

December Topics

Mac Security

Virus This is a program that earns its name by its ability to replicate itself, locally and often across a network. Many viruses attach themselves to other programs. When those programs are launched, the virus code is launched as well and the virus goes about its nefarious business. Viruses are commonly found in the Windows world.

Trojan A Trojan (shortened from *Trojan Horse*) is a kind of malware that promises one thing but delivers another. For example, you've downloaded an application that promises to make you rich, cure male-pattern baldness, etc. When you run this miracle worker the contents of your computer are, instead, beamed to an underground data center in Kamchatka. The greatest risk in this scenario is the person operating the computer. Resist the urge to open a file you receive in an anonymous email message, you're unlikely to get one of these Trojans.

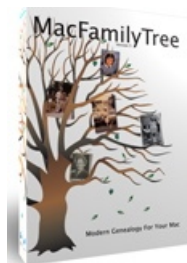
Phishing Like Trojans, phishing schemes—those schemes that trick you into revealing personal and financial data—exploit the weakness of the person sitting at the computer rather than the computer itself. These are fraudulent offers or warnings that arrive via email or instant message demanding that you provide credit card, social security, password, or bank account information in order to maintain an account or service or confirm a transaction.

To thwart phishing schemes all you need do is avoid taking the bait. Banks, lending institutions, credit card companies, auction sites such as eBay, online services, Internet service providers... any reputable outfit that holds personal information *never* demands this kind of information in the form of an email message.

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Mac User Tips

- Repair permissions 1 time per month and always before updating the system software. Use disk utility in the Utilities folder. How you ask? Select the hard drive on that appears in the left pane and click on repair permissions in the right panel.
- Having unknown problems? After repairing permissions, startup the computer holding down the SHIFT key until you see the little gear rotating below the Apple.
- Forward Delete by holding down the function key and pressing the delete key on laptops, or wireless keyboards.
- Set your desktops to auto start and shutdown in system preferences.