



## Basic Virus & Spyware Cleanup

(Revised 9/24/08)

(A current version of this document is always available at [www.hotlinkdata.com](http://www.hotlinkdata.com) → Tech Corner → [Utilities & Downloads](#))

This document is a basic How To on how to do a simple virus and spyware scan and cleanup on a Windows PC. This procedure is only effective if any infection is relatively minor, as spyware, malware and viruses are designed to be evasive and tough to remove.

Please note the following:

- Attempting any of these procedures, and/or running any of our recommended downloads can result in a completely crippled computer. Please take this warning very seriously. You could very well end up with a computer that does not run at all.
- None of these programs/procedures are 100% effective. What this means if it you do all of this and it doesn't help. Sorry. We tried to help. Please don't expect any phone support or verbal help from us while you try to perform a cleanup on your own. (*"So how do you clean my computer if these programs don't really work," you ask? Answer: We do much, much more than just run cleanup programs on your PC to remove infections.*)

**How to start your PC in Safe Mode** (*You will do this when instructed below*)

- To start your PC in safe mode, If the computer is running, shut down Windows, and then turn off the power.
- Wait 30 seconds, and then turn the computer on.
- Start tapping the F8 key about 1 tap every 1 to 1½ seconds. The Windows Advanced Options Menu (text only startup menu) appears. If you begin tapping the F8 key too soon, some computers display a "keyboard error" message. To resolve this, restart the computer and try again.
- Use the up and down arrow keys to select Safe Mode and press Enter. The computer then begins to start in Safe mode.
- When you are finished in safe mode, close all programs and restart the computer as you normally would.

### STEP 1

Download and run Dr. Web's CureIt from our website. This is a quick and easy scan for obvious viruses and spyware.

- Go to: [www.hotlinkdata.com](http://www.hotlinkdata.com) → Tech Corner → Utilities & Downloads, then click and download Dr. Web's CureIt. Be sure you save it to a spot where you can find it after the download. It does not install, so you must find the actual program to run it.
  - Note: Say YES to downloading the most recent version.
  - Note: The home website for CureIt is [www.freedrweb.com](http://www.freedrweb.com)
- Reboot your PC and run CureIt again in safe mode if possible.

### STEP 2

Home users only!

If you are a home user, download and run WinsockXPFix from our website. This clears out and fixes goofy stuff with your network connection. Note that this also blows out any static network settings you have, so if you are a business, commercial computer, etc, DO NOT RUN THIS!! If your tech



guy/gal has set up static settings on your PC at the office, this will remove them, and you'll be stuck paying him/her to come fix it.

- Go to: [www.hotlinkdata.com](http://www.hotlinkdata.com) → Tech Corner → Utilities & Downloads, then click and download Winsock Repair Tool. Be sure you save it to a spot where you can find it after the download. It does not install, so you must find the actual program to run it.
  - Note: Do not run this if you are a business computer or you have any static network settings. (We warned you!)
  - Note: This will force a restart of your machine when it's done.

### Step 3

Download and run AdAware

AdAware is a great program for removing basic spyware/adware/malware infections.

- Go to: [www.hotlinkdata.com](http://www.hotlinkdata.com) → Tech Corner → Utilities & Downloads, then click and download AdAware. Download and install, or install it right from our website.
- Once installed, run the program. Download all updates, run a full scan.
  - Note: Most of what AdAware recommends removing is safe to remove.
  - Note: The home website for AdAware is [www.lavasoft.com](http://www.lavasoft.com).
  - Note: You view "How-To" movies on Lavasoft's website at <http://www.lavasoft.com/support/supportcenter/index.php>
- Reboot your PC and run AdAware again in safe mode if possible.

### Step 4

Download and run Spybot S&D

Spybot Search and Destroy is another great program for removing basic spyware/adware/malware infections.

- Go to: [www.hotlinkdata.com](http://www.hotlinkdata.com) → Tech Corner → Utilities & Downloads, then click and download Spybot S&D. Download and install, or install it right from our website.
- Once installed, run the program. Download all updates, immunize, run a full scan.
  - Note: When installing Spybot, do NOT install the Tea Timer.
  - Note: Most of what Spybot S&D recommends removing is safe to remove.
  - Note: The home website for Spybot is [www.safer-networking.org](http://www.safer-networking.org).
- Reboot your PC and run Spybot again in safe mode if possible.

### Step 5

Download and run AVG Free Antivirus.

AVG has a free version of their antivirus for home users to try. The free version license is not for commercial use!

- Go to: [www.hotlinkdata.com](http://www.hotlinkdata.com) → Tech Corner → Utilities & Downloads, then click and download AVG Free. Download and install, or install it right from our website.
- Once installed, run the program, download all updates, run a full scan.
  - Note: Most of what AVG recommends removing is safe to remove.
- Note: The home website for AVG is [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)

### **Please Note**

We truly like to help, and that's why we created this document, but unfortunately we are unable to provide free phone support, guidance, suggestions, etc. for folks attempting to clean up their PC.