

## Protecting Against Spyware and Adware

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Just when you thought that you had covered all of the bases (you have installed and regularly scan with McAfee Viruscan or other anti-virus software, and Spamkiller or other anti-spaming software) along comes a new, less sinister, but equally frustrating, bombardment of programs to guard against. They are referred to as “**Spyware**” and “**Adware**”.

If you look at the programs on your computer’s “C” drive, you will most likely find a myriad of spyware and adware programs, silently running in the background, monitoring your activity. While some of these unwanted programs simply track and report your activity on a company’s Web site, they **all** are stealing your computer’s resources and are making it run slower. Some of the more insidious programs actually monitor your keystrokes and can capture passwords and other sensitive information, or even **hi-jack** your browser, making you use their search screen or forcing you to go where you don’t want to go. That’s going too far!

Have you noticed that your computer is running a lot slower lately? Have you tried to use Internet Explorer or your Favorite Places, to go somewhere on the Net, and found yourself rerouted to another search screen, or to a site that you didn’t want to go to? Well, the reason is probably that you have spyware and adware installed on your hard drive that you did not want or authorize! Want a free solution to get rid of it? Yes?

### Here are 5 Steps that will Help You

1. Protect Your System – download these two programs to find and eliminate adware and spyware:
  - AdAware – a free download from [www.lavasoftusa.com](http://www.lavasoftusa.com)
  - Spybot Search & Destroy – a free download from [www.safer-networking.org](http://www.safer-networking.org)
2. Scan Your System – scan your harddrive with AdAware and Spybot Search & Destroy every time you run your virus scanning software, at least once a week.
3. Take Care When Surfing - Be careful visiting Web sites that you are not familiar with. Watch out for sites that present you with a lot of pop-up ads, particularly ones that you can’t seem to get rid of. Don’t download free programs from sites that you aren’t sure of. Go to sites that are reputable and are known for providing safe freeware or shareware like: [www.download.com](http://www.download.com) or [www.tucows.com](http://www.tucows.com).
4. EULA’s - When you are downloading a program, read the End User License Agreement before you click “Yes, I accept these terms”. You may be agreeing to install spyware or other actions that you may not want. Read the Agreement before clicking “Yes”.

5. Pop Ups – That goes for pop up ads too. Before you click O.K. or “Yes”, just to get rid of them, you better read them, to see what you are agreeing to.

Follow these steps to help you protect your computer system and rid yourself of unwanted programs that slow it down by stealing its resources. Keep your head up! For more information about Search Engine and Keyword Optimization, Building an E-commerce Store, and Protecting your Web Site and Computers Against Viruses and Spam, request our other articles.