

BRIGHTWEBS TIPS

Gerri's Computer Newsletter

August 2007

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Tips from <http://www.lavasoft.com> the makers of AdAware anti-spyware. Read more on their security center page

Nearly 90% of all computers are affected by spyware - virtually everyone with an Internet connection. Here is how to best prevent infection and stay safe when online:

- Never click "agree" or "OK" to close a pop-up window because that can trigger spyware. Only click on the red "x" in the corner or click on Alt + F4 to close the window safely.
- Choose passwords with both numbers and letters, or to be even more secure pick a "pass phrase". Never use birthdays, family or pet names.
- Never log into your bank or other financial accounts from public computers or from wireless networks where login information can be stolen.
- Use common sense!

BASIC EMAIL TIPS

Many people are overwhelmed with email these days, with spam and warnings of spam and jokes making their rounds for the fourth time. You can help to minimize the problem by practicing good email habits:

- Always use a good subject line.
- Don't keep just clicking reply when the message topic has changed to something completely new, take the time to change the subject line.
- Don't forward jokes with other people's email address showing
- Don't forward jokes at all unless you are really sure the other person wants them
- Never forward 'warnings' until after you've checked them at <http://www.snopes.com>

Together we can help keep email clean and useful instead of a nuisance.

I WILF SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

A new acronym which stands for *What Was I Looking For*, **wilfing** is responsible for many lost hours browsing on the internet, distracted by all the information available.

One British study estimates that people waste two working days per month on the practice of aimless surfing, with shopping being a prime activity and men being more prone to it than women.

Go ahead, do a search for *Wilfing* on Google and you too can be a part of the problem.



TURN OFF BLUETOOTH WHEN NOT USING IT

OK, so last issue I told you how cool Bluetooth was and all the many things you could do with it, but now I want you to turn it off if you're not using it, for security reasons.

Some phones can be 'discovered' whenever they come in range of a Bluetooth device. My computer has a plug-in Bluetooth receiver (it looks like a little USB flash drive) and whenever I walked into the room with my phone, the phone synchronisation software popped up on the computer offering to download any photos I had taken.

If you live in an apartment building, or you're walking on the street, your phone could potentially

Computer Basics Classes start again Sept 27 at Langara and there will be two sessions of four classes each. This beginner series is very popular—call Daniel Thorpe at 604-323-5266 for more info or to sign up.

New Course Offering at Langara
I'm also teaching Microsoft Publisher, starting Sept 15 for 3 Saturdays. If you'd like to learn how to make cards, brochures and newsletters, Publisher is a great Desktop Publishing program, friendly and easy to use. Come join me. Daniel Thorpe will have details on this also—see number above.



® be broadcasting that it's on and available.

Here's how to turn Bluetooth on or off. It's getting so you can't let any of these devices

play on their own!

Turning off Bluetooth on your computer—look for a small Bluetooth icon in the System Tray at the bottom right of the screen. Right click on it. Left click on Advanced Configuration. Left click on the Accessibility tab and uncheck the box marked "Let other Bluetooth devices discover this computer".

On my cell phone, I click on Tools > Phone Settings > Connectivity and select Bluetooth and then click on it to select Off.

Your cell phone or whatever else you might be connecting, should have instructions with it.

SHORTCUTS MINUS MOUSE

Using the Windows key and Application key will let you bypass the mouse for many commands—Just clicking the Windows key brings up the start menu. Windows+D minimizes all the windows you have open.



The Applications key (between the Windows key and the Ctrl key, bottom near the right hand on most keyboards) brings up the same menu as right-clicking. It gives you choices about what you can do wherever you happen to be at the time ('context-sensitive help' in geek speak).

CLEANING YOUR KEYBOARD

1. Turn off computer
2. Disconnect keyboard
3. Turn keyboard upside down and gently shake to allow particles to fall out
4. Dust off keyboard with compressed air or use a vacuum
5. Lightly moisten a clean lint-free cloth with 3 parts water 1 part liquid dishwashing detergent
6. Wring out very well
7. Carefully wipe keys

AVOID Eating and Drinking near the keyboard

NEVER plug in or unplug a keyboard or mouse with the computer on (unless it's a USB connection—if you're not sure, don't do it).



CHECK CREDIT CARD RECEIPTS

Are the merchants you deal with still printing your full account number and expiration date on the credit card receipt? Since April 1st, Visa rules says they shouldn't, and MasterCard is gradually phasing in this policy as well, but they aren't doing much about it unless you complain.

"Criminals hunt for receipts like this to pull off identity theft. Once they have your name, credit card number and expiry date, they can rack up big charges ordering merchandise on the phone or online with no signature required."

See the rest of the article from the August 1st edition of the Toronto Star at <http://www.thestar.com/columnists/article/241882> and help make us all safer.

CHEAPEST GAS?



Have you discovered a great spot for cheap gas? Let the rest of us know about it at

<http://www.vancouvergasprices.com> where you will find listings of the stations all over the lower mainland all listed by area and brand name.

ORGANIZING YOUR PHOTOS

If all your pictures are dumped into your **My Documents** folder, with only a date to separate them, or perhaps into **My Documents\My Pictures** you might want to spend a rainy day this fall cleaning them up. It's as easy as doing it with paper.

First off, open your My Documents folder and click on **View > Explorer Bar > Folders**. This will turn the left task pane into a list of folders. Now click on **View > Thumbnails** and you will see a tiny version of all your photos.

In the left task pane, left click once on **File > New > Folder**. You will see a little folder with the words *New Folder* highlighted in blue, waiting for you to type in a name - it might be the place name of the photos, or the event you filmed, or the branch of the family you took pictures of. Be sure to press the Enter key on the keyboard to 'lock in' the name.

Now drag your thumbnails across to your new folder(s) by left clicking and holding the mouse button down as you drag, until the new folder is highlighted, then let go of the button and the photo will drop into the new

folder. If your hand is shaky and you accidentally drop the photo in the wrong folder, you can immediately click on **Edit > Undo Move** and the photo will go back to where it was so you can try again.

You will also probably find a lot of duplicate photos - you can delete the ones you don't want by right clicking on them and choosing **Delete**.

To save photos from an email message (in Outlook Express) click on **File > Save attachments**. To do this with Hotmail, click on the paperclip and choose **Save to disk**. Be VERY careful with this and with any attachment - make sure your antivirus software definitions are up to date!

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Please contact me at 604-773-6107 for private lessons, with technical questions or to find out more about my classes. And visit <http://www.brightwebs.com>*

-check out the internet links and library pages. Tell your friends about them.

Thanks! See you next time. Gerri