



Safe Computing Guide

Create Strong Passwords

1. Choose passwords that are difficult to guess, using upper case, numbers, and special characters. One way to create good strong passwords is to use part of a phrase that is easy for you to remember. This phrase can be a set of words taken from a book, a song, a quotation, a statement, or anything else that you always easily remember. This phrase should be easy for you, but no one else should ever think about attributing it to you.

Example:

Phrase: "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers..."

Password: "Fs&7yAoF"

2. Install Anti-Virus Software

Anytime you open an email attachment, or download a file from the Internet, you are in danger of getting a virus on your computer. Viruses can potentially send themselves to everyone else on your email list, damage/delete files and programs on your disk drive or install hidden programs that allow an intruder to remotely control your computer. This is why it is very important that you install anti-virus software. Once installed, be sure to keep it updated. Antivirus developers continually release updates or virus definitions that help catch new viruses. WKU offers all WKU Students with a free copy of Symantec Endpoint Antivirus software. You can access this at <http://www.wku.edu/software>

3. Run Windows Update

Windows Update is the online extension of Windows that helps you to keep your computer up-to-date. Use Windows Update to choose updates for your computer's operating system, software, and hardware. New content is added to the site regularly, so you can always get the most recent updates and fixes to protect your computer and keep it running smoothly.

Visit <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com/> to update your computer.

4. Email

-Never open an email attachment from someone you do not know. Delete it.

-Be sure your anti-virus software scans your emails.

-Never forward letters.

-Never forward virus warnings, as they may not be legitimate.

-Never use the "Unsubscribe" feature of Spam emails or reply to Spam mails because by doing so, you confirm the validity of your email address and the spammer can keep on sending you unsolicited commercial email. The proper way to deal with Spam is to delete it. You can also forward spam that you receive in your WKU email account to spam@wku.edu.

5. Back up your critical files

Saving your files on your hard disk, CD-Rs, CD-RWs, USB flash drives, and emailing it to yourself is the standard way to back up your files.

6. Downloading Files

Be very careful about the software and files that you download. Only download files from trusted sources. Files from un-trusted sources may contain viruses or have adverse affects on your computer. Some downloaded software may also contain spyware. Spyware collects personal data about your web surfing and other habits and sends that information to advertisers or other interested third parties. Some examples of spyware carrying programs are Kazaa, Imesh, and Bearshare. Do not download or share copyrighted files such as music or movies with out permission from the copyright owners. Copyright infringement is against university policy and state and federal law. The No Electronic Theft (NET) Act of 1997 allows for criminal prosecution of individuals who electronically copy and distribute copyrighted work, even if there is no commercial gain from doing so.

ResNet Office
Mass Media and Technology Hall
270-745-7000