1. Clean your Hard Drive & Registry   Twice a month

Windows creates files for many reasons and stores them in folders all over your hard drive! You MUST clean out these junk files. Hard drives fail due to lack of maintenance! Regularly use **CCleaner** on each user. Run this program 1st. All other steps will run faster!

Double Click the **CCleaner** icon.

1. When it starts, CCleaner has the default settings checked. Click the **Run Cleaner** button to clean your Hard Drive.

2. It will then delete all unneeded files. If you have never done this it could take quite a while. I have seen more than 29,000 megabytes of wasted space on a drive!

3. Next you should click the **Registry** button. This is a Registry file cleaner.

4. Click the **Scan for Issues** button. When it is done scanning click the **Fix selected issues ..** button.

5. Then click the **Fix All Selected Issues** button. Say **yes** at the warning.
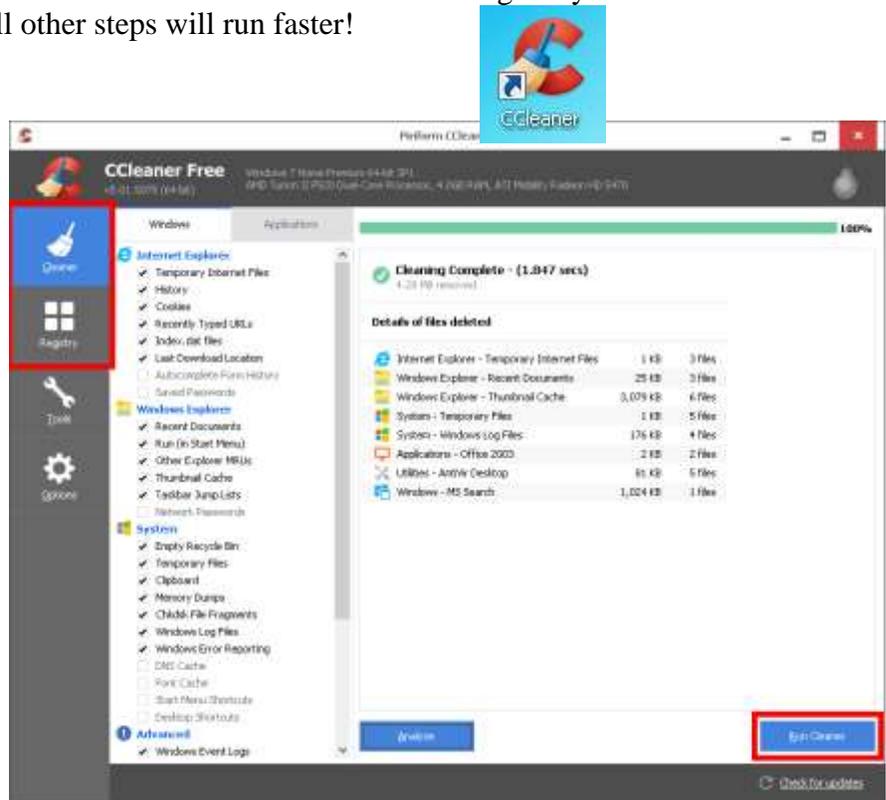
2. Defragment your Hard Drive   Twice a month

As you use your hard drive to store files it becomes fragmented. Fragmentation is the scattering of file parts all over the disk. Fragmentation occurs as files on a disk are deleted and new files are added. It dramatically slows disk performance. Defragmentation is the process of rewriting the parts of a file to adjacent sectors on a hard disk to increase the speed of access and retrieval. As files are enlarged, your PC saves the additional information on new empty spaces on the hard disk. When files are thus fragmented, the computer must search the hard disk each time the file is opened to find all of the file's parts, which slows down response time. Defragmenting reorganizes your computer's hard disk. **You should defrag your hard drive right after CCleaner**.

Click on the **Defraggler** icon. Then click on the **Defrag** button.

3 & 4 Optimize & Backup your Registry   Once a month

The Registry is the most important set of files (hives) on your PC. Nothing happens on your PC without the Registry being consulted. The Registry contains instructions, settings, parameters, lists of programs, history, startups and more. After a while your Registry becomes bloated and slow. Running these programs after Defragging will make all other steps faster.

NTREGOPT is a free program that optimizes these critical files (Hives). It works on every version of Windows. It can keep your registry files compact and efficient!

1. After using CCleaner: Click on the Icon to start it and click OK. Click YES if you get a message about a missing "Hive". You must reboot in order to use the newly optimized Registry. **Use ERUNT first then reboot.**

ERUNT (Emergency Registry Utility NT) is a free program to back up the Registry.
1. After NTREGOPT: Click on the Icon to start it
2. Check all the boxes and agree to every screen. Let it store the backup where it wants. It will create a folder with the current date as the name.

Using this backup PC Bits can easily recover your Registry if it becomes corrupt. We can also fix hacker encryption of registry files!

ZoneAlarm

ZoneAlarm is your Firewall program. It monitors all **traffic** (Data, files, requests, emails etc.) in and out of your PC. It will block (**Deny**) unauthorized traffic. How does it know what is authorized and unauthorized? You teach it!   As ZoneAlarm monitors traffic it will:
1. Block (**deny**) traffic from *new* programs.
2. Then pop-up a warning message about the "new program" that is attempting to send data either:
    a. to a device within your PC (Trusted Zone) or
    b. to a device outside of your PC (Internet)

You must tell ZoneAlarm what to do in each case. Read each pop-up message carefully. You should know why this "new program" is trying to send traffic. You should recognize the program name. When you don't recognize the program or don't know why the warning popped up "Deny" it.

To ONLY fix mistakes: *Double* click on the ZoneAlarm Icon down by the time. Click on the **center** "Firewall" button then click under **Application Control** the **### programs secured** link. In the list that opens a green check means always **Allow**, a red **X** means always **deny**. The **?** means ZoneAlarm will **Ask** you what to do. Find your mistake and click on each of the four red **X**'s. Choose the option you want.

ZoneAlarm periodically sends updates and advertising pop-ups. **Do NOT click on ads. Don't update/upgrade ZoneAlarm witho** **instructions.**

AVIRA your Anti-virus Program

Your Anti-virus program is Avira AntiVir Personal. Its logo is the red umbrella. When you see it down by the clock in the right hand corner of the Taskbar it is protecting your PC from viruses. It will scan any file as it is read or written before you can use it.

New viruses come out hourly! Avira has an automatic update feature. I have set it to update daily at 6AM. If you don't see this happening, call me. Updates go through several distinct steps. Avira must download one or more files then stop the program in order to install new versions. Often downloads can take quite a while. When Avira has a major update, their servers become backed up and can't meet the demand. Be patient, it may have to try several times before it will connect and update. The advertisements or "Notification" is your notice that the update has happened. Close all advertisements by clicking on the **X**. **NEVER buy or Upgrade Avira. Don't install any other Avira product.**

Scan with Avira   Twice a Month

The automatic update of Avira is not enough. You should scan your hard drive(s) for viruses twice a month or if you suspect you might be infected.
1. Double Click on the **Scan for Viruses** Icon on your Desktop.
- Your scan properties are set to maximum strength. It may take a while based on the speed of your computer, hard drive, and the number of files you have on your hard drive. Be patient.

Viruses detected will be automatically deleted. If the scan finds viruses and the deleted and quarantined counts don't match, email me the Report. Click on the Report button, cut and paste the text into an email. Send it to me and I will read it. service@pcbitsweb.com

Scan for Viruses

Update your Manual Programs

AVIRA and ZoneAlarm are not enough. If you do not immunize your PC regularly (**At least twice a month**) it **WILL** get infected. Spyware, browsers, hijacking, and file sharing software are used by "hackers" as doors into your PC. Poorly written software can allow viruses to enter. The most important thing is to NEVER download file-sharing software (Bit-Torrent), screensavers, toolbars, Search engines, "Optimizers" and other free programs. Free games are often bait to attract the unwary.

Update Spybot Search & Destroy   – Twice a month

1. Double Click on the **Spybot-S&D** Icon
2. When the main screen opens click on the **Update** button.
3. Spybot will check for updates. Follow the instructions to download all updates.
4. If you receive updates you should **Immunize** your PC. Click the **Immunization** button. Follow the instructions and **Apply Immunization**.
5. Now do a **System Scan**. Click on **Start a Scan** when the window opens. The scan will take a while. When the scan finds results click the **Fix selected** button. You should then see a green check mark next to each result and the **Fix selected** button will be grey.
6. X out of all Spybot windows.

Scan your PC with Malwarebytes   – Twice a month

You should also scan if you suspect a virus.

1. Click on the Malwarebytes Anti-Malware Icon.
2. Click the large blue **Scan Now** button.
3. Malwarebytes will do the rest!
4. When the scan is finished and/if Malwarebytes finds threats, click the **Remove Selected** button. If it wants to reboot, reboot immediately.
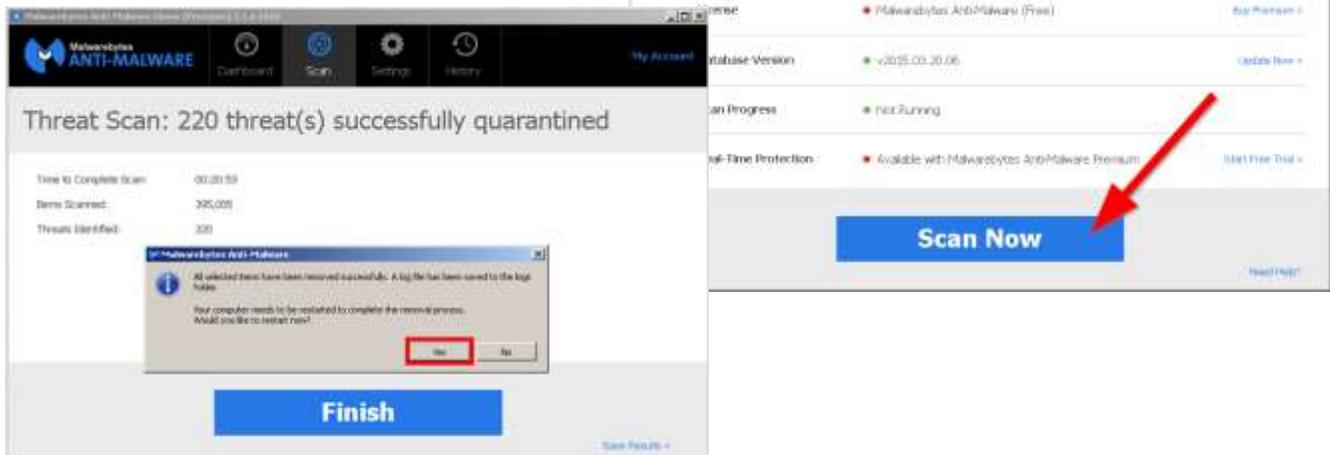
Update SpywareBlaster   Twice a Month

SpywareBlaster is a product by Java Cool Software. It will teach your PC to never run dangerous "programs".

1. Click on the **SpywareBlaster** Icon.

2. After the main screen opens click on the **Download Latest Protection Updates** link.
3. Click on the **Check for Updates** button.
4. After the updates are downloaded click on the **Enable Protection for all unprotected items** link.
5. Close SpywareBlaster

Update Windows   Monthly, on 2ⁿᵈ Thursday of the month

Microsoft Windows (any and all versions) has a LOT of programs that use the Internet. During a day you may have 25 or more "programs" sending and receiving data over the Internet. Many of these programs are found to have "vulnerabilities," weak places in their computer code that will allow a hacker to break into the program and infect your PC! As Microsoft writes or updates programs, new vulnerabilities are discovered. **These are not viruses and therefore Avira does NOT protect you from them!** Microsoft has software that provides updates. **You MUST** update Windows monthly.

Check your Update Settings on the 1ˢᵗ of the month!

Double Click on the Windows Update Icon on your desktop. Look for the Change Settings link on the left. Open it and make sure your settings are **"Check for updates but let me choose whether to download and install them"**. Use the drop down arrow to find this option.

Note: Microsoft updates Windows on the 2ⁿᵈ Tuesday of each month. We wait 2 days!

Click on the Windows Update Icon on your desktop.

Microsoft "Rolls Up" many updates into 1, 2 or 3 large updates each month. You must install all Important Updates. *Do Not* install Optional updates. The Malicious Software Removal Tool is a custom Virus scan. You should get this one.

Note: Microsoft Windows 10 does not have this feature. It downloads updates whenever it wants. You cannot control this.

You must also Update Java, Adobe, Flash player, iTunes, QuickBooks, Quicken and all other programs you have downloaded and/or purchased. Hackers break into all of them. If the manufacturer of the program notifies you of an update please put it in. Look in my blog www.pcbitsnews.com for news and instructions on these updates.