

Internet Safety Tips

1. Protect your Personal Information

It's valuable. To minimize your risk of identity theft, don't share your personal information unless you know how it will be used and protected. Don't reply to or click on links in an email asking for your personal information, or prompting you to log in. Think carefully before giving out your birth date, address, phone number or Social Insurance Number online.

2. Log Out after using Public Computers

When using a public computer, make sure that you sign out of your email session and any other website that you have logged in to. Always delete any files that you have put on a public computer.

3. Know who you're dealing with

When shopping or doing business online, look for a company's physical address and a working telephone number. When entering in a credit card number, look at the URL of the site to see if it is secure – "**https**". Before downloading free software, read the fine print — viruses can accompany downloads. Beware of emails from unknown senders.

4. Use Anti-virus Software

Install anti-virus software and make a note on a calendar to purchase the new version when it expires (purchasing a new disk is recommended by many over downloading from the Internet). Look for anti-virus software that removes or quarantines viruses, and for antispyware software that can undo changes spyware makes to your system.

5. Protect your Passwords

Keep your passwords in a secure place. Do not share them on the Internet, over email, or on the phone. Use a combination of letters and numbers and change them regularly.

6. Back up Important Files

If you have important files stored on your computer, copy them onto a removable disc, and store it in a safe place.

7. Secure Your Wireless Internet at Home

Set a password for your wireless internet; otherwise anyone within range will be able to use it.

8. Keep your Computer and Software Up to Date

Software creators discover vulnerabilities in their programs on a regular basis, and unless you download system updates, your computer may be at risk of being infected with a virus or spyware.

Books

Using the Internet Safely For Seniors for Dummies by Linda Criddle & Nancy C. Muir. 004.678 CRI

Internet for Seniors in Easy Steps for the Over 50s by Michael Price & Sue Price. 004.678 PRI

My Parents Second Computer And Internet Guide : Beyond The Basics by Louise Latremouille. 004.16 LAT

Teach Yourself the Internet and Email for the Over 50s by Bob Reeves. 004.678 REE

Online

Internet 101: <http://www.internet101.ca>

Media Awareness Network: <http://media-awareness.ca/>

Visit us at www.westvanlibrary.ca/computers for information about our computer classes, our Community Computing Centre, and to access our "Teach Yourself" handouts.