

## Routine Maintenance for your computer

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*"In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice. But, in practice, there is." - Jan L.A. van de Snepscheut*

How many people would buy a car, and never expect to do anything else to it but drive? Think about it, would you buy a brand new shiny car, do no general maintenance, no oil changes, nothing. How long would you expect the car to run?

Now think about your computer, since you bought it, have you done any maintenance? Will you be surprised when something goes wrong? Most people are. Here are some tips to keep your computer maintained.

**Cleaning** – Dust, dirt, smoke and general grime is a big killer for electrical components. It can clog up fans that keep your system from overheating, and cause components to not function. "It's like sucking air through a straw!" Overheating can cause damage to many of the components in your computer. Keeping your computer away from sources of smoke, and having the dust and dirt cleaned out of the case at least once a year will help. In addition, CPU and Power supply fans should be

replaced on a yearly basis.

**Critical Updates** – Your Operating System ( or "OS") should be up to date. Critical Updates can be downloaded from the website of your OS manufacturer. (If you use "Windows" the site for updates would be <http://www.microsoft.com>).

**Software Updates** – Other Software packages you use, often have downloadable updates to fix problems with the software, and in the case of Virus software, keep you protected from the latest discovered viruses and other vulnerabilities.

**Run Disk Cleanup/Scandisk** – Scandisk will repair errors found on the disk. Cleanup will remove temporary Internet files and free up space on your hard drive.

**Run Disk Defragmenter** – Disk Defragmenter should be run on a regular basis as well, this essentially keeps the information in your hard drive, in order. Picture a busy library with lots of people using lots of books. What would happen if the Librarians stopped re-shelving the books in the proper order? It would certainly take a lot longer to find the book you wanted. A

Defragmented Drive is like the well-organized library. Disk Defragmenter will also scan the disk for errors first.

**Remove Spyware and Un-needed programs** – Spyware is software which may be installed by downloading something else from the Internet, or visiting certain websites. It tracks your movements online, and slows down your computer. Spyware programs run in the background, so you may not ever realize they are there, until your computer starts running slow. These should be removed, not only for privacy reasons, but because they cause decreased performance of your computer, and/or cause it to cease operating.



Routine Maintenance will help keep your computer running smoothly for years to come!

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