Bits and Bytes

Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center

Don't – You know? You spend sixteen plus years going to school to find out what people have written in books. When you're old enough to get out in the real world you have even more to learn, usually all the things that weren't written in books or taught in school. Now you're ready to get a job and, guess what, there's even more to learn. Does it ever end? With some people it does, with others, never. I think most of those who join the Compute Club fit in the "never" category. You bought or were given a computer, you bought a book, took some classes, bring your problems and questions to the Open House Help Clinic, and attend the question and answer meetings we have in January and July. There's just one problem with this whole scenario, "You don't know what you don't know", you know? In life that can cause problems or it might lead to a disaster. The same is true with your computer. Not knowing something about your computer can end up creating a minor problem, or a complete system failure. You probably don't want to be reminded that most computer malfunctions are caused by the person running the mouse. So, what are some of the don'ts you need to be aware of?

Don't turn off the computer by pressing the power button on the front of the computer unless you've lost control of the mouse and the keyboard. If you have control of the keyboard you can use the Windows key or the Ctrl + Alt + Delete keyboard combination command to turn off the computer.

Don't fail to download and install all of the updates from Microsoft that are appropriate for your computer. If you have Windows XP and have elected to use the "Automatic Update" feature, you're not receiving all of the updates for your computer. If you have Windows Vista and haven't changed the default setting, you're not receiving all of the updates for you computer.

Don't delete anything associated with a program you have installed on your computer. If you want to remove a program, use the uninstall feature.

Don't use the preview pane to read your e-mail in Outlook Express. Turn it off, and then double-click the e-mail header to open the message in a new window.

Don't use your computer with an out of date antivirus program or a program that is not configured to provide maximum protection from viruses.

Don't give your real e-mail address to the world. Get one or two disposable e-mail addresses and reserve your real e-mail address for your friends and relatives.

Don't download and install a free program from the Internet unless you've checked to see if it's safe. A lot of the free programs you find on the Internet contain adware, spyware, or other malicious content you don't want on your computer.

Don't open an unsolicited e-mail message (Spam) unless you like Spam and want to receive more.
Don't open Outlook Express and start reading the new e-mail messages without first deleting all of the unsolicited e-mail (Spam).
Don't click anywhere on a pop-up advertisement window that appears on the screen while you're on the Internet. Use the keyboard combination keystroke to remove the pop-up window.
Don't just accept that New Folder named New Folder you accidentally created, correct the name.
Don't try to work in a window that's not full screen unless you have a reason to do so. If you want a window to always open full screen, tell the computer that's what you want. Be in control.
Don't click on any of the links that are located outside of the text you're reading on a web page.
Don't e-mail digital photos that are not properly sized for e-mail.
Don't accept the default settings for sounds, power options, and screen savers. Configure your computer to run the way you want it to run.
Don't let your computer become infected with malware (adware, spyware, key loggers, Trojan horses, etc.).
Don't use an unsecure wireless router.
Don't click on an unsubscribe link in an e-mail message unless it is from the organization where you personally signed you for a subscription.
Don't open an e-mail attachment unless you've confirmed that the person is sending you something attached to an e-mail.
And the list goes on and on. Did you see something on the list you didn't know? Great! To learn the "How do I do that?" associated with many of the "Don'ts", your options are to read the book, take a class, come to an Open House Help Clinic, on the Club's web site call someone on the Help Sources list or one of the individuals on the In-Home Help / Tutoring page, or submit your questions to the panel of experts at the July Question and Answer meeting. As you can see there's a lot of help available, but it's up to you to take advantage of what the Club has to offer.

Tom Geselschap has had to resign from the Programs Committee. Please let us know if you would be interested in serving on the committee that suggests topics to be presented at our monthly meetings.

We would also like to have someone volunteer to help with or take over as Editor of the Newsletter.

Grisoft has just released the free version of their latest antivirus program, AVG Free 8.0.

Having a problem with your computer? Having a problem doing something on the computer? Stop by one of the Open House Help Clinics we have at the John Ruehle Center and see if we can solve your problem. These clinics are from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first Saturday and the third Wednesday of the month. The clinics are open to the public so you can invite a friend or neighbor.