

PC Overhaul 10-Step Virus Removal Process

Backup

Before I start I [create a backup of your files](#). This preserves your precious data files, documents, photos, spreadsheets, music, etc. so that no further harm can come to them.

Offline Virus Removal

I use some of the best software in the industry to scan your hard drive for viruses including trojan horse or trojans, rootkit viruses, worms, keyloggers and more. I do this while it is outside of your machine. Many malware programs ("malware" is the generic term for all the programs the bad guys try to get on your PC) take over your computer's functions when you first boot up. Scanning for virus infections from another machine allows them to be removed while they are not being used on your computer. I remove virus files and folders completely in this step.

Offline Spyware Removal

I will also perform a full scan for spyware, adware and while the disk drive is outside your computer. This generally gives the best chance of getting a "clean boot" once I re-install the drive.

Remove Old Anti-Virus Software

Because the PC is "compromised", often the installed anti-virus or spyware software has been compromised as well. I normally remove the old broken programs and install free antivirus software.

Test for Damage to Key Windows Components

(Windows Registry)

Some infections are worse than others. Often the infection will have damaged Windows programs, drivers and services that are needed for healthy operation of your computer. Some particularly nasty viruses will infect your disk's Master Boot Record (MBR), fixing this is a rather delicate by-hand process that is done in this step. Registry cleaning and optimization is done here as well.

Install Virus Tools

I use a series of tools that are the best in the industry at identifying and killing computer viruses and malware. I thoroughly scan your computer multiple times to eliminate all instances of pests.

Install Security Updates

Any necessary Microsoft Security Updates are installed. Windows security features are checked and configured to the proper settings. Other security updates may be applied in this step as needed.

System Testing

Test for internet access and speed. In many cases I use something called a "sniffer" to examine network traffic coming into and out of the PC to ensure that there is no malware still on the system and "phoning home". I also test to alleviate the possibility that hidden malware might return.

Audit Trail

I provide you with the logs for any automated scans that found positive results. I also document the additional steps taken to configure and secure your system.

Recommendations

I provide customized recommendations for customers to ensure that malware doesn't return.