

## How to Protect Your Computer from Malware

A free guide from  
[Ducktoes Computer Services](#)  
of Calgary, Alberta



Many computers I see in my virus lab have little or no protection against spyware or viruses. Sometimes they have anti-virus software, but it has expired or is no longer updating. Unprotected computers end up, eventually, and usually very quickly, in the virus lab or repair shop. This doesn't have to happen to you. If you are worried about expense, just use the free versions of these programs.

This is what you should do to protect yourself:

1. A combination of free [AVG](#) and [Malwarebytes](#) is very effective prevention. There is so much malware out there now, with 5,000 new types of malwares created everyday, no one program can prevent all spyware and viruses. Having both greatly increases your chances of remaining infection free. Download and update both. AVG runs all the time on your computer and updates itself automatically, but Malwarebytes you have to run and update once a week or so.
2. Familiarize yourself with the programs' interfaces and how they work. Make sure the AVG is updating and scanning. Check out its Virus Vault to see what malware it has removed. Learn how to update and scan the Malwarebytes. It is easy once you get used to it.
3. Try other anti-spyware programs. While you can have only one anti-virus, you can have many anti-spyware. See if they catch anything the other two have missed. Here are some good ones:

- [SuperAntiSpyware](#)
- [Dr. Web Cureit](#)
- [Spybot Search and Destroy](#)
- [Ad-Aware](#)

4. Turn on your Windows Firewall. Click the Start button, then Control Panel. Inside the Control Panel, find the Security Center. At the bottom of the Security Center page, click Windows Firewall. A Windows Firewall

page will open. Click the little circle in front of On (recommended.) At the bottom on the page, Click "Okay.

5. Make sure your Windows Updates is on automatic.
6. Practice "Safe Hex." I'm borrowing this term from my tech friend Mike Yaunish of Compugent. That means use protection and stay away from dangerous sites. Porn sites and file-sharing programs that share music and videos are often rife with malware. If you do wander into an unsafe site, run your anti-spyware and anti-virus immediately after. It's like taking a morning after pill, but is better than nothing.
7. If your computer starts acting strange, is slower, has pop-ups, or if the browser is taking you to sites you didn't click on and don't want to go to, take your computer to Ducktoes or your computer tech. Infections get worse and more difficult to remove over time. Catch them early and the chance for removal is better and less expensive.

If you own a computer, you will have to, sooner or later, learn to protect yourself, or hire someone else to do it. If you have a tech-savvy friend or relative, ask him or her to teach you. Ducktoes will be glad to help you too. Otherwise, if you don't take charge of your virus protection, you will have your computer in the shop every few months.