

PC Tech UpTime, Inc.

Computer Repairs & Services

<http://www.pctechuptime.com>

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(828) 400-7271

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PC User Tips: **VERY IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS TO READ**

- 1) Some programs listed in Add / Remove, or Programs and Features are not all easily recognized, and may be special business software for your work, but be aware many others fall under the category of spyware, meaning they send statistical data at random times on their own even when you are not running them. This will slow your PC down to a crawl, sometimes causing it to freeze up or stall.
- 2) There are very few **Maintenance/Utility programs** that run properly on Windows Vista and newer systems without damaging the OS System and Registry. For best results use the built-in Windows Maintenance utilities and only have ONE Antivirus or Internet Security, and only ONE Firewall installed at any one time! Windows includes a good Firewall in the system. The built-in maintenance utilities are:
 - ✓ Disk Clean-up
 - ✓ Error Checking (all check boxes UNCHECKED)
 - ✓ Disk Defragment (avoid setting to do automatic Defragmentation, and only use on the main C:\ drive)
 - ✓ Do not run Windows Defender with any other security software, it must be turned OFF first! Windows Defender is designed as a fail-safe in case the user's security software is not installed properly, or not at all.
- 3) **FREE** is a nice word unless that Free costs you the loss of data, or corrupts your system.
- 4) **Viruses** come in many forms. Just remember a Virus, Malware, or Trojan Horse, Etc. does not want you to remove it... PERIOD. A virus will attempt to disable: **Microsoft Updates, Antivirus or Internet Security program, and Redirect** all efforts to get on the internet to find a repair. The sooner you turn the computer off and get it repaired the less damage will occur. Then a Virus starts it's evil purpose of stealing your data, financial information, pictures, corrupting your documents to make them unusable, and Finally it damages the systems files so it will not reboot, or runs exhaustingly slow...!

Be aware that Viruses can be removed, spyware can be removed, but the damage it does to your system files and your personal files is generally fatal to the system forcing you to repeatedly rebuild your system. This may take 3 to 5 hours per machine to get them back where they are reliable. To complete Windows updates alone on Vista will take a minimum of three hours with repeated update upon update bombarding you for several days after you think you're done.

Windows 7 takes less time at roughly 2.5 to 4 hours to complete all the needed updates, and this is on 30 mbps Internet connection. DSL will normally take between 2 to 10 times longer even if you're connected directly using an Ethernet cable to your main modem or router, if you have one. Wifi is usually only half as fast as a direct plug Ethernet wired to your modem or router.

- 5) **Spyware** generally looks innocent, and much of the spyware comes in TOOLBARS of various flavors, or sites you download free stuff from. Some even comes from Homepages you get tangled up with. I would not install a toolbar even if my mother made it! Why would you add a second steering wheel to your car? Daaaaah!

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- 6) **Conflicts** are more common than viruses, and just like someone you can't get along with. A programmer with a selfish attitude is worse than a Virus. This is especially true because Microsoft Windows updates its software daily. The software you install must comply with the Windows System or else a conflict arises and weird things begin to happen. All software must get along or problems will rear their ugly head.

- 7) **To run your Internet Explorer browser correctly** there are usually three add-ons you will need to keep up-to-date: (Java, Acrobat Reader, & "Flash-Player, not in Windows 8"). Be cautious during the install to uncheck junk that can cause system problems...just uncheck these: **Ask Toolbar, McAfee Security Scan, Google Chrome**. Experience has shown those people who recommend this junk are seeking job security, or a way to cause your system trouble!

- 8) **Finally FREE Software is not the worst of it...** then along comes P2P (peer to peer) programs. I can't list them all since there are so many, but they all promise free music, movies, software, pornography, and more to download freely. This sounds so enticing to a world so strapped for income and morals. Just be aware of how they work: (uTorrent, Frostwire, limewire, iMesh, Bearshare Etc.). Below is an overview of what a P2P programs requires, and does on your system after installation.
 - 1) You download a program (that has many nasty hidden programs inside it that opens ports on your PC).
 - 2) It requires you to create a user name and password
 - 3) It requires you to create a shared folder (which every other user worldwide can access)
 - 4) It allows you to download all the promised free stuff but fails to tell you most of it is highly illegal because they are located off shore in another country that has little or no control over them. Oh by the way...that shared FOLDER it makes you create, it will store everything you download –good or bad, and if anyone else actually accesses your shared folder, (highly likely) you become a distributor of that material, GET THE PICTURE!. The music industry has fined individuals for millions of dollars and won by reason of transmitting copyright software and material electronically. If that is not bad enough terrorists and illegal hackers decompile commercial software then add viruses before they recompile that software or movie to make it appear to be proper and safe, but it's not!

- 9) **Open source Software** is freely downloaded, and not all Open Source is bad, but the developers have no responsibility to you the user that it will work without a problem. Heck, even commercial software you pay for has serious issues. But, there are some you can trust:
 - a. Open Office www.openoffice.org Apache Office Suite, made by Oracle
 - b. Irfanview www.irfanview.com Image viewer and converter
 - c. Java www.java.com also made by Oracle see caution below.
 - d. Acrobat Reader www.adobe.com Made by Adobe see caution below
 - e. Flash Player www.adobe.com Made by Adobe see caution below
 - f. AVG Free www.freeavg.com (This is for personal use only, but protects better than any other Antivirus on the market) The commercial version includes better options, and legal rights for business, church and nonprofit!

CAUTION:

(Uncheck extra garbage that software tries to install: Any Toolbar, Google Chrome, and Ask toolbar. This applies to Java, Acrobat Reader, and FlashPlayer, and others.)

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10) Over-Heat Issues:

For a desktop keep it elevated to at least 6 inches above floor level. It must have plenty of air-flow, and be cleaned about every 6 months inside with canned compressed-air!

For Laptops always use a lap desk or chill-pad. Never operate a laptop on a table cloth or any other soft surface. Laptops can overheat and damage the processor and power supply quickly when air-flow is restricted.

This kind of damage may also void your warranty. Many laptops are not engineered with long life in mind. Simply stated a laptop naturally is used on your lap, right? But, the brilliant engineers that design them place the vents right where your leg will be...! Try and outsmart them and maintain good air flow under and to the sides of laptops to make them last longer.

SAFETY MEASURES TO EXTEND COMPUTER LIFE & YOUR PEACE OF MIND!

- 📁🕒 Only use built-in Microsoft or Mac maintenance utilities
- 📀🕒 Make recovery CD/DVD immediately (usually takes from 1 to 5 DVDs each) Use permanent marker to label disks then store them in a safe place.
- 📄🕒 Always update your Windows System before each use
- 📄🕒 Always be sure your Antivirus definitions are up-to-date
- 📄🕒 Only install programs made for your system, don't chance it! (ie. Vista, Windows7, Windows 8.0, Windows 8.1)
- 🕒 Save your work frequently. Rule of thumb: (Never let more time pass than you're willing to retype, or redesign)
- 💾🕒 Backup anything of value onto an external device regularly. (Hard drive, Flash drive, or CD/DVD)
- 🕒 Do system maintenance about every 80 to 100 hours of use, or every two months or less.

PS:

Every piece of software has glitches and bugs in it. The goal is to find software that has the least number of issues. Everytime a new system hits the market there is a high likelihood that not all currently available software will work on it. Keep in mind that the word compatible does not always mean software will run 100%. The best tactic is to find software that includes your new system's description as made for it.

WISDOM:

Minimum requirements generally mean that software has been known to run on some old hardware that you might have on hand. You have to ask yourself the question will I live long enough to see it run smoothly and effectively. Your time is the most valuable thing that you can manage. Slow systems and old software will waste weeks of your life every year!

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COMPUTER TIPS FOR FASTER PERFORMANCE

 **MORE FREE COMPUTER TIPS -** that can save you time and money!

You may already use some of these methods to help you stay organized. The better you prepare for the unexpected the happier you'll be when it happens.

1) ORGANIZE FILES -

Organize all your important files (letters, resume, family photos, pictures, spread sheets, presentations and financial backups into one main folder! Avoid using your email program as a storage place. Whether you use an Internet email account or a local program on your own computer the more items you keep stored there can slow it down dramatically.

The best storage location on Windows XP systems is "My Documents". For Windows Vista, Windows7, and the Windows 8.0/8.1 it uses a folder with the same name as the "USER NAME" for that profile.

2) GROUP IN SUBFOLDERS -

Windows normally offers several folders where you can place your files. It is wise to create a special folder named "**MyBackup**". The newer systems have many group folders already made*. Always create folders that have a simple and descriptive name to store your data in:

My Documents *	-Personal and Business
My Pictures *	-Photos / Images / Pictures
My Music*	-Stores all your music
Contacts *	-Address book
Downloads *	-files downloaded from the Internet
Favorite's backups	-Bookmarks backups
Financial Records	-Quicken / Money files / Peachtree
Saved Email...	-Emails, Attachments / .pdf files

Keep in mind that the file format is dependent on a specific program to open them. If the program is not present on your computer it may not open. Note: some versions of Microsoft Office will not open newer versions of the same program: ie. Word 97, Word 2003 may experience issue with file extension because Office changed from .doc to .docx

3) BACKUP DATA-

Backup your data on an external storage device regularly either manually or through special software. Failure to do this will cause you to have a very bad day when disaster does strike. It is not if...but when you will lose data!

4) ANTIVIRUS...

Use a reliable AntiVirus program, and update daily, or as often as you use your computer. From experience on hundreds of computers serviced over the years we have found much better protection, lower cost, and

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quicker system performance using AVG commercial software than any other brand. Check out our website and click on our “**Home & Software**” menu, then click on “**AVG Antivirus Security**” and follow the links.

5) FIREWALL...



Setup and use a Firewall to protect your data from intrusion from outside your own computer. Windows has one built-in, but when more security is needed choose an Internet Security package from AVG

NOTES:

Be certain that you only have one Antivirus program and one Firewall program installed. More than one of either of these programs can cause conflicts and errors. Windows Systems offer a built in firewall that is setup through the dialup or network connection. If you want to install some other firewall disable the Windows firewall first! Many routers will also add another layer of protection that includes a built-in Firewall that focuses on incoming traffic only in most cases. High-end routers can include protection in both directions coming in and going out! Avoid relying solely on a router firewall type of protection. If you use utilities other than what comes with the operating system such as Registry cleaners, and a groups of free junk BEWARE. You may be playing with dynamite!

6) SYSTEM MAINTENANCE: for a how to go to: <http://www.pctechuptime.com/maintenance.html>

7) SYSTEM RESTORE:

On Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7, and on Windows 8.0 /8.1 there is a very important tool that can save you many hours of work it's call the System Restore.

Setting a restore point before all software installations will improve chances of recovery if a major conflict arises.

8) SURGE PROTECTORS -



Surge Protectors are essential and very important. At the very least you should have one of these between your wall plug and your computer equipment. A little known fact is that once a major surge hits your "Surge Protector" the likelihood of your equipment still being protected is greatly reduced. Some surge protectors will still conduct power making you think you are still protected. A few will stop working all together to show you they are no longer protecting you!

High-end surge protectors sometimes have a warning light that lets you know it has been hit and is no longer protecting your equipment! Even reset buttons do not provide the assurance that you are adequately protected. Surge protectors do not protect you from BROWN-OUTS or BLACK-OUTS...see below!

9) Battery Backup, Better known as an UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply):



The electrical power that you have in your home averages approximately 110 to 115 volts. This may change during storms, or by an interruption caused by vehicle accidents that damage power-lines. Most equipment in your home or business work well on the normal

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electric companies services. But, computerize electronics are becoming more and more complex, and they need more protection than just a surge protector can provide. To learn more about how your equipment may be at risk by not using a battery backup, try searching www.google.com using the search phrase: “Why use a Battery Backup”. Below are a few typical power problems that you have probably already experienced.

BLACK-OUT...

This is when the power goes completely out and all equipment shuts down.

BROWN-OUTS...

These are sometimes more threatening to your open files and System Files than to your computer hardware itself. This is where file corruption and loss of files can occur more frequently.

BATTERY BACKUP SIZES...

Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS)...these come in many sizes, and are rated in volt-amps (VA). The faster the processor you have in your home or business the heavier the equipment load requiring a larger unit to be installed. For small desktop systems a 900 VA would be sufficient. But when a system has a power supply greater than 350 watts, say 400 Watts or 600 Watts you will be wanting a 1500 VA or higher.

What kind of equipment needs a Battery Backup? Basically this includes your computer and monitor, Internet Service Modem, any external hard drives that you have connected to the computer, and the Router if you have one.

Although Battery Backup companies advertise long time periods of extended operation it is better to err on the side of caution, and estimate half of the quoted time. You basically only need a small window of time to properly Shut Down your computer to avoid file damage. If you are in doubt about what is needed ask the sales person where you buy the Battery Backup about how much VoltAmp Rating that will be required to handle your computer, and how long of a period that really is. You will need to know the total watts of all the equipment you will be using. Realize of course system wattage increase as the system gets hotter, and hard drive activity increases.

At first investing in an Battery Backup (UPS) unit may seem expensive, but when you consider the loss thousands of important files, or many hours or work replacing them...then the price becomes small in comparison. So, buy as large of a unit as you can afford. And, if the one you buy does not offer an auto-shut down feature then avoid leaving your computer on while you are not at home, or in the office.

Office personnel...always check to see if your IT department has your data protected already. Even so, system file corruption from “Brown-outs” may make a battery backup a great investment. Time is very valuable!

Warning...UPS systems are only meant to carry the load of your CPU (main computer). DO NOT plug in lights, heaters, non-essential printers, any laser printer, and speaker systems, etc.

Sincerely,
PC Tech Uptime Technician