

This handout lists Web sites that can help you maintain security and privacy on your computer. These sites are listed with no special warranties for their contents or products. Meyda Online has no affiliation with any other site.

Assorted Tips & Observations

- With computers, privacy is never absolute. You can attain relative privacy with some work.
- Data has a way of both disappearing and resurfacing at awkward moments. Tools for data recovery are very powerful and computer activities leave trails on disks.
- Know your PC. Having an idea of what's normal for it can alert you to problems.
- Defaults are often at fault. Take the time to look through the settings and adjust them.
- When installing software, choose the "custom" installation options to see what gets installed.
- When selling, donating, or trashing a PC, be sure to wipe the disks. Formatting is not enough.
- Don't install more "services" than needed on the PC. The Gibson Research Center tests at <http://grc.com/> are helpful to show what is visible to others on the Internet.
- Think before opening email attachments.
- Keep up to date with security updates and patches.
- Privacy isn't just a matter of computers & networks. The non-computer privacy intrusions are often greater.
- Compartmentalize personal info. Don't make it all easy to find in one place.
- The best security tool is a brain.

General

Meyda Online

<http://www.meydaonline.com/>

This site looks at information security, privacy, and liberties issues. Still in early development.

Gibson Research Center:

<http://grc.com/>

Has some useful utilities and revealing tests. Although this site emphasizes Windows, some of the tests, such as the "Probe My Ports" under "Shields Up", are useful for any operating system.

Stay Safe Online

<http://www.staysafeonline.info/>

Has a basic set of "10 Security Tips."

Security Focus

<http://www.securityfocus.com/>

Comprehensive security resource. Look up reported vulnerabilities and how to fix them at <http://online.securityfocus.com/bid>
You can also sign up for various computer security maillists from this site.

Privacy Foundation

<http://www.privacyfoundation.org/>

Info about privacy in general. Covers some computer privacy matters, especially Web bugs.

ComputerBytesMan

<http://www.computerbytesman.com/>

One of the latest topics on this site is privacy problems with recent versions of Windows Media Player.

Home PC Firewall Guide

<http://www.firewallguide.com/>

Good starting point for learning how to use personal firewall products to help protect info and privacy.

EPIC Privacy Tools Links

<http://www.epic.org/privacy/tools.html>

Good starting point for finding all kinds of privacy tools for PCs and Macs.

Windows

Microsoft Security Info

<http://www.microsoft.com/security/>

If you use Microsoft products, check this page periodically.

Outlook 2000 Security Update

<http://office.microsoft.com/Downloads/2000/Out2ksec.aspx>

Also has link for the Outlook 98 Security Update.

This update would prevent spread of many worms.

One major downside, several file formats will become inaccessible via Outlook. If you are a programmer or developer, this may pose problems unless you and the people you are working with send program files as zip files or other "safe" formats.

Zone Alarm

<http://www.zonealarm.com/>

Nice "personal firewall" program. A free version is available. Detects attempted outbound Internet connections as well as incoming ones. Detects Web bugs embedded in non-Web documents.

Pest Patrol

<http://www.pestpatrol.com/>

Software to detect spyware, remote access Trojan horses, etc.

Linux

LinuxSecurity.com

<http://www.linuxsecurity.com/>

Linux Security HOW-TO Document

<http://www.linux.org/docs/ldp/howto/Security-HOWTO.html>

MacIntosh

MacWorld Internet Privacy Article

<http://www.macworld.com/1995/11/features/1210.html>

Although an old article, it has good tips that are still useful for everybody.

Cryptography

PGP International

<http://www.pgpi.org/>

Obtain the excellent Pretty Good Privacy encryption program.

Best Crypt (Jetico)

<http://www.jetico.com/>

Disk & Data Wipers

BCWipe (Jetico)

<http://www.jetico.com/>

Webroot's Window Washer

<http://www.webroot.com/washer.htm>

Evidence Eliminator

<http://www.evidence-eliminator.com/>

Securing Wireless Networks

Practically Networked's Wireless Security Tips

http://www.practicallynetworked.com/support/wireless_secure.htm

Good introduction to improving wireless security, especially for 802.11b networks.

Linksys's Wireless & VPN Security Overview

<http://www.linksys.com/edu/vpnwireless.asp>

A general overview of securing wireless networks and virtual private networks.

Reality Checks

Vmyths.com

<http://www.vmyths.com/>

DataFellows Virus Hoax List

<http://www.f-secure.com/news/hoax/>

When you get an email warning of a "new virus", this is the site to check.

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