



# Burgess Computer Services

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## Computer Security

Using your computer online for banking and shopping is safe if you take some simple precautions. Just as you protect your wallet by not leaving it laying around, a few simple precautions will also protect you online.

- 1) **Virus Protection** - A virus is a software program, script, or macro that has been designed to infect, destroy, modify, or cause other problems with a computer or software program.
  - a. Use a reputable product to protect your computer.
  - b. Update weekly or, better still, daily. (New updates are typically issued on Wednesday evening/Thursday mornings.)
  - c. You get what you pay for (free products are not normally so good).
  
- 2) **Protect against Spyware, Adware, and Malware** – These are programmes, often installed without your knowledge, that track your movements on the internet and send data about you back to the originator's web site.
  - a. Again, use a reputable product, to protect your computer against these attacks.
  - b. Update it regularly.
  
- 3) **Firewall** - A software utility and/or hardware device that limits outside network access to a computer.
  - a. Some broadband routers have a firewall built in. If so, make sure it is turned on.
  - b. If you do not use a router with this feature then software packages are available instead.
  
- 4) **Internet Security Suites** – All in one protection programmes that normally contain protection against viruses, adware, spyware, email spam; and a firewall
  - a. Update them regularly.
  - b. Remember to renew your subscription; if your subscription expires so does your protection.
  - c. If the product hasn't been updated very recently then it is almost useless.
  - d. Check it is running!
  
- 5) **Phishing Emails** – These are emails that attempt to trick you into providing your personal bank details to a stranger. They will appear to be legitimate and it is easy to fall for them so be careful!
  - a. NO bank, building society, eBay, or online agent will ever ask you to confirm your security details via email, or ask you to click a link and enter your details. Such emails are always "phishing" for your bank details, and will take your money. NEVER RESPOND TO THEM - DELETE THEM!
  - b. Never click on links within emails. Even if a link looks correct some phishing attempts create fake websites that strongly resemble the original one. If you login to them then the phisher gets your details.
  
- 6) **Wireless LAN**
  - a. ALWAYS turn on encryption; otherwise somebody may be able to sit outside your house and access your computer, stealing all your data and using your internet connection.



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## 7) Passwords

- a. When choosing passwords never use names (family members, friends, nicknames, maiden names, parents names, pets, etc), telephone numbers, car registrations, football teams, the best passwords are random characters with numbers in them as well.

## 8) Storing Passwords or Bank Details

- a. Do not store password, or credit card details, with sites. If they have an option to store your details say NO.
- b. Don't store this sort of personal info on your PC at ALL. If the data is not on your machine then even if you are attacked, spyware cannot access it.

## 9) Gold Padlock – Most web browsers indicate that encryption is in use on a web site by showing a gold padlock in the lower right hand corner.

- a. Make sure that you only enter personal information on a site which is encrypted. This ensures that your details cannot be spied upon as they travel across the internet to their destination.

## 10) Using Credit Cards & Debit Cards

- a. If you use a credit card you are better protected and can get your money back more easily than when using a debit card.
- b. Only use a debit card on well known sites such as budget airlines, cinemas, etc. as they sometimes offer a lower price when using debit cards.

## 11) Windows Updates

- a. Microsoft release security updates regularly. Check that your computer is set to receive and install them; otherwise you may be vulnerable to attacks.

## 12) Free Software

- a. There are some online sites offering to check your computer for you. KEEP WELL CLEAR OF THEM! They often actually contain adware and spyware to direct you to their site.
- b. Remember: NOTHING IS REALLY FREE on the internet. For example, free screen savers often have adware & spyware within them. AVOID THEM!