



2024 CYBER SURVIVAL GUIDE

How to Survive a Computer Virus

Gather round the digital campfire for a spine-tingling tale about computer viruses and the chaos they leave in their wake:

- + Sluggish devices!
- + Sensitive information stolen!
- + Laptops transformed into expensive paperweights!

Viruses and malware are very real hazards swarming around the internet, but you can bushwhack them away with concerted action and a quality antivirus program. Going forward, you can be proactive to keep viruses from making your device sick!

1. Watch out for the symptoms of a computer virus.

Common signs of a [computer virus](#) include:

- Suddenly slow computer performance
- Computer unexpectedly shutting down or restarting
- Missing files
- Frequent system crashes
- Frequent error messages and unexpected pop-up windows
- Unknown applications (like browser toolbars) appear without you downloading them
- Overworked hard drive causing your computer's internal fan to run often
- Lagging web browser or your web browser constantly redirects
- Malfunctioning antivirus programs or firewalls

- 2. Run a full system scan with your antivirus software.**
- 3. Restore your computer to an earlier backup if you cannot delete the infected files. Run a full system scan again.**
- 4. Delete all the temporary files on your device.**
- 5. Go Safe Mode: if you cannot delete all the temporary files, try booting up your system in “Safe Mode” and attempt to delete them again. Typically, you can boot up Safe Mode from the device’s sign-in screen**
- 6. If you’re still not sure you got rid of the virus and want more assurance the virus is gone, wipe your hard drive and reinstall your operating system.**

This is called “reimaging your machine” and will delete all your files and documents (which is why we recommend practicing good backup habits). Depending on your operating system, you can access this option from the Settings or Utilities menu. Although there are rare instances where a computer virus survives a drive reimaging, this will generally eliminate the vast majority of viruses.