

Viruses and Hoaxes

Anyone with a computer connected to the internet and being used for email, will get a virus sooner or later and you are even more likely to get a hoax.

What is a Virus?

It's a computer program developed by "IT hooligans" to cause damage and mischief to computer users. There are over 61,000 known viruses and about 15 new ones are detected every day!

What should I do about it?

You can't stop a virus being sent to you but you can stop it infecting your computer. To do this you **must** have up-to-date anti-virus software and you **must** keep your virus definitions up-to-date.

What is a Hoax?

It's an email message, usually passed onto you by a well-meaning but misguided friend, which contain bogus warnings usually intent only on frightening or misleading users. You probably don't actually have a virus but the message claims you do and may for example persuade you to delete a perfectly valid system file. Deleting this file can then cause you problems. One of the most common of these is the so-called "Teddy bear virus", where the legitimate system file – jdbgmgr.exe is said to be a virus. It's not! There are about 150 known hoaxes.

What can I do about them?

1. If you get an email which might be a hoax, search the Symantec website www.symantec.com for keywords from the email. It will tell you if it's a known hoax. There is a complete list of hoaxes at www.symantec.com/avcenter/hoax.html
2. Please disregard the hoax emails -. The best course of action is to simply delete these hoax emails.
3. Tell the person who sent you the email, that they are perpetuating a hoax and should tell everyone they sent the hoax message on to.

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