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Protect Your Computer From Becoming Part Of A Botnet.

Do you have a zombie in your house?

No, not one of the living dead from TV or movies, but a computer infected by malware that can be accessed remotely and controlled to do everything from stealing your personal information to sending out email spam that can infect or disrupt other computers around the world.

This malicious software is also called a bot because it is controlled by a remote source. Infected computers can also be used to build a botnet - a networked army of infected devices commanded by a central server.

How do you know if your computer is part of a botnet?

It's not easy because the malware is designed to avoid detection, but there are warning signs to be aware of, such as:

- Your computer seems to be working noticeably slower or crashes frequently.
- You find email messages in your 'sent' folder that you didn't send.
- Your web browser crashes frequently.
- It takes longer to shut down or start up your computer.

How did it get infected?

That's hard to tell, but the Internet can be a dangerous place. Hackers are looking for ways to access everything from personal data to your computer itself. It could have been anything from a visit to a malicious website or a link or a downloaded file.

What can you do to prevent it?

- Some experts recommend using antivirus software and keeping it updated.
- Install operating system and application software updates when available.
- Keep your computer firewall at maximum level.
- Delete spam email without opening it.
- Don't click on links or download attachments if you're not sure of them.

What happens if your computer is infected?

- Your antivirus software might be able to detect and deal with malware, but hackers are constantly trying to get around antivirus protections.
- You might actually need to erase your hard drive and reinstall your operating system and applications. That's why it's a good idea to keep backups.

Don't become part of the zombie botnet army. Do what you can to protect your computer and other devices.

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