

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [PC Running Slow or Think You're Infected? Read This!](#)

AsSaSs@iN - November 16, 2017, 3:52 am

presents...

Provided by the members of...

An exclusive guide for the members of HackForums to aid them in speeding up their PC!

Introduction

It's great to see you again [White Hat Malware, Virus, and Rat Removal Help](#) Forum. After some time away to complete my studies inspired by my time in the Hackforums HijackThis! Team and Malware Removal Team I am ready to start producing new and exclusive content for you guys. I hope you find these tips helpful, follow my instructions carefully and heed my warnings where appropriate. I welcome feedback, criticism, questions and your own tips in the [replies](#).

These steps are for Windows PC's only running Windows 10. If enough demand for a Mac version is generated, I'll look into producing a guide.

Software Required [FREE]:[Malwarebytes](#) by MBAM - free version

[CCleaner](#) by Piriform - free version

[Software Update](#) by Glarysoft - free version

[10AppsManager](#) by The Windows Club - free version

1. Make Sure You're Not Infected

Symptoms of infection:

Crazy advertisements popping up everywhere - difficult to escape from.

Odd computer behavior.

Slower than normal internet processing - not relating to your ISP.

Error messages.

Freezing and crashing of software and the computer.

Outgoing messages, PM's, DM's, emails, tweets etc from your account that you did not send.

Oddly named files, names and locations.

Software that you did not install, installed or popping up - including antivirus programs telling you you're infected.

Hardware or accessory problems.

If you are infected it's wise you seek to rectify this issue. A fantastic starting point is this forum! Please read Aura's thread "[\[Read\] What you need to know when receiving assistance in the White Hat Help section](#)".

As a general safe starting point and course of action, do the following:Download and install the free version of [Malwarebytes](#)

NOTE: If you have Malwarebytes already installed, you don't need to install it again. Simply start from the next bullet point;

Once Malwarebytes is installed, launch it and let it update his database. You might have to click on the little arrow by Scan Status in the middle right pane for it to do so;

Once the database update is complete, click on the Scan tab, then select the Threat Scan button and click on Start Scan;

Let the scan run, the time required to complete the scan depends on your system and computer specs;

Once the scan is complete, make sure that the first checkbox at the top is checked (which will automatically check every detected item), then click on the Quarantine Selected button; If it asks you to restart your computer to complete the removal, do so.

2. Uninstall Old and Unwanted Software

This goes without saying - some software that you use once in a blue moon doesn't necessarily have to remain installed on your computer forever. It jams up unnecessary space, probably has processes and services running that you're not aware of - jamming up your CPU - and can just get in the way with day-to-day functionality.

How to uninstall software:

Click the Windows Icon (bottom left).

Settings.

System.

Apps and Features

Scroll through the apps and features and continue to uninstall completely and reboot where required.

Video Tutorial Available Here: https://youtu.be/KDSogf_tbCs

PRO TIP: Sort by 'Size' and prioritize the larger unnecessary software.

3. Delete Unnecessary Files

Here is the spring cleaning part of speeding up your computer - it isn't fun but it's so necessary! We have so many files floating around that never get used or can be stored elsewhere not jamming up your system. Here are my top 5 tips for clearing up a tonne of storage space:

1. Delete All Your Old Junk!

Let's start simples! Go through your files systematically and delete old stuff you don't need and won't ever need. A great way to simplify this is sorting your files by date modified - if it's a file that was modified years ago and you don't see yourself needing it, get rid of it!

2. Delete Duplicate Files

Here's one you didn't think about - how often have you copied/pasted a file into multiple different locations? Or downloaded something - moved it - and downloaded again (I think that's all of us!). Fortunately, CCleaner has an amazing inbuilt tool for helping you detect these duplicate entries and give you a quick and easy method to delete them.

To delete duplicate files: Open CCleaner by Piriform

Click Tools on the left panel.

Click Duplicate Finder

Make sure you have the following selected for your search:

Click Search.

WARNING: legitimate files will return as results associated with different programs - if you just go deleting everything you might stop the software from working. If you make a mistake like this, just uninstall then reinstall the software. I advise watching this short video I made:

Video Tutorial Available Here: <https://youtu.be/NpBXzBro0tw>

Select ONE of the duplicate version - after selecting all the duplicates you wish yo delete - click delete.

3. Move Larger Files to Storage Devices

USB memory sticks and external drives are dirt cheap these days - who would be storing their movies, songs, pictures etc on their hard disk these days? This one is easy, head on down to your local store or grab yourself a bargain on eBay/amazon and get those large unnecessary files off your system!

4. Move Files to Cloud Storage

Even better and more of this generation - use cloud storage!

Advantages:Usability: these days with a decent internet connection - uploading even bulky items quickly is not an issue.

Access: access your files on a range of devices all around the globe on a variety of devices, whenever you need!

Sharability: we are a truly global generation - share your files with family and friend in different corners of the globe with the click of a button.

Cheap: base hosting starts as low as \$3/month. For some portable hard drives (~\$100) you get 3 years of worldwide accessible storage for less than a bulky hard drive.

Backup: I don't know about you - but I trust Google's servers a hell load more than a hard drive I got on sale. I've had numerous hard drives simply stop working - to date (6 years) I have had no issues with online storage.

Disadvantages:Privacy: this goes without saying - like anything online you need to safeguard yourself from people who may want access to your personal data.

Bandwidth: if you want to upload large files - depending on where you are it can be a bit tedious.

Storage: correlates with cost depending on the vendor.

5. Empty Your Recycle Bin

Seriously not hard - however most peoples computers I get onto have GB's of data just sitting in their recycle bin. Please just get rid of it!

4. Update Software, Drivers, and Operating System

Updating software is often crucial to maintain system performance as well as improve software functionality and system security. It's therefore important that you keep your software, drivers and operating system up to date. This can be a difficult thing to keep track of but lucky for us some awesome people have made some great tools available to us!

Update Software

I trust you've downloaded [Software Update](#) by Glarysoft by now - if not do so! It's going to do a great job at finding which of our software is out of date and give us direct links to their updates. Install Software Update and allow it to run.

NOTE: When installing Software Update - be sure to uncheck 'Install Software Update Utilities'.

A new tab will open listing the software requiring updates and their download link.

Work through the list, pay particular attention to any antivirus, third-party firewall, java and drivers - these are critical! It's a good idea to run this tool on the odd occasion.

Update Drivers

A note about updating drivers and the use of third party software to update drivers...

In general, we don't recommend updating hardware drivers unless you have a reason to. If it's not broken, don't try to fix it. Skip the driver update utilities, these can be potentially hazardous to your system - while some people have never had issues with these tools, further research reveals this has caused some issues for some individuals.

Windows Update

Windows will automatically update drivers for you, especially in Windows 10. To perform updates, refer to the 'Update Windows' section. In Windows 8 and 7, hardware drivers are an optional update.

While it's likely you already have the most recent driver, if you're having trouble with a device, you can try fixing it by updating the driver or reinstalling it. Here's how: Select the Start button, type Device Manager, and select it from the list of results.

Expand one of the categories to find the name of your device, then right-click (or tap and hold) it, and select Update Driver. For graphics cards, expand the Display adapters category, right click your graphics card and select Update Driver.

Select Search automatically for updated driver software.

If Windows doesn't find a new driver, you can try looking for one on the device manufacturer's website and follow their instructions.

If these steps don't work, try reinstalling the driver: Open Device Manager, right-click (or tap and hold) the name of the device, and select Uninstall. Restart your PC and Windows will attempt to reinstall the driver.

Source: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-au/help/4028443/windows-update-drivers-in-windows-10>

Graphics Drivers

Use the preinstalled software on your system to check for updates for these drivers. AMD, NVIDIA and Intel all put out software with their hardware that you should find on your machine.

Update Windows

It's important you're up-to-date with the latest version of Windows - if you're not running Windows 10, I recommend it! Keeping your version of Windows 10 current is essential for performance and patching any potential security issues.

To Update: Click Start

Settings

Updates and Security

Windows Update

Check for Updates

If there are updates available - let it do its thing.

Alternatively, click 'Check for Updates Now' through Microsoft here:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-au/help...windows-10>

5. Disable Unnecessary Services

When you startup your computer, services start. Unknowingly to you, software plants their services within your system through their installation - that's ok - some software need it to perform the functions you desire! But there's lots of services you don't need running on startup (e.g. iTunes helper if you're running Windows with an Android Phone). Make sure if you're not sure about a service to research it's function before you disable it. If you're not sure, post on the forums and someone will help out

To disable unwanted services: Open CCleaner by Piriform

Click Tools on the left panel.

Click StartUp.

Scroll through the list of programs, any software that you think doesn't require components running at startup; select, then disable it.

An example for me is 'OneDrive' as I know I don't use the service but it comes bundled with Windows.

Video Tutorial Available Here: https://youtu.be/_zZr2szA2hg

6. Remove Unused Browser Extensions

These are always running in the background when your browser is open - consuming your precious CPU. You can either manually remove/disable extension through your browser or use CCleaner. CCleaner makes it really easy to do this - otherwise google how to remove extensions in not only the browser you are using, but all browsers on the computer.

To disable unwanted plugins: Open CCleaner by Piriform

Click Tools on the left panel.

Click Extensions.

Scroll through the list of extensions, any extension that you think doesn't require components running at startup; select, then disable it.

An example for me in the video below is all the extensions in Firefox can be deleted as I removed Firefox from my system months ago - this is proof that things still lurk on your computer and take up resources. I can also disable some extensions in my browser of choice, Google Chrome.

Video Tutorial Available Here: https://youtu.be/_3oliCmTH_U

7. Delete Old System Restore Points

You gather old system restore points like you gather socks - you don't realise how shitty they are until you come across them! Newer versions of Windows are getting better at not collecting them - but they're still there sometimes taking up precious space. Restore points are sometimes crucial to help us save our PCs from disasters so remember, we don't want to remove the latest restore point! Let's use CCleaner again to help us remove our old system restore points. Open CCleaner by Piriform

Click Tools.

Click System Restore

The latest system restore point will be disabled for your safety, select all restore points that you can (or wish to).

Click Remove.

Video Tutorial Available Here: <https://youtu.be/z9HBghJc5cY>

AsSaSs@iN - November 16, 2017, 7:40 pm

8. Remove Windows 10 Bloatware

The definition of bloatware: software whose usefulness is reduced because of the excessive disk space and memory it requires. A number of bloatware items come bundled with Windows 10 including Store, Money, 3D Builder and Alarm to name a few. Fortunately for us, there is a fantastic tool that has been developed specifically for Windows 10 to allow you to easily remove bloatware called 10AppsManager.

Screenshot of 10AppsManager

To Remove Bloatware from your System

Download [10AppsManager](#) from TheWindowsClub to your Desktop. Extract the contents of the zipped folder 10amW10.

Right click 10AppsManager and select Run as Administrator

10AppsManager will launch, you can then manually select which apps you wish to uninstall. Otherwise you can select the 'Remove All' button down the bottom right.

Allow 10AppsManager to run uninterrupted until you have removed all apps you have deemed unnecessary.

9. Run CCleaner and Delete Temporary Files

Now it's time to get rid of a bunch of temporary files - unnecessary and clogging up good space! Did you know that every page you visit stores temporary files on your system? Pictures, videos, scripts you name it! CCleaner is great for removing all of these.

To clean temporary files:Launch CCleaner

NOTE: cleaning 'cookies' will log you out of any active sessions online - Facebook, HackForums etc. So be sure you either know their password, have it saved or can recover it.

The 'Cleaner' tab on the left-hand side will be open by default.

Toggle through the 'Windows' and 'Applications' tabs and ensure all that can be (or all that you want to) clean is selected.

You will have to exit out of your browser for this.

Click 'Run Clean' and let it do its thing.

10. Run Disk Cleanup

Disk Cleanup is Windows built-in version of CCleaner to remove unnecessary files (mind you it doesn't remove anywhere near the amount of stuff CCleaner does!). But why are we running it after CCleaner? Well, Disk Cleanup can do a couple of extra things to your Windows computer such as remove old versions of Windows and compress system files.

To run Disk Cleanup:Click Start

Type 'Disk Cleanup' and open it.

Place a check next to all the items you wish to clean - if you're unsure of what a category is, just click it and Disk Cleanup will have a description below for you.

Click 'Cleanup System Files'

11. CHKDSK

CHKDSK short for Check Disk checks the state of the hard drive and correct any errors it finds, if possible. It can be useful for troubleshooting read errors and other storage-related errors.

To Run CHKDSK:Open file explorer.

Click 'This PC'.

Right click on the drive you wish to run CHKDSK (usually C).

Click 'Properties'.

Click the 'Tools' tab.

Under 'Error Checking' click 'Check'.

CHKDSK will now run and make repairs as necessary.

12. System File Checker

The System File Checker or sfc.exe is a utility in Microsoft Windows located in C:\Windows\System32 folder. This utility allows users to scan for and restore corrupt Windows system files.

To run System File Checker:Click Start.

Type 'cmd'.

Right-click Command Prompt and click 'Run as Administrator'.

In the command prompt window type (without {SPACE}):

The sfc utility will run for a while and replace any corruptions on reboot.

NOTE: In case you are unable to start the System File Checker, and you instead get the “Windows Resource Protection Could Not Start the Repair Service” error, you may want to check up if your Windows Modules Installer service has been Disabled. To do so, type services.msc in start search and hit Enter. The status of this service should be set to Manual.

13. Defragment

Fortunately in the newer versions of Windows, Defragment is on Autopilot once a week. However, this sometimes isn't reliable and it's worth checking to see if your PC needs defragmenting. Defragmenting is required as over time, files on your hard drive get fragmented, and your computer slows down because it has to check multiple places on your drive for those pieces.

When and How to Defragment: Click Start.

Type 'Defragment' and open 'Defragment and Optimize Drives'.

Select your drive - if it is OK and doesn't need defragmenting the 'Analyze' option won't be available.

If a disk requires defragmenting it's 'Current Status' will read 'Needs Optimization' and the 'Analyze' option won't be available - with these disks you should go ahead and click 'Optimize'.

If a disk hasn't been defragmented recently, click 'Analyze'.

If the score is 5% or greater fragmented - it is advised you 'Optimize' these drives also.

Let it do its thing.

14. Miscellaneous

I have categorised the following tips as 'miscellaneous' because in general these tips degrade the other facets in order to achieve better performance. The main goal of this tutorial was to allow you to restore your machine to a faster, cleaner state and not limit you to what you can do. Click on each subject and it will link you to a tutorial on the topic. [Optimise Power Profiles](#): you can switch to performance mode - but this will drain a laptop's battery life.

[Maximise CPU Power](#): you can throttle the CPU power based on your power supply.

[Go Opaque](#): Windows 10 fancy graphics take a toll on your system's performance - consider switching from your flashy translucent start bar to an opaque one.

[Disable Visual Effects](#): Windows 10 animations and special effects feature lower your system's performance - consider removing them to squeeze every last bit of power out of your machine.

[Limit Programs in Task Bar](#): here you can prevent software from placing their icon in your taskbar next to your speaker and battery icon, these all use your system's resources.

[Stop Apps Running in the Background](#): some apps running in the background are actually quite useless and it's completely up to you if you want to prevent some of these from running. Microsoft Edge, Microsoft Store, Sticky Notes, and Tips are all useless to me, are they to you?

[Use the Windows Startup Tool](#): this is to disable startup programs similar to that of CCleaner - Windows lets you know what software on startup is requiring the most energy - disable CPU hungry software you don't need to launch as soon as you open the computer.

[Automatically Sign into Windows](#): your login page while essential for security slows things down, if you're using a desktop and not worried about others using it why not consider this feature?

[Shut Down with One Tap](#) (point 4): you can program your power button to actually shut your machine down for you - safely - with a single tap.

[Turn off One Drive Sync](#): if you're not using OneDrive turn off this feature.

[Turn on Fast Startup](#): With Windows 10 there is a new “hybrid” startup mode that should cut down

on bootup times. IT does this by putting the PC into hibernation instead of fully shutting down.

[Turn off Search Indexing](#): this is another of those - if you want to squeeze every ounce of performance type tips - don't expect to easily search for files after you do this one.

[Turn off Tips](#): if they haven't annoyed you into googling how to turn them off already!

Keep Computer Cool: hot computers don't function as well - if you can have the laptop on a firm surface where air can circulate. If you have a desktop, make sure the fans are clean and there's nothing obstructing airflow.

Power Off: give your computer a break and increase the life by turning it off every so often!

[Overclocking](#): check out the forums on HackForums.

Realistic Expectations: you can't expect a push bike to compete with a Ferrari. Sometimes it's better to reformat or upgrade!

15. Hardware This tutorial is a software-based approach to speeding up your system but of course, I must acknowledge the power of hardware upgrades! If none of the above tips have helped maybe it is time to upgrade a component or two? An important point, however; multiple upgrades can be expensive, at this point it may be more cost effective to purchase a new machine altogether and start fresh.

Upgrade RAM: make sure you check how much your machine can handle and don't exceed this! You don't want to fry your machine - this is a fantastic way to speed up general functionality.

Convert from a HDD to an SSD: old HDD take time to spin and boot up, solid states are speedy and will have a significant impact to both bootup time and general functionality.

Upgrade Graphics Card: maybe if you want to better support dual screens or if you're having noticeable issues with your existing one.

Upgrade CPU: some systems won't even allow you to do this - if you're getting to this point to increase speed just start fresh.

Closing Remarks

Hopefully, you found this information a little helpful - the number of steps can be overwhelming but you can do it over the span of a couple of weeks. It's been a while since I've written a tutorial like this so please forgive any typographical errors I may have made (and missed).

It'd be great if you could let me know:

Was this thread helpful?

Did you try out these steps or learn anything new?

What would you like to see next?

Is there anything you may suggest that I missed?

And please post questions in this thread, not directly so everyone can benefit from them ?

AsSaSs@iN - November 17, 2017, 1:31 am

(Nov 16, 2017 09:52 PM)Bleeping Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) All of this is great but I personally disagree with the use of Driver Booster by IOBit. I have had experiences where it has completely installed the wrong driver as well as not install them correctly. One such application that is known in the IT repair industry is SDIO, or Snappy Driver Installation Origin. It uses very accurate algorithms and only updates what is actually needed. If you'd like you can check that out here: <https://sdi-tool.org/>

Thanks for the reply, I personally haven't any issues with Driver Booster. As you're from Bleeping Computer I'll look into it and consider modifying my OP if I agree ? Thanks for the links too - admittedly looking at Snappy Driver it looks better already!

Phlox - November 17, 2017, 5:17 am

(Nov 16, 2017 08:40 PM)AsSaSs@iN Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Nice one ? Good to see some similarities - but also great to see some differences ? Thanks for sharing!

Thank you very much AsSaSs@iN ! ?

M?xim - November 17, 2017, 10:51 am

I really should take my PC more serious when it comes to keeping it safe and clean. By a quick look it seems like this thread will help with the later.

Saving this for the morning coffee.

Well done Assassain.

AsSaSs@iN - November 17, 2017, 4:22 pm

(Nov 17, 2017 11:51 AM)Maxim Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I really should take my PC more serious when it comes to keeping it safe and clean. By a quick look it seems like this thread will help with the later. Saving this for the morning coffee.

Well done Assassain.

Cheers bro, I was inspired because my once super fast computer was laggy after I neglected it during exams and travel - thought it was time to tidy things up. Safe to say if you follow everything your machine will run like a dream.

Bleeping - November 17, 2017, 4:52 pm

(Nov 17, 2017 02:31 AM)AsSaSs@iN Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Thanks for the reply, I personally haven't any issues with Driver Booster. As you're from Bleeping Computer I'll look into it and consider modifying my OP if I agree ? Thanks for the links too - admittedly looking at Snappy Driver it looks better already!

I am not but I do strongly endorse their content and class. ?

test - November 17, 2017, 5:19 pm

Oh boy this post made me all sticky. Great guide, Assassain

AsSaSs@iN - November 17, 2017, 5:32 pm

(Nov 17, 2017 05:52 PM)Bleeping Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I am not but I do strongly endorse their content and class. ?I agree, I checked out SDIO and it's just so massive (12gb? - defeats the purpose of the thread honestly) - surely there's a less resource-intensive alternative to this that functions just as well?

(Nov 17, 2017 06:19 PM)testaccountplsignore Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Oh boy this post made me all sticky. Great guide, Assassain

I have that effect on people bby.

Bleeping - November 17, 2017, 9:41 pm

(Nov 17, 2017 06:32 PM)AsSaSs@iN Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I agree, I checked out SDIO and it's just so massive (12gb? - defeats the purpose of the thread honestly) - surely there's a less resource-intensive alternative to this that functions just as well?

I have that effect on people bby.

I think you're using another part of SDIO, you can download the indexes rather than the full driver packs. It allows both options.

AsSaSs@iN - November 22, 2017, 7:44 pm

(Nov 17, 2017 10:41 PM)Bleeping Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I think you're using another part of SDIO, you can download the indexes rather than the full driver packs. It allows both options.

Thanks bleeping - continuing to work on this. Unfortunately my post is too long to edit, so will come soon.

AsSaSs@iN - November 26, 2017, 4:50 am

So Bleeping - I used SDIO and it wrecked my mouse drivers - had to reinstall windows lol (keeping

files)

D?ceived - November 26, 2017, 4:56 am

Thanks for this tutorial I am most likely going to just follow every step through later and see if I get improvements!

AsSaSs@iN - November 26, 2017, 5:07 am

(Nov 26, 2017 05:56 AM)D?ceived Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Thanks for this tutorial I am most likely going to just follow every step through later and see if I get improvements!

Let us all know how you go Deceived. Depending on your machine it can take a couple hours to quite some time! Depends how much stuff you've got going on :)

CompSec - November 26, 2017, 3:33 pm

Great guide. Thank you for the time spent on this, Assassin :)

Riyu - November 27, 2017, 8:59 am

Could you make a Mac version :/

World Peace - November 28, 2017, 1:28 am

Everything about the guide seems great although I don't exactly think it's the brightest idea to update drivers using third party software like Driver Booster and the likes.

AsSaSs@iN - November 28, 2017, 2:46 am

(Nov 28, 2017 02:28 AM)World Peace Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Everything about the guide seems great although I don't exactly think it's the brightest idea to update drivers using third party software like Driver Booster and the likes.

Working on modifying - I had no issues until I used a different tool.

Viral Dragon - November 29, 2017, 3:32 am

I think people don't appreciate the comprehensive-ness that is guide — a truly wonderful guide

-Viral.

AsSaSs@iN - December 4, 2017, 6:48 pm

(Nov 29, 2017 04:32 AM)Viral Dragon Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I think people don't appreciate the comprehensive-ness that is guide — a truly wonderful guide

-Viral.

Thanks viral, appreciate the support ? ?

Dan129 - December 8, 2017, 6:04 am

if anti virus dont install i prob have a virus right?

Viral Dragon - December 9, 2017, 11:38 am

(Dec 8, 2017 07:04 AM)Dan129 Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) if anti virus dont install i prob have a virus right? Not entirely, no. It could just be a broken install/er or a corrupted download.

Try to reinstall it after downloading it again.

-Viral.

AsSaSs@iN - December 11, 2017, 3:37 am

(Dec 9, 2017 12:38 PM)Viral Dragon Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Not entirely, no. It could just be a broken install/er or a corrupted download.

Try to reinstall it after downloading it again.

-Viral.

I agree with VD on this one ? If you need more help, just make a thread.

Tony Starks - December 11, 2017, 3:43 pm

Thank you for post, think I need to do that on a couple of my computers!!

AsSaSs@iN - December 14, 2017, 6:28 am

(Dec 11, 2017 04:43 PM)Tony Starks Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Thank you for post, think I need to do that on a couple of my computers!!

No problem Tony Starks, hopefully it helps you out!

AsSaSs@iN - December 29, 2017, 5:47 am

Thread has been updated, modifications include:Alterations to driver updates.

Bloatware removal

Hopefully that's of some help to you guys.

Brainsdotco - May 8, 2018, 4:42 pm

Thank you so so much for this