

HUMANIZING TECHNOLOGY
By Frank, Your Computer Tutor

YOU CAN'T RELY ON AN ANTI-VIRUS PROGRAM TO CATCH A VIRUS

If you're on the internet, you'll get a virus. However, most of them could be stopped dead – fast! Here's how we can work together to stop the spread of most viruses.

Firstly, it's imperative to have a firewall to keep bugs from slipping in your computer's back door. Microsoft Windows XP provides one for free - it's adequate & you don't need Norton or McAfee's firewall. A free antivirus from www.Grisoft.com works better than the aforementioned companies, too!

ANTI-VIRUS PROGRAMS NEED CURRENT DATA TO CATCH A VIRUS:

Unfortunately, a friend can unknowingly send you a virus anytime, especially in those Fwd, Fwd, Fwd's. *Once the virus is activated by you looking at an INFECTED attachment or an HTML-type email**, many viruses will take over your address book and send themselves to the folks in your address book, ad-infinity.

With thousands of virus being invented & morphed each month, your machine can catch a *sent* virus that possibly has no immediate cure, or fix – virus filters provided by AOL, ATT, MSN, Yahoo or Norton or McAfee cannot catch viruses they do not know about. Nonetheless, you can defend yourself from email viruses no matter what!!!

AN ANTI-VIRUS DEFENSE: TRICK IT! CREATE A SECRET CODE:

An emailing virus cannot know or replicate a subject-line SECRET CODE created by you. A virus is really very stupid; it's only program that is programmed to put something like this in the email SUBJECT LINE:

“Please read this; I want your opinion”; Look at this” . . . and, since “your name” is connected to your email ID, your friends will eagerly open the email and/or attachment.

“BADA-BOOM” they have your-sent-virus: *Thank You Very Much - My machine is trashed!!*

As email users, we are daft not to exercise simple precautions to prevent virus propagation . . .

The Secret Code is something you write in SUBJECT field-line of your email. You can Identify yourself with your initials or your first name to look like this:

SUBJECT: Frankh – I am sending you this email
SUBJECT: FH - This is from me
SUBJECT: FHFamily – bring the kids Sunday
SUBJECT: FrankH - Computer Tech – I'm sending you a Bulletin

Once you've determined your code, tell all your friends to look for *your* special *Secret Code* when you email them, and that they should not to open any email sent from you if the code is not the subject line. Ask your friends to do the same when sending email to you, and explain to them that you will not accept mail from them without *their* *Secret Code* appearing in the subject line, and never any Fwd, Fwd, FWD's.

Is it any more trouble to enter a code? No, because you should be entering something into the subject line anyway as polite protocol – adding your name or initials only initiates a few more keystrokes.

* HTML email have a fancy formatting look: Bolding, Colors, Dancing Smilies, Underlining, Fancy Fonts. These emails can contain hidden background codes that can destroy you computer. It is best to set your email to be just old fashioned "plain text " – it's very boring-looking, but very safe.

THIS IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT: UNLESS YOU ARE EXPECTING A DATA PROGRAM FROM SOMEONE, NEVER, EVER OPEN AN ATTACHMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING small letters at the end of the attachment line - aka EXTENSIONS:

ade	adp	bas	bat	chm	cmd	com	cpl	crt	exe	hlp	hta	nf
ins	isp	js	jse	lnk	msa	mdb	mde	msc	mdz	msi	mst	mst
pcd	pif	reg	sct	shs	url	vb	vbe	vbs	wsc	wsf	wsh	

If you want more info on Virus safeguards, or Virus Hoaxes go to:

<http://www.beyondtechnology.net>

Click on the blinking star, and then choose VIRUS INFO

Next time we'll discuss how to keep you and your kids safe: Web sites that Identify Registered Sex Offenders who are possibly living next door to y o u.

Mentor Frank Hare, M.A., has Hundreds of Happy Clients and manages Colorado-based BeyondTech, LCC: Services offered: custom-built computers & IN-HOME SERVICES: repairs, networking, Spyware & virus removal, 24/7. Call 303-575-1774 frank@beyondtechnology.net