Veltec Networks

HOW TO MAINTAIN A
HEALTHY COMPUTER
13 Tips

Performance of your computer is greatly reduced over time due to the accumulation of spyware, unnecessary files, a disorganized hard drive, and worst of all, viruses!

By regularly performing the maintenance tasks below, you can keep your PC running safely and smoothly, and enjoy the benefits of having a secure and reliable computing experience.

1. VIRUSES

A computer virus can copy itself and spread from one computer to another. It's recommended to have a valid and updated version of anti-virus software installed (and running at all times) on your computer.
 a. Run professional anti-virus software (e.g., Eset).
 b. Verify it's updated (This is necessary because 50,000 viruses come out every day.)
 c. Confirm your anti-virus software hasn't expired.

2. SPYWARE

These are files that allow publishers to observe your Internet browsing activity, record your credit card numbers, and present you with unwanted pop-up advertisements. The presence of spyware is typically hidden and can be difficult to detect. An accumulation of spyware can severely slow down your PC, and cause it to crash or behave abnormally. To be protected, make sure you have an up-to-date spyware software installed.
 a. Run professional anti-spyware software (e.g., Malwarebytes).
 b. Verify it's updated.
 c. Don't let your anti-spyware software expire.

3. SOFTWARE

Firewall Security settings are very important when protecting your computer, especially when using a computer away from your home or office. A software firewall can prevent direct access to your computer and files. Be sure to check your Control Panel every three months to ensure your firewall profile is active. This capability is in all Windows computers.

4. UNNECESSARY PROGRAMS

Many computers store a large number of programs which are never used. This tends to clog your computer over time. The steps below will allow you to safely remove these unnecessary programs from the disk drive. Furthermore, you would be amazed at how many programs load up when you start your computer.
    a. Review "Add/Remove Programs" inside your Control Panel.
    b. Perform this once every three months.

5. BOTTLENECKS

If your computer suddenly or periodically becomes slow, you may be experiencing a temporary bottleneck. The 4 most common bottleneck areas are:
    a. CPU
    b. Memory
    c. Disk
    d. Network

Immediately upon detecting a slowdown, open "Task Manager" and review the "Performance" tab. This will show you the top things that are affecting the performance of your computer. Click on "Processes" and you can see which has the highest percentage. You can right-click and stop this specific task to speed things up.

6. TEMPORARY INTERNET FILES

Every time you surf the Internet, order something online, or read e-mail, information is stored on your computer for later use. Over time, this junk accumulates and eventually influences the performance of your computer. You should periodically go in and clean up your cache. Check your browsing history and delete what you don't need. Perform this once a month. For heavy Internet users, perform this once a week.

7. DISK CLEANUP

This procedure reduces the number of unnecessary files on your hard disk to free up disk space and help your computer run faster. It removes temporary files, empties the Recycle Bin, and removes a variety of system files and other items that you no longer need. Open "Disk Cleanup", click "OK" and it will automatically perform the cleanup. Do a Basic Cleanup and System Cleanup. Both are important to do. Perform this once a month.

8. DISK DEFRAGMENTATION

This procedure rearranges the files on your hard drive so your computer can access them more efficiently. Over the long run, a disorganized hard drive can eventually crash and obliterate all your stored data. To do this manually select "Defragment" and select your hard drive to "Optimize." Or, schedule optimization to run at least once a month in "Settings."

9. DISK CHECK

You can help solve some computer problems and improve the performance of your computer by making sure that your hard disk doesn't contain any errors. Go to the "Start Menu," right-click the "Command" prompt, "Run as Administrator," in the window type "CHK DSK" and this will test the integrity of your drive. "CHK DSK/F" will fix any errors. Perform this once every three months. Depending upon the size of your hard drive, this may take several minutes. For best results, don't use your computer for any other tasks while it's checking for errors.

10. WINDOWS UPDATES

This is very important. Microsoft periodically releases updates for Windows operating systems. These updates repair certain bugs discovered over time, decrease the security vulnerability of your system, or add functionality to your operating system. Go to your "Control Panel," "Check for Updates" and any updates that you find should be installed. Perform this once every month, or configure "Automatic Updates" in your settings.

11. OPTIMAL ENVIRONMENT

Your computers should be internally cleaned for accumulated dust and be stored in a cool, well-ventilated environment. Pop open the computer case and blow it out with a can of compressed air. Perform an internal cleaning every six months.

12. HARDWARE UPGRADES

Workstation lifecycles are 3 to 5 years. It's more cost effective to replace workstations nearing the end of their lifecycle due to increased maintenance requirements. Hardware warranty duration should ideally mirror the operation workstation life. If your workstations are nearing the end of their warranty, you should either obtain an ended extended warranty (typically up to 48 months) or replace them as soon as possible to minimize downtime.

13. BACKUP

No matter how well you look after your computer system, there will always be the possibility of it crashing, a hard drive failure, etc. It's best to backup your important files every so often to prevent losing all your data if a breakdown occurs. If your employees store files on their desktop or C drive, you're in jeopardy of losing these files. Ensure they are stored securely on your server.

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