



internet help site

HEALTH ADVICE FOR YOUR COMPUTER

13 Top Tips to prevent spam

Because email is free, spam is the scourge of the internet. It's annoying and an extreme time and resource waster but unfortunately, I think we're stuck with it. The good news is that you can minimize it.

What is spam?

Spam is technically called UBE (Unsolicited Bulk Email) which basically means someone sends out a whole pile of junk email to people that didn't ask for it. It is not emails, ezines, etc, that you requested but no longer want. Remember, you requested them, so it can't be spam! Check out the article on my blog for more info.

<http://internetdoctor.blogspot.com/>

Basically, it's only a matter of time before most of us receive some sort of spam. As soon as someone knows your email address, you become a spam risk. The more you use the internet, the greater the chance of someone harvesting your address. If you've gone a year or more with the same address and have had very little spam, you are doing extremely well! The average life-span of an email address is about 18 months.

How did I get spammed?

Spammers use all sorts of methods to gain addresses. Some are simple and even accidental whereas others rely on sophisticated software. Here's a short list:

- From unsecured mailing lists
- By scanning web pages
- From Usenet (one of the oldest computer networks around)
- From peer-to-peer and file sharing networks
- From web forms, guest books, ezines, contests, registration forms, etc
- From printed materials, eg; brochures, leaflets, phone books, newspapers, etc
- From AOL profiles (AOL is regarded as a good source of newbies)
- From chat rooms and forums

- From “contact us” pages at your domain; eg; myemail@ mydomain.com
- Hoax and junk emails
- Some newsletter owners on sell their list after they’re finished
- Online and off line promotions
- They purchase leads or whole lists
- From FFA networks
- By hacking into sites
- Your ISP email address may have been owned by someone previously
- Someone may have access to your computer, either sharing or on a network
- From HTML emails (they’re the pretty ones)
- From you and your friends when you forward emails
- From someone’s address book
- Just by guessing!

As you can see it’s a fairly long list. The good news is that most of this can be avoided by Safe Usage Practices and then helped by some form of filtration software.

What can I do?

Firstly, make sure you get a copy of my free report “How to use email safely” and read that. Then we’ll list a few tips and ideas that you can implement.

Safe usage tips

- Make sure that only you have access to your computer
- Don’t file share in fact disable it on your computer
- Do not disclose your address to anyone unless you think they are reputable
- Do not forward and CC junk emails to everyone you know. If you do get them, simply delete them.
- Have multiple email addresses. You can get free ones from Hotmail, Gmail,etc and use them for all of you online activities. Keep your personal and business emails separate and personal.
- Do not display your email address on your website. Instead use a contact form.
- Do not sign up for everything! Be very selective.
- Don’t download anything! You may catch something. No smilies, icons, screensavers, free checks, free offers or anything flashy. This is a high risk area!
- Choose freeware and shareware very carefully. This is a high risk area.
- Use security software and keep it updated.
- If you have an old address, it may be time to replace it, especially if you’re getting spammed.

Prevention and minimization

- Ideally have a number of email accounts or consider Webmail where you can check your mail on the server before it even gets to your computer.

- Purchase a filtering program which YOU can program. They come in a variety of complexities but I prefer to keep things simple. For many years I've been using the Incredimail program for my email. It's extremely user friendly and FREE! They supply a great "Junkfilter" which is available for a very reasonable price with no ongoing charges! Again, It's very simple and user friendly like their email program. I that recommend you give it a try. It's great!

Note: Many ISPs will provide spam filtering for you and in some cases this done by default. That's why you may not be receiving half of your emails!

One of the biggest violators of this is AOL (in America) where they treat just about every email as spam regardless of whether or not you requested it. This type of vandalism is the equivalent of the Postal Service throwing half your mail in the bin. They may very well be costing you a lot of business!

If your ISP does not give you the option of controlling your own filtering, then change ISPs! Personally, I switch off the ISP's spam filter and set up my own filtering at my end. I get all of my emails and then I get to choose.

- If you haven't got a filter, set up a Junk folder and put in all of your unwanted mail. Go to your toolbar, under Edit- click >select all. Then right click the items, and click block and bounce to sender. They will all be done at once.
- You can also go to "Message Rules" in your toolbar where you can personalize you settings and approved senders.

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