

Top 10 Tips On Protecting Your Computer

By [Carlos Wardlow](#)

The one question asked most often by people these days may very well be "How to protect my computer?" People of all ages spend more time on the computer than not these days, which makes computer security-and, in particular, learning how to prevent computer viruses - an issue of paramount importance. Following these 10 tips will dramatically improve your computer security and leave you less likely to ask "How to protect my computer?" after you've suffered a breach!

- 1.) Buy and install anti-virus software: This is the one computer security measure everyone can implement easily and quickly. Simply put, the first thing you should do upon buying a new computer is add the anti-virus software. It won't completely secure the computer, but a computer without anti-virus software is unsafe.
- 2.) Buy and install anti-spyware software: Spyware is software that is installed on your computer, without your knowledge, that allows outsiders to get a glimpse at your computer activities. Spyware is usually more annoying than damaging-if you've been subjected to pop-up ads, you're probably a victim of spyware-but still, buying and installing the anti-spyware software will cut out that aggravation and allow your computer to run in a smoother fashion.
- 3.) Password protect your home and/or office wireless router. If you fail to do so, hackers can worm their way on to your wireless and steal valuable personal information from your computers. This has the added benefit of improving the performance of your wireless Internet: Your signal will be stronger without people in nearby homes and offices stealing it.
- 4.) Shut off your computer when you're not using it. Many people like leaving their computers on 24/7 so that they can easily resume work after waking up or returning home. But whenever a computer is on, it is vulnerable to attacks from hackers. A computer that is shut off cannot be infiltrated by the bad guys!
- 5.) Be careful downloading email attachments. This qualifies as an "old-fashioned" computer security recommendation, but it's still relevant. Someone from work sent you a Word doc? You're probably OK. A spammer sent you an attachment in a bizarrely worded email? Delete, delete, delete! Also be careful with an email attachment that has been forwarded to you by someone else. There's always the chance that the attachment picked up some malicious code at some point.
- 6.) Change up your passwords. A simple Google search will reveal common passwords you should avoid using. Also make sure your passwords aren't obvious and predictable to those who know you-in other words don't make your passwords the names of your children and don't include the digits of your birthday or anniversary. Try, whenever possible, to have different passwords for every site, and keep a written document of your passwords in a safe spot.
- 7.) Regularly back up important data. This falls under the heading of "you can never be too safe." If, despite all your efforts, something should go terribly wrong and a virus or a hacker renders your computer unusable, at least you won't lose your vital files.

8.) Update all your software, from your Internet browser to essentials such as Word and Adobe Reader. These updates come with valuable patches that address any security issues that have cropped up since the software was released.

9.) When making purchases on the Internet, only buy from "secured" websites. Failing to do so leaves you vulnerable to identity theft. You can find information about a website's security level at the bottom of the page.

10.) Be vigilant! The most pivotal part of computer security is asking yourself, every single day, "how to protect my computer?" Daily maintenance of your computer is the best way to keep it safe and operating at peak efficiency!

Carlos Wardlow has provided consulting services to companies ranging from Fortune 500 to small businesses in the NY/NJ Metropolitan and Central New Jersey areas since 1999. [CNK Technical Solutions](#) is dedicated to help leverage technology to make your business as efficient as possible.

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