

Computer Maintenance Using Software – Galen Garretson

1. Keep your Anti-Virus software up-to-date and use an Anti-Malware program.

At minimum do a manual virus scan of your computer if your software does not do that automatically. Remember, anti-virus software runs in the background, but may not do a complete scan of your system on its own.

As a complement to your anti-virus software run a scan of your system using an Anti-Malware program, such as MalwareBytes. Malwarebytes, and other similar software, is designed to find files and registry entries that your anti-virus software may not pickup. These are called PUPs (potentially unwanted programs) and PUMs (potentially unwanted modifications). The existence of virus and malware not only can affect your PC's performance, it can also endanger your important data such as bank accounts, etc.

2. Data Backup

Back up your data to an external drive or the cloud in case of a computer failure. What I am saying is, back up your data to an external drive or the cloud in case of a computer failure. Really, back up your data to an external drive or the cloud in case of a computer failure.

3. Keep your operating system up-to-date.

Windows 10 does a pretty good job of downloading and installing updates on its own. If you have a previous version of Windows, be sure to check your update settings.

4. Delete the junk files.

Junk files such as downloaded program updates, temporary files, offline webpages, the recycle bin, system error memory dumps, cookies, etc. can be removed and free up valuable hard drive space. All of those files can be deleted by using a disk cleanup program such as cCleaner, Advanced System Care, Glary Utilities, etc.

5. Defrag the Hard Drive.

Defragging the hard disk is useful to arrange the layout of your files on the hard disk. Proper arrangement will allow the drive to access your files more quickly. **DO NOT** use defrag on an SSD (Solid State Drive).

6. Correct Errors in the Windows Registry file.

Errors in the windows registry file can slow your computer down at start-up, attempt to run non-existent software and contain remnants of uninstalled programs. Use a trusted program as those listed above or others you prefer to keep your registry file free of errors. For an eye-opener, download and run "Auto Runs". This program will show you everything that is attempting to run as your computer starts up.

7. Update device drivers as necessary.

I go by the old saying "if it's not broken, don't fix it". So, I don't randomly update drivers. I may do it occasionally, but only for specific reasons. Most of the time it occurs when a device stops working or a program demands that the device (such as a video card) have particular requirements which I can only get with a driver update. If you do update your drivers be careful of relying on driver update programs. First, try to go to the manufacturer of your computer and look for driver updates there.