

Three Minute Tech Tip - # 18

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Spyware (also called Adware or Malware) is software installed on your computer without your knowledge. Web sites offering "free downloads" usually place one of these bad programs on your computer to display ads, track your activity, or even steal your identity.

Today's Tech Tip: Protect your computer, Be armed against Spyware.

It is essential that those working with computers on the Internet today be protected from spyware. Not only can spyware cause your computer to slow to a crawl, but it can redirect your Web browser, annoy you with pop-up ads, steal your personal data and generally wreck havoc on your system.

There are numerous types of spyware. Adware is advertising-supported software that displays pop-up ads and can sometimes install components that track personal information. Malware is software designed specifically to disrupt the normal operation of your computer. These programs can include a virus, a Trojan Horse or a monitor. Trojan Horses are designed to cause loss or theft of computer data, and to destroy your system. System monitors are applications designed to monitor computer activity including email and keystrokes.

PC World magazine recently tested and rated 7 anti-spyware software programs against 45 spyware attackers. (April 2005) The top rated product was Sunbelt Software **CounterSpy 1.0** (\$20) that removed 93% of the spyware. Other suggested anti-spyware includes Lavasoft **Ad-Aware 1.0** (Free) and Safer Networking **Spybot Search & Destroy 1.3** (Free). I personally use all three programs to keep my office and personal computers clean.

Disclaimer: We recommend these programs, but do not guarantee their performance or compatibility with your computer. If problems do arise, all programs can easily be removed from your computer using "Add or Remove Programs" in Windows Control Panel.

Here is where to find and download the programs:

CounterSpy	www.sunbeltsoftware.com
AdAware SE	http://www.lavasoftusa.com
Spybot Search & Destroy	http://www.safer-networking.org/en/download/

Time's up! Gotta go. Have suggestions for other Tech Tips? E-mail me.

As always, feel free to contact Troy at the regional helpdesk with any tech support questions at help@remax-nj.net or (888) 54-REMAX.

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