

# Viruses, worms, adware, spyware and other nasty things

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## So what are viruses and should I worry?



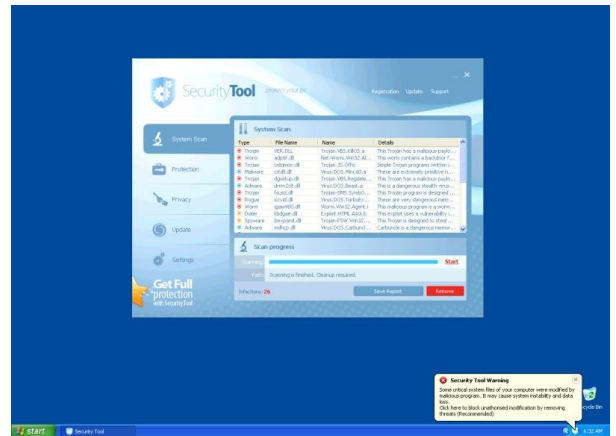
Well the short answer is yes! If you do not take basic precautions you will soon get your PC infected. This could just slow your computer down but more likely give you so much grief with strange things happening that your computer becomes unusable.

The most common viruses are simple programs called Trojans written by bright people who just want to vandalise your computer: they just make it slow, difficult to use and erase some data.

The more worrying are called “fake AV” viruses - they try to make money out of us; some pretend to be virus checkers, tell us we have hundreds of viruses then want money from our credit cards to fix them

Like this scam that pretends to be a virus checker but is actually a virus!!

Others take over our computer and send mail to all our contacts encouraging them to look at a certain website, or even ask us to type in some personal details and steal our credit card numbers this is called “phishing” for your personal information .



## How do they get on your PC?

They come from all sorts of places: infected websites, e-mail attachments, music downloads, videos, social networking or messaging sites. It is easy to say be careful about these but difficult to do especially if you want to make good use of your PC for all these applications.

## So how to you stop this?

The short answer is that we cannot. Just like we cannot stop burglars getting into our houses – if they are determined enough they will get in. What we can do is to take sensible precautions: to protect our house we can lock the doors and leave a light on. To protect our computers we can use an anti virus program. If you cannot afford much you can download free AVG – see the website [WWW.filehippo.com](http://WWW.filehippo.com) for this. If you can afford a bit more protection get a big name program like Kaspersky Internet security [www.kaspersy.co.uk](http://www.kaspersy.co.uk).

You can only have one virus checker at a time so it is important you remove any others that might be on your PC, like old versions of Norton that might have been on your PC since it was new.

If you think you have a virus, restart your computer (in safe mode if you know how to) make sure your virus checker has been able to update itself, and then run a full scan. It might be the first time you looked at the instruction book for your virus checker, but it is the most important thing you can do. These simple actions could stop the virus doing any more damage, and the good ones will restore all your computer files that the virus has changed.

Most computer technicians will be willing to take a look at your computer to make sure you are protected, this can cost as little as £20 so might be one of your best investments.