Title:
How To Tell If Your Computer Has Been Infected With Spyware

Word Count:
519

Summary:
Spyware is hidden programs that unbeknownst to you, download themselves into
your operating system along with your intentional downloads. Mainly entering
your computer via freeware and shareware, they can harm your PC as well as your
personal life as they record your every movement on the computer in addition to
sometimes having the ability to scan files in your hard drive. All of this
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Keywords:
spyware, malware, computer, slow, pc, adware, identity, theft

Article Body:
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your computer via freeware and shareware, they can harm your PC as well as your
personal life as they record your every movement on the computer in addition to
sometimes having the ability to scan files in your hard drive. All of this
secretly obtained information is reported back to the Spyware originator through
the program and can lead to an overload of junk mail in your email boxes as well
as claiming your identity through the personal information it retrieves off your
PC.

•   The first sign that you're computer has been infected by Spyware would
be sluggish performance of your PC. Spyware will slow down your ability to surf
the internet as you browse through and load pages from various websites. It will
make your programs load and run slow as well and may even cause the system to
crash.

•   You might see that certain toolbars have been added to your web browser
that you have no recollection of putting there. This is another warning sign
that your system has been infiltrated with a Spyware program or programs.

•   Another symptom of Spyware infection is pop-ups that appear on your
browser windows that are completely unrelated to the site you're visiting and

even if your pop-up blocker is turned on.

•   If you notice that your settings have been changed, whether within your programs, files or browser options, that's another sign to watch for, especially if you reset them and they don't remain that way upon closing and re-opening the files/programs or after completely restarting your PC.

•   If your computer seems to have taken on a life all its own, opening and closing files and programs, sliding out and then shutting it's CD door in addition to any other types of weird activity, there's a good chance you've been infected by Spyware.

•   When you open your email box and see that half the messages you sent were returned 'undeliverable' or emails were sent on your behalf that you didn't write, that's another Spyware warning sign.

•   One more symptom of being infected with Spyware is if your modem's activity light flashes continuously when you're not on the internet. And if your system light is flashing on and off, that's yet another tell-tale sign.

•   The worst thing that could happen is if someone actually does acquire your personal information and uses it to steal from you by claiming your identity. If you receive a credit card bill or bank statement containing unidentified activity, your computer is one of the first places you should look.

You best bets for protecting your PC from getting infected by Spyware is to be extremely careful when downloading free files, programs, music, etc. from the internet and ensuring that everyone else who uses the computer does the same. Installing Anti-Spyware software is highly recommended and you should run it constantly and use it scan your system regularly to identify and destroy any interlopers.