Here is a simple explanation of **Ransomware** for beginners using plain and easy-to-understand English.

**What is Ransomware?**

**Ransomware** is a **type of computer virus** or malicious software (**malware**) that **locks your files or computer** and demands **money (a ransom)** to unlock them.

**How Does Ransomware Work?**

* You may **click a bad link**, **open a fake email attachment**, or **download an infected file**.
* The ransomware **enters your computer** without you knowing.
* It **locks your files**, photos, or even the entire system.
* A message appears saying you must **pay money to unlock** your files.
* Even if you pay, there is **no guarantee** your files will be restored.

**What Happens to Your Files?**

* Your files are **encrypted**, which means they are turned into unreadable code.
* Only the hacker has the **key** to unlock them.
* You can’t open or use the files unless you get that key.

**What Does It Look Like?**

* A screen message saying “**Your files have been encrypted**.”
* A countdown timer showing how much time you have to **pay the ransom**.
* Instructions to **pay using cryptocurrency** like Bitcoin.

**What Can You Lose?**

* **Important documents**
* **Family photos and videos**
* **Business files**
* Full access to your **computer**

**How to Protect Yourself from Ransomware**

* **Do not click** suspicious links or emails.
* Always **keep backups** of your files in a safe place.
* Use **strong antivirus software** and **keep it updated**.
* Keep your **computer and software updated** with the latest security fixes.
* Use **Two-Factor Authentication** on important accounts.
* Be very careful with **unknown email attachments** or links.

**What to Do If You Get Infected**

* **Do not pay the ransom.**
* **Disconnect from the internet** immediately to stop the spread.
* Use a **trusted antivirus program** to try to remove the virus.
* If needed, **take your device to a professional** or **contact cybersecurity help**.
* Restore your files from a **backup** if you have one

**In Simple Words**

**Ransomware** is like a **digital kidnapper** that locks your computer or files and **asks for money to unlock them**. Be careful online and **always back up your important data**.

Would you like a printable version of this explanation?