PC Pitstop

Avoiding Viruses and Scams

PC Pitstop sees all manner of viruses and software 'bugs' every day from a huge range of different sources. It is near impossible to keep up with speed at which new viruses or scams spread, but common sense tells us where to look. So it is with this knowledge that we have compiled some basic tips to avoid costly and damaging issues from viruses occurring on your machine:

✓ **Be sure to keep your machine up to date -** with the latest patches from Windows Update. These software patches fix bugs and exploits and help to keep your machine secure from the newest viruses.

✓ **Watch your web browsing habits -** There are billions of sites on the internet and not all of them are nice. Most of these sites are related to adult content, 'free' downloads such as music; software and movies; online flash game websites; and gambling websites such as online poker. If you are going to download or sign-up for something on a website make sure it is a verified safe site beforehand possibly by searching for the name of the site/service on Google.

✓ **Do not open email attachments from people you do not know!** This is the leading cause of virus infection and also the way most viruses spread, even if it is not an application in the attachment the file can still be infected or trigger an exploit on your system leading to your system being infected. Only open attachments from known people, and even then use caution.

✓ **Keep your identity safe online -** do not give information out to strangers or to random web sites. This includes your name, address, phone number etc... as this information can be used for nefarious purposes such as bank scams or identity theft.

✓ **Avoid pop-ups or banners offering FREE product -** most of these lead to malicious web sites or scams. These will usually present you with a window that reads something along the lines of "Your system is infected - Click here to run a FREE virus scan!" Do not click on these, just close the window and ignore them. If you are genuinely concerned about viruses, pop into PC Pitstop for a true virus health check.

✓ **Finally, avoid taking calls from 'technicians' claiming that your computer is infected –** No-one outside of the person directly in front of your machine can know exactly what is or isn't wrong with your computer. These tricky scammers will usually ask you to type something into your machine, providing them with remote access, where they can then cause a lot of damage. Hang up on them and never hand over credit card details to someone you don't trust.

Keep these points in mind for HAPPY HEALTHY COMPUTING!

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