

# Getting the Most Out of Your PC: A Few Simple Steps Can Keep Your Computer Operating in Top Shape

(NAPSA)—Computers are like cars, they require maintenance and care to run efficiently. Viruses, computer crashes and lost files are the bumps in the road causing your PC to stall. A computer is a costly investment and it is important to take steps to ensure your investment will last a long time.

By following some simple preventative measures, you will get the most out of your PC and save yourself time and money. HP, the world's largest consumer technology company and leading manufacturer of PCs, offers these easy tips and tricks to keep your PC safe and running efficiently.

**Update Anti-Virus Software Regularly:** Anti-virus software scans a computer's memory and disk drives for viruses that can quickly take up available memory and bring the computer to a halt. Once an infected file is found, you may choose to delete, quarantine or clean the virus. Trial versions of anti-virus software are available from Symantec [www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com) and McAfee [www.mcafee.com](http://www.mcafee.com). Other anti-virus tips include:

- If your software enables automatic updates, makes sure that it updates your software daily since new viruses are cre-

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ated unknowingly to you.

- Do not open attachments from unknown or suspicious sources.
- Before opening an attachment, scan it first using anti-virus software.

Many technology Web sites have information about virus protection. HP.com provides definitions for common malicious programs, as well as instructions for eliminating and preventing viruses.

**Backup Your Files:** Whether it's your digital photos from your last vacation, video clips of the new baby or important files for your business presentation, backing up important files will save you from potentially losing sensitive and irreplaceable data. The safest way to keep your files protected is to use a removable media backup, such as a zip drive, flash drive, CD-R/RW disks or a floppy disk. Once your files have been stored, backup your computer sys-

tem regularly to ensure new files are also protected.

**Install a Firewall:** A firewall is a way of protecting your computer from the outside world. A firewall blocks unwanted access to your PC, and is useful in preventing harmful programs and other threats from damaging or slowing down your PC. You can download a free firewall from Zone Alarm at [www.zonealarm.com](http://www.zonealarm.com).

**PC Maintenance:** Most PCs installed with Windows include the disk defragmenter and disk cleanup utility. To launch, click "start," "programs," "accessories," "system tools" and select the option from the menu bar. The disk defragmenter increases the speed of programs on your computer by reorganizing files on your hard disk into contiguous blocks. The disk cleanup frees up hard drive space by emptying the recycling bin, deleting files in the temporary folder and deleting installed programs you do not use.

Remember, your PC needs preventative and ongoing maintenance to continue running at peak performance. Hopefully, these tips and suggestions will help keep your PC running in top form. For more ways to protect your PC, visit [HP.com](http://HP.com).