

PROTECT YOU AND YOUR COMPUTER

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** The following are my biased recommendations for personal / SOHO protection.
You may certainly have other preferred programs or vendors.
Do not install any of these without understanding the consequences.*

- (Free) Apply Windows and Office updates frequently or automatically:
<http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com/> <http://office.microsoft.com/productupdates/>
- (Free) Install software firewall. There is also firewall software now in Windows XP with SP2.
-ZoneAlarm, <http://www.zonealarm.com/>
- (< \$100) Connect basic hardware firewall between Internet connection and your network:
Linksys Cable/DSL Router, <http://www.linksys.com/>
- (Free) Install and update frequently or automatically AntiVirus software:
-(Free) AVG Anti-Virus, <http://www.grisoft.com/>
- (Free) Encrypt all critically sensitive files and store the private key on a USB storage device.
Consider using PGPdisk to create an encrypted volume on your hard drive (e.g. X:).
-(< \$100) PGP Personal, <http://www.pgp.com/>
-(Free) GnuPG, <http://www.gnupg.org/>
-(Free) PowerCrypt, <http://www.ovsoft.com/>
- (< \$100) Use encryption or virtual private networks (VPN) when transmitting any files, even by email:
-PGP, Linksys Cable/DSL VPN Router or Endpoint
- (Free) Passwords:
-Schedule regular password changes in your daytimer (min. every 90 days)
-Use a different password on every device
-Use strong passwords (letters, numbers, upper/lower case, symbols) e.g. W1relesS
- (\$0.50/week or \$30) Backup your critical files often, e.g. mark in your daytimer to burn a CD once a week and test your backups. Use USB keys, they can be rewritten. Also external USB/firewire hard drives.
- (< \$100) Buy a surge protected power bar or UPS for your computer equipment.
Not all power bars have surge protection. Purchase a small uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and configure it to auto shutdown your system in the event of power failure to help avoid data corruption and loss.
- (Free) Permanently destroy all deleted files, don't trust the recycle bin or trash.
-(< \$100 and Free Trial) SecureClean, <http://www.whitecanyon.com/>
-(Free) Eraser, <http://www.heidi.ie/>
-(Free) SuperShredder, <http://www.analogx.com/>
- (< \$100 and Free Trial) Completely wipe your hard drive before giving, selling, or throwing away your computer.
WipeDrive, <http://www.whitecanyon.com/>
- Protect your privacy by cleaning up all tracks of your Internet and computer activities, integrates with IE.
Also popup ad blocker. Weed out bad cookies, pop-ups, flash, ActiveX.
-AbsoluteShield, <http://www.internet-track-eraser.com/>
-(free) Cookies Cop 3, <http://www.pcmag.com/utilities/>
- (Free) Run a spyware detection program regularly on your system.
Ad-Aware, <http://www.ad-aware.com/>
Microsoft AntiSpyware <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/>
- (< \$100 and Free) The unsolicited undesired email clogging our mailboxes is an annoyance and a security threat.
-(<\$100 and free trial) Challenge/Response based: Qurb, <http://www.qurb.com>
-(free) Filter based, SpamBayes, <http://spambayes.sourceforge.net/>
-(<\$100) Filter based, iHateSpam, <http://www.sunbelt-software.com/>
- (Free) Never install a wireless networking device out of the box. See separate handout.
- (Free) Be very skeptical of things on the Internet. Don't assume that e-mail "From:" a particular person is actually from that person. Don't assume that an attachment is what it says it is.