

TIPS FOR Safe Computing



Use firewall protection

Windows XP gives you the option to protect your internet connections with a firewall. A connection protected by a firewall (either by Windows or a program such as Norton Personal Firewall) will be less prone to security issues, viruses, and unauthorized access.

Configure internet browser for security

If using Internet Explorer set the Security level to “medium” or above. Browser security can be changed under the Tools menu and then Options or Internet Options. A safer way to browse the internet is by using an alternative browser such as Mozilla Firefox or Safari (if you are using an Apple computer). Firefox is available for download at: <http://www.mozilla.org>

Do NOT open unknown programs or documents

A good general rule to follow when dealing with email attachments and other downloadable content is to NOT open anything that originates from an unknown source. Documents and program files can contain code that will harm your computer. To avoid viruses that may be imbedded in documents or programs, do not download or open files that are named suspiciously. You should be generally suspicious of any content that comes from an unknown source or is emailed to you unexpectedly.

Regularly backup data

By regularly backing up the data stored on your computer you can avoid losing your files in their entirety. Backups of data can be made in several ways. You can burn your data to CD's or DVD's if you have the proper drives. You can purchase a USB or Firewire external hard drive. If you are a Hamline student or staff member, you also have the option of storing a limited amount of data on the web via the NetStorage system.

Install an auto-updating anti-virus program

No Windows based computer should ever be connected to the internet without virus protection. If you are a Hamline student and do not already have an anti-virus program, you can download one via Pipeline (Additional Services: Download Software). Once an anti-virus program is installed, be sure that the program is automatically checking the internet for updates. It is also very important to scan your computer for viruses on a regular basis. Such a scan can usually be setup to run automatically.

Install security patches as they are released

The easiest and most important way to keep your computer safe is to download and install software updates. To check for updates using Windows XP click Start: Programs: Windows Update. Windows Update can, and should, be configured to check for and install updates automatically. If you have an Apple computer you can check for updates by clicking on the apple in the top left corner of your screen and then Software Update.