



► Online safety and security begin with you

Every day, more than a billion people worldwide use the Internet to work, shop, play games, stay informed, and communicate with family and friends. For children, the Internet is a virtual classroom and playground; for adults, it is a powerful tool.

But using the Internet can expose you and your family to nuisances such as spam e-mail and instant messages, or risks such as identity theft, child predators, and security threats that may damage your computer or destroy your valuable data.

Fortunately, you can take a few simple steps to help protect your computer, your family, and your personal information online. The information provided here is a good start. For more online safety tips, visit www.microsoft.com/protect.

► Protect Your Computer

By taking four basic steps, you can help keep your computer secure from many malicious software attacks:

- **Use a firewall and keep it turned on**—The firewall in your Microsoft® Windows® operating system helps to protect your computer by placing a protective barrier between your computer and the Internet, camouflaging it from criminals and malicious software such as viruses and worms.
- **Keep your operating system and software updated**—One of the most important things you can do to protect your computer is also one of the easiest: keep your operating system and other software up to date with the latest software. The easiest way to do this is to use the **Automatic Updates** feature in or **Windows Vista®** or Windows XP SP2. You can also manually update your operating system at **Microsoft Update** (update.microsoft.com). For even greater protection, try the 90-day free trial of **Windows Live™ OneCare™** (onecare.live.com), an always-on computer care service from Microsoft that helps protect your computer from malicious software and enhances computer performance.
- **Install antivirus software and keep it up to date**—Antivirus programs scan everything that goes into your computer—including e-mail, discs, and data files—searching for thousands of known viruses and working to remove any they find. Subscribe to an antivirus update service, and automatically download updates to help protect your computer from the most current threats. **Windows Live OneCare** offers antivirus protection as part of its comprehensive computer care service.
- **Use up-to-date antispyware software**—Antispyware programs—such as **Windows Defender** from Microsoft—monitor your computer for spyware and other potentially unwanted software that tracks your online activity or makes changes to your computer. Antispyware programs alert you about the software they detect and help you make decisions about how to deal with it. As with antivirus software, update your antispyware software regularly.



Protect Your Family

By understanding the benefits and risks of Internet use, and following a few basic guidelines, your family can have a safer, more secure online experience:

- **Talk to your children about what they do online**—Explain Internet risks to your kids and how their behavior can increase or lessen those risks. Learn the games your children play online, which chat rooms they visit, and what they write in their blogs and their profiles on social networking sites. Teach kids to trust their instincts and to tell you immediately if they ever feel threatened or scared by something that happens online.
- **Set clear rules for Internet use**—Establish clear rules about when and how your children can use the Internet, and post the rules near your family computer. Make it clear that kids will not lose their computer or other privileges if they tell you about online situations that make them uncomfortable.
- **Keep personal information private**—Teach your children to check with you before they share personal information about themselves or your family. Teach them to be very cautious when talking with anyone they don't already know or trust in the real world.
- **Use family safety software**—Microsoft provides family safety settings in a range of products—such as **Windows Vista**, **Xbox 360™** and **Xbox LIVE®**, and **Windows Live OneCare Family Safety**—to help you manage your children's Internet use. For a comprehensive list of popular family safety tools from many companies, see kids.getnetwise.org/tools.



Protect Your Personal Information

By understanding how criminals use the Internet to commit crimes, you can help limit your risks:

- **Be smart online**—Ignore and delete spam—any offer that seems too good to be true, probably is. Keep your personal financial information private—do not reply to e-mail from your bank or financial institution asking for account information; instead, contact the bank directly by phone or by typing their Web address into your browser. Use strong passwords for better security—at least eight characters that combine letters, numbers, and symbols. And don't download files or click links or attachments unless you are confident you can trust the source.
- **Manage your personal information**—Before sharing personal information on a Web site, read the privacy statement. Check for **https** in the Web address, or other signs that the site protects sensitive data. Match the name on the Web address and the security certificate to make sure the site is legitimate and not a fake.
- **Use technology to reduce your risks**— Many Internet service providers and e-mail services or programs, such as **Windows Live Hotmail®** and **Outlook® 2007**, use spam filters and other technology to identify and delete billions of spam e-mails daily. New technologies, such as **Phishing Filter** in **Internet Explorer® 7**, can detect and help block potential phishing scams.



Back Up Your Files

No security method is completely foolproof. So it's important to back up critical files regularly, before you get hit with a problem. Learn how at www.microsoft.com/protect.



Helpful Resources:

www.staysafe.org
www.microsoft.com/protect
update.microsoft.com

onecare.live.com
kids.getnetwise.org/tools
www.onguardonline.gov

