

## **IT Security for Users**

### **Computer Viruses**

This document looks at Viruses and how they can be avoided and how they can be fixed.

Other resources in this section are:

- IT Security for Users



## What is a virus?

A virus is a program that can attack your computers important files and make your system unstable or even unusable. It is important to treat viruses seriously and safeguard your computer against these attacks.

Viruses are man made by unscrupulous computer hackers who are attracted to the notoriety which launching a global wide computer virus can generate.

## Buying Anti-Virus software

Most Operating systems do not include a virus program so it is important to buy one as soon as possible. There are many brands of anti-virus software vying for your attention so shop around and see who offers the best service.

Make sure that your virus software supplier has an adequate website for example McAfee and Norton anti virus have regular virus update downloads on their website and even e-mail newsletters that you can subscribe to in order to keep updated with the latest viruses.

## Subscribe to an Anti Virus E-Mail newsletter

It is important to be aware of new viruses, which are created. Subscribing to a newsletter can keep you informed and help you to be prepared for when a new virus is in circulation. To do this:

- Step 1 Log on to the McAfee website <http://www.mcafee.com/anti-virus/default.asp>
- Step 2 Enter your e-mail address in the Free Virus news field
- Step 3 Click Sign Up
- Step 4 You should now receive virus news regarding new viruses and information on how to protect your computer



The image shows a web form titled "Free Virus News" with a "Learn More..." link. Below the title is the text "Virus alerts, breaking news, & more!". There is an input field labeled "Email Address" and a "Sign Up" button. At the bottom, there is a link that says "Read the latest security news".

*Registering for virus news using McAfee***How to spot an E-Mail virus**

E-Mail viruses can be very easy to spot and this can be the best way to prevent them from harming your system. They will usually be from people you do not know. The subject line will usually be something alluring so that you will want to open the e-mail. One such case was the "I Love You" virus, which stated this in the subject line of the E-Mail. This enticed people to open the E-Mail and led to thousands of computer networks being affected by the virus.

Always be cautious before opening E-Mails. Question its authenticity and go through a quick mental checklist before opening e-mail. The following guide should help you through this process:

**Five-point guide on how to spot an e-mail virus:**

1. Do you know this person? Is the Subject line valid i.e. related to your personal life or work directly. E-Mail virus spreaders depend on your curiosity when opening e-mails
2. Are you being enticed to open the e-mail by exaggerated means? Remember the I Love You virus
3. Does the E-Mail contain an attachment with an .exe file attached? These files execute a program to be run on your machine and are the main way e-mail viruses are spread. Right click the attachment and look at the properties of the file to double check.
4. Always scan the e-mail attachment with your Anti Virus software if you are not sure of its origins. Right click the attachment and select scan.
5. Delete the e-mail if it fits any of the above criteria. Also remember to delete the e-mail from your deleted items area

**Fixing viruses after they have infected your computer**

It is not too late if a virus has infected your computer as most viruses can be fixed by downloading a patch from an Anti-Virus website.

We will look at the "lovgate" virus in this scenario and explain the way in which this can be cleaned from your system.

- Step 1. Log on to <http://www.mcafee.com/anti-virus/default.asp>
- Step 2. Search for the name of the virus that has affected your system in the virus Search field (Named usually after the executable that caused the harm i.e. worm.exe)
- Step 3. Read the article how has your system been affected?
- Step 4. Download any fixes/patches from the site to your hard drive
- Step 5. Read the instructions regarding applying the patch
- Step 6. Apply the patch according to the instructions
- Step 7. Test your computer to see whether the virus has been removed

**Virus Search**

containing

lovegate Search

> [About the Virus Information Library](#)

**Help Topics**

- [Help with Removing a Virus](#)
- [Anti-Virus Tips](#)

**Report a Problem**

- [Report a Virus](#)
- [Report Suspicious Activity](#)

*Searching for a virus using McAfee*