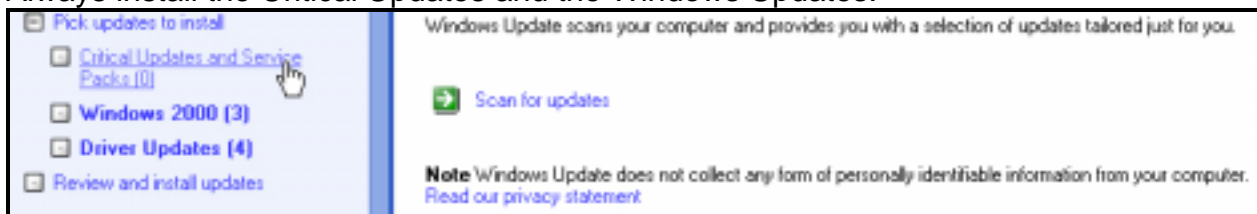
Please, consult the manuals on how to properly install and configure these.



If you are using Mac OSX, there is firewall software built in to the system, no need to buy any software. Firewalls are generally unnecessary with Macs because PCs on the Internet cannot see Mac configurations. Check with Apple for instruction how to set up a firewall, if you wish.



Update Windows and your MS applications with the latest hot fixes and patches regularly. All Windows versions can be updated at <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com>. Always install the Critical Updates and the Windows Updates.





Always apply the security patches and updates on your Mac. This can be done by choosing Software Update from the System Preferences (OSX) or the Control Panels (OS9) and allow it to run (requires Internet connection).



Use an Anti-Virus software and make sure you have the latest updates installed. The campus provides McAfee anti-virus software (for the PC) and Virex (for the Mac) free for all faculty and staff. You can order a copy of this software at <http://www.fullerton.edu/it/titancardservices/software.htm>. Instructions for installation and update are provided on the CD.

If you already have antivirus software installed, go to your antivirus vendor's Web site to get the latest updates, also known as virus definitions.



Install legitimate anti-spy ware software (PC only). This software will protect against ad-serving software, Trojan horses, and other means of tracking your surfing habits. It will also keep software that impacts the smooth operation of the workstation from being installed without your knowledge. One such software is Spybot available at <http://spybot.eon.net.au/>



Disable File Print Sharing in your computer (PC Only). Consult your software manuals. Instructions for Windows XP users can be found at: <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;307874>

Safe Computing Practices



Surf the web with a caution. There are lots of interesting and special software often available for free. Be wise and judicious in using any of these as many times they can have unwanted programs (spy ware) attached to them so:

- Virus scan all download software
- Be cautious of users you add to your Personal Messengers (ICQ, AIM, MSN Messenger, Yahoo, etc.,)



Back up your computers hard drive.

Editor: Giovanni Arteaga
Contributor: Chris Manriquez
Contributer: Jeff Newell

It is recommended that you keep copies of all data you consider valuable on in at least two locations. The first can be your computers hard drive. The second can be an additional hard drive, Zip disks, CD-R media, or other location.



Defragment your computers hard drive often (PC only).
You can use Microsoft built in disk defragmenter or a third party, such as Executive software's Diskkeeper.



Don't let others use your computer as administrator.
This will minimize the amount of un-authorized software and changes to the systems settings.