

tech talk, the nasty virus

Ok so it might seem a little ridiculous to write an article regarding protecting PC's from viruses but the truth is... many people don't! Why? The most common reason I've found is, most people have no desire to pay \$60 dollars to re-register their antivirus program each and every year, it's like having to pay for car insurance, nobody really wants to do it. But as we all well know it needs to be done, and if you're not aware of this? You'll soon find out quickly when your new PC craters in six months.

It's important to understand that new PC's do not come protected from viruses! Don't make the mistake of thinking so!! New PC's usually come with a trial version of Norton in which case is only good for about three months. Once expired you are then expected to pay an additional \$60 on top of your new PC purchase for the full version of an antivirus program. This is a hassle and I've personally had to learn the hard way when I nearly lost my new laptop a couple years ago because I was naïve and thought antivirus came activated with the computer. Come to find out I had acquired 130 viruses! That was a record breaker for my tech who was shocked my computer was still running.

The moral of the story...PROTECT YOURSELF! It pays and your compuer will last much longer! If your opting for a free anti-virus program my recommendation would be AVG. I actually like AVG better than Norton because it allows my computer to run faster yet it works equally as well. You can go to www.grisoft.com and download it for free. But before doing so PLEASE NOTE, you must uninstall your current antivirus program and get rid of all files before installing a new one or you will have hell to pay!!!

Get a firewall to protect your PC from others trying to access it, particularly if you're using wireless networks. Zone Alarm works awesome! You can get this free by going to www.zonealarm.com.

To prevent spyware consider downloading Spybot Search & Destroy at www.safer-netwroking.org as well as Ad-Aware at www.lavasoftusa.com, both programs are free and give you additional protection from those trying to seek out your personal information on the web.

Try using a new browser, Internet Explorer is awful! My recommendation is using Mozilla Firefox, you can download it for free at <http://www.mozilla.com/firefox/>. Mozilla is a lynx product and is well-maintained by it's programmers.

These are just a few ideas to protect your PC cheaply and honely. If however you own a MAC none of this applies so consider yourself lucky!