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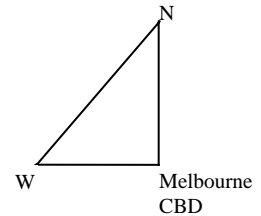
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# NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2004

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**Protect Your PC - Windows 98, Windows 95, and Windows NT**

**Important** Before you begin to update your computer, back up your files and information.

**Step 1: Use an Internet Firewall**

Before you connect your computer to the Internet, you should install a firewall. This is a piece of software or hardware that helps prevent hackers, and many types of viruses and worms, from accessing your computer.

Firewalls are the most important first line of defence for computer security. You should also use Windows® Update and antivirus software to help protect your PC.

If you have a computer with Windows 2000 Professional, Windows Millennium Edition (Me), Windows 98, Windows 95, or Windows NT, you should get and install either a hardware or software firewall.

The following resources provide more information about some firewall options.

**Hardware Firewalls**

Hardware firewalls are a good alternative for earlier versions of Windows. Many wireless access points and broadband routers for home networking have built-in hardware firewalls. These provide sound protection for most home networks.

**Software Firewalls**

Software firewalls are available from several vendors, including:

- BlackICE PC Protection
- Computer Associates (12 months free)
- McAfee
- Symantec
- Tiny Software: Tiny Personal Firewall
- ZoneAlarm

To learn more about firewalls, read Checklist: Install a Firewall, from the Microsoft Security Web site. This article includes a discussion of software firewalls made by other companies, as well as hardware firewalls and
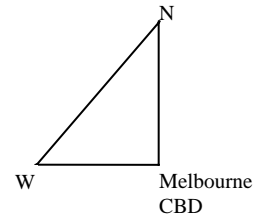
## SOLUTIONS FOR HOME AND SMALL BUSINESS

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network routers. This information can help you select a firewall solution if you use an earlier version of Windows on your computer.

**Step 2: Get Computer Updates**

Microsoft Windows NT® Workstation, Windows 98, Windows 98 Second Edition (SE), and Windows 95 have reached the ends of their product support life cycles. (If you are not sure what version of Windows you are using, you can find out by following the instructions for checking your operating system version).

Updates that were provided for Windows 98 are available on an archived basis on the Windows Update site, and the Microsoft Support Web site provides a number of resources you can use to find help.

However, Microsoft no longer offers technical support for these releases. Because of this, we encourage you to consider upgrading to Windows XP Professional or Windows XP Home Edition so you can take advantage of Automatic Updates and other security features introduced since the operating system you are using was released.

**Step 3: Use Up-to-Date Antivirus Software**

Antivirus software is a program that either comes installed on your computer or that you purchase and install yourself. It helps protect your computer against most viruses, worms, Trojans, and other unwanted invaders that can make your computer "sick." Viruses, worms, and the like often perform malicious acts, such as deleting files, accessing personal data, or using your computer to attack other computers.

Help your computer stay healthy by asking yourself the following questions:

1. **Do you have antivirus software installed on your computer?**

   Many major computer manufacturers include at least a trial version of a popular antivirus package on new computers.

   o Click **Start**, and then click **Programs**. Look for an item in the list with a name like McAfee, Norton, or Symantec.

   o If you don't have antivirus software installed, check out the following antivirus software companies for special offers on their products:
   - Computer Associates (12-months free trial subscription)
   - F-secure (6-months free trial subscription)
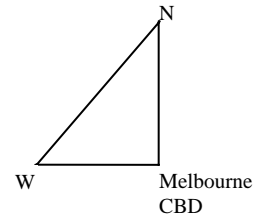   - McAfee (Save up to 35%)

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- Panda Software (90-day free trial subscription)
- Symantec/Norton (90-day free trial subscription)
- Trend Micro (Save up to $20)

If you already have antivirus software installed, but you want to install a new product from a different company, be certain to uninstall your current product before installing the new one. Leaving the previous version installed can cause conflicts on your system.

2. **Is your antivirus software up to date?**

   Out-of-date antivirus software means ineffective antivirus software. Antivirus software relies on regular updates to help protect against the latest threats. If you aren't subscribing to these updates, your computer may be vulnerable to threats.

   Make sure you have activated a subscription for continuous updates of your antivirus software.

   Most antivirus software updates itself when you are connected to the Internet. To ensure your software is up to date, open your antivirus program from the **Start** menu or the taskbar notification area and look for update status. If you still aren't sure if your antivirus software is up to date, contact your antivirus software provider.

3. **Is your antivirus software set up correctly to provide the best protection possible?**

   The following settings should be turned on by default when you install the software. If you turn them off for any reason, be sure to turn them back on before you connect to the Internet.

   1. **"On-access" or "real-time" scanning** should be turned on. An icon in your notification area should appear to indicate that this setting is enabled.
   2. Antivirus software should perform a **scheduled scan of your hard disk**.
   3. Antivirus software should be configured to **scan e-mail messages**.

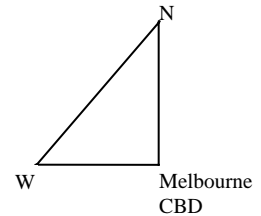# SOLUTIONS FOR HOME AND SMALL BUSINESS

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## HELPFUL HINTS

### Five hints for avoiding junk e-mail

If the very idea of wasting time deleting junk e-mail makes your blood boil, then it's time to take action to reduce the amount of spam you are dealing with. These five tips won't make spam go away, but they can reduce the amount of downtime you spend attending to it.

- **Activate junk mail filters.** If the e-mail system you use doesn't have built-in filters, then you should download a stand-alone junk mail filter or change e-mail clients. (Read about some of the innovative anti-spam features in Outlook 2003 below.)
- **Reduce your exposure.** If your website includes an e-mail link, you're going to get junk mail. An alternative approach is to encourage site visitors to manually enter your e-mail address and explain why you're doing it. If you submit your site to search engines, be selective and determine that they're reputable. Don't allow employees to post their business e-mail addresses to newsgroups or other public websites.
- **Never reply to spam.** That's a sure-fire way to alert spammers that they have an active e-mail address.
- **Be wary of HTML e-mails.** These can contain web beacons or tracking codes that allow senders to log your e-mail address and possibly other information once you've opened their mail.
- **Use a dedicated e-mail account for Web transactions.** If you purchase goods and services online or sign up for free e-mail newsletters, consider using one of the free Web-based e-mail services such as Hotmail for Web transactions. That way you can keep your real e-mail address private.

### How junk mail filters work

Microsoft Outlook 2003 with Business Contact Manager comes loaded with powerful spam-fighting features including, among others, a junk mail filter. The filter evaluates whether a message should be treated as junk mail based on several factors, including when it was sent and the content and structure of the message.
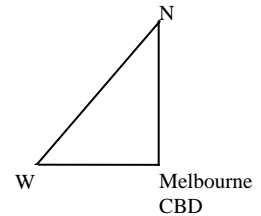
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By default, the filter is set to a low setting to identify the most obvious spam. Any messages trapped by the filter are sent to a special Junk Mail folder that can be accessed at a later time. You have the option of setting the filter to be more aggressive, but you also run the risk of sending legitimate messages to the Junk Mail folder. However, these messages aren't lost; they're just not displayed in your in-box. You can also configure Outlook 2003 to permanently delete junk mail messages as they come in.

**To change junk e-mail settings in Outlook 2003:**

1. On the Tools menu, select Options.
2. In the Options dialogue box, in the E-mail section, click Junk E-mail.
3. Choose the level of junk e-mail message protection you want.
4. Click OK.

There may never be a time when junk mail is totally eradicated. But with the right software and some basic precautions, you should be able to significantly reduce disruptions caused by spam.