

# The Tech Beacon

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## Using PDF files for Homework

### Accessing PDF Files

Many attachments, including course materials and homework assignments, are now sent to students by e-mail as PDF files. A PDF file is a file that was created using Adobe Acrobat. Opening and saving a PDF attachment using Microsoft Outlook is very simple.

1. Open Microsoft Outlook
2. Open the email with the attachment
3. Double-click the icon to the left of the attachment

**Attachments:**  Notes from Free Comp

4. When the dialog box comes up, click Save to Disk
5. Click the drop-down arrow and select My Documents, if necessary
6. Click Save

When you are ready to use the file for a course assignment, simply go to My Documents and double-click the file to open it.

## Be Aware of Attacks By Viruses and Spyware

### Protecting Your PC

Greetings Reader,

Thank you for your interest in this issue of "The Tech Beacon." As many of you know, using your personal computer to surf the internet is not always safe. This month's issue is going to focus on two of the primary threats to your computer -- viruses and spyware. The presence of these two hijackers on your computer can cause your computer to run slower than usual, as well as cause damage to your computer's hard drive. This issue will provide information on different types of spyware and will help you determine which spyware removal tool will best meet your needs. It will also inform you how to scan your computer for viruses, remove any viruses that are found, and keep the virus definitions updated using Symantec Antivirus.

In addition to tools to protect your PC, this month's "Tech

Beacon" will review Wacom's Graphire3 tablet for photo editing.

I hope that these articles and reviews will be beneficial to you in helping you know how to protect your PC.

In this issue, we also must inform you that Nathanael Waites is no longer going to be working with us on the "Tech Beacon." This newsletter was his vision and we wish him the very best.

Sincerely,

Ellen Hucks

# The Wacom Graphire3 Tablet

In the world of technology, in the past few years, many users have become interested in digital photography and graphics. With this new-found interest

came the creation of new devices that simplify and improve creating and editing your graphic work. One of these devices that may

be beneficial for the graphic designer is the Wacom Graphire3 tablet.



With your purchase you receive the Graphire3 4x5 pen tablet, a wireless pen, pen stand, wireless mouse, 2 CDs with Wacom tablet driver software, user manual, bundled software, and a one year warranty<sup>1</sup>.

## The pen tablet

The Graphire3 4x5 pen tablet is the *active area*, where the wireless pen and mouse are used. It does require a USB port, but provides a fairly long cord for a little more mobility. Along with these useful features, it also has a very convenient photo frame located on the *active area*.

There is one major disadvantage, which is the fact that the *active area* is much smaller than the area that you could use if you had an optical mouse.

## The pen tool

Obviously, the pen is the most notable device. Along with left and right click located on the side of the pen, it also has an eraser tool and a convenient pen stand. We used the device in Adobe Photoshop CS in which it could perform all of the tasks that can be done with an ordinary mouse. Although it is more precise than an ordinary mouse, it is also

<b>Manufacturer:</b>	Wacom Technology
<b>Model #:</b>	CTE-430
<b>Est. Street Price:</b>	\$99.95
<b>Pros:</b>	Simplifies Photoshop tasks, more precise than a mouse
<b>Cons:</b>	More sensitive than a mouse, which may cause difficulty for the average user; active area is smaller than that of an optical mouse
<b>Bottom Line:</b>	Great for graphic designers
<b>Rating:</b>	★★★★☆

more sensitive. It would probably take an ordinary user twice the time with the wireless pen tool than with an ordinary mouse until he became more familiar with it. Unfortunately, this could be a major drawback to a graphic designer who will only be paid when he finishes his work.

## The wireless mouse

The wireless mouse provides a more familiar feel than the pen tool and also operates without the restraint of a cord. However, it would probably be more beneficial to buy a wireless optical mouse if you were looking for less restraint, because in order to use the wireless mouse that comes with the tablet, you must also use the tablet's *active area*.

## In conclusion

This product probably would not be beneficial for the average user; however, it would profit the professional graphic designer who had the time to become more familiar with it. In my opinion, it would be well worth the money for a professional designer.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wacom.com/graphire/4x5.cfm>

Image courtesy of [http://www.wacom.com/graphire/images/lg\\_graphire4x5.jpg](http://www.wacom.com/graphire/images/lg_graphire4x5.jpg)

# Using Symantec Antivirus

## Scanning Your Computer

Depending on the user's internet usage, every computer should be scanned for viruses once every 1-2 weeks. Using Symantec Antivirus, scanning a computer for viruses is very simple. To start, double-click the yellow shield icon in your computer's system tray. This will start Symantec Antivirus. To



scan a computer for viruses, click Scan Computer on the left side of the Antivirus window. This will display a box on the right side of the screen which will give you the option of scanning the whole computer or of scanning the A, C, and D drives separately. Check the box next to My Computer and click the Scan button at the bottom of the screen. Symantec Antivirus will then scan your computer and notify you of any viruses that are found.



## Removing Viruses

When a virus is found on your computer, Symantec Antivirus will place the infected file in Quarantine to prevent it from further damaging your computer; however, all viruses should be removed from the Quarantine and completely deleted from your computer. To do this, you must first click the plus sign next to View on the left side of the Antivirus screen. Click Quarantine under View. This will display the list of quarantined files on your computer. To delete the viruses, simply click the red X button above the list of infected files. A window will appear which will tell you that the file(s) can be deleted. To remove them, click the Start Delete button. This completely removes the infected files from your computer. When it is finished deleting the files, close the window.



## Updating Symantec Antivirus

In order for Symantec Antivirus to effectively protect your computer from viruses, it must be updated at least once a week. Symantec makes updating the antivirus very simple by providing the LiveUpdate feature in the antivirus window. To update your antivirus, you must be connected to the internet. Once you are connected, open Symantec Antivirus and click the LiveUpdate button in the bottom right side of the screen. Allow Symantec to search for updates by click the Next button in the LiveUpdate window. When the updates are installed, click Finish to complete the process.



## Protecting Your Computer from Viruses

1. Update Symantec Antivirus once a week using LiveUpdate.
2. Scan your computer for viruses once a week.
3. When receiving emails, do not open attachments from someone that you do not know. A legitimate email should always be signed by the person sending it.
4. Be careful when using internet chat rooms. Do not accept files from people that you do not know.

What is Spyware?

# Spyware's Threat to Your Computer

## Spyware, what's that?

I am sure a lot of you are asking yourselves that same question – What is spyware? Spyware is known by many names, such as, malware and adware, and comes in many different forms – keyloggers, trojans, etc. The basic definition of spyware is any program that attaches itself to your computer and transfers information about your computer to a third party.

At one point or another I am sure that some of you have had pop-up windows appear as soon as you access the internet or have noticed toolbars on your Internet Explorer window that you do not remember downloading – this is spyware.

By this point you are probably beginning to understand the magnitude of the problem of spyware. Obviously, spyware can be a real threat to you and your computer.

## How do you obtain spyware?

There are many different ways to obtain spyware, such as surfing the internet, downloading picture or music files, checking your e-mail, etc. Almost everything you do on the internet has the potential of attracting spyware.

## I've never seen anything called "spyware" before, does that still mean I might have it?

Although you may not be aware of it, if you are able to connect to the internet, it is almost definite that you have some sort of spyware located on your hard drive.

## What are the negative effects of spyware?

Of course, each type of spyware has its own negative effect, but all spyware causes your computer to run slower than normal.

However, I want to focus on one main form of spyware – **keyloggers**.

**What is a keylogger?** A keylogger is, of course, a form of spyware with the main purpose of capturing keystrokes. Sound innocent? Maybe until you realize that you have used your credit card number to pay a bill online, entered your bank account number numerous times, or used a password to access a personal account. Keyloggers are probably the worst kind of spyware and may be the hardest to locate.

Another popular form of spyware are pop-up windows and toolbars that download themselves. The most popular programs that perform this type of spyware are Gator and WildTangent. Now that you know what a threat spyware is within the next view pages we will be reviewing the best spyware removal programs that may be beneficial to you.

# Spyware Killers

Now that we have learned the negative affects that spyware, adware, and keyloggers have on one's computer, we are going to provide information on some of the best programs available for removing them. Many spyware removal programs are free to try but some may require purchase.

In this article, we have compared four of the best spyware removal programs available – iSpyKiller 2.1, Spybot Search and Destroy 1.3, SpySubtract Pro 2.5, and Spyware Doctor.

We tested all four of these programs simultaneously on one computer, the results are listed below. We hope that reading these reviews will help you decide which program is right for you.

## iSpyKiller 2.1

The program that found the least amount of infections was iSpykiller 2.1, which found 29 infections. This program is provided by eSunSoft Technologies. It is, of course, free to download and provides a backup system in case you accidentally deletes necessary files. However, while it is free to download it only allows a three day trial and once infections are found, the \$29.95 purchase of the program is required for removal. Another disadvantage of this program is that when opening the program, it may accidentally change your homepage, if you do not read the directions carefully. The final disadvantage of this program was that although it found the least amount of infections, it was the slowest of all four programs – lasting roughly 45 minutes.



## Spybot Search and Destroy 1.3

The next program was Spybot Search and Destroy 1.3 which detected 99 infections – over three times as many as iSpyKiller. It was also the first program to finish scanning. This program has the highest download rate of all four programs, probably because it is completely free of charge, and is suitable for the needs of most users. It also provides a recovery

center, along with free updates to fight against the latest spyware, and an immunization center to block “bad” downloads. However, the major disadvantage is the fact that many cases of spyware infections are still not caught.



## SpySubtract Pro 2.51

The next program on our list was SpySubtract Pro 2.51 which found 284 infections. This program also has a restore center, but unlike the previous programs, it lists the infections in their different categories, such as, keyloggers, cookies, etc. Another advantage that this program had over the previous two is the Blacklist and Whitelist capabilities.

With the Blacklist capability, one may program SpySubtract to automatically remove certain items when found while scanning, and the Whitelist capability allows you to program SpySubtract to ignore certain items which you may want to keep on your computer. Although this program is completely free for download, the trial only lasts for 30 days after which the purchase price is \$29.95.



## Spyware Doctor

The final program on our list was Spyware Doctor which found 483 infections. It found more infections than the previous programs combined. It was the second program to finish scanning, which took roughly 15 minutes. It is completely free to try and has many different capabilities. Much like Spybot, it also has an immunizer to block ActiveX threats. However, unlike the previous programs, Spyware Doctor features a Browser Monitor and a Cookie Monitor that constantly monitors for Spyware or other hijackers and promptly removes them. Although it does have many advantages over the other programs, it also has one major disadvantage. Spyware Doctor does not allow you to download the updates for the program with the free trial, instead you must buy the full product before you can update the software. Spyware Doctor costs \$39.95, but it is probably well worth the price.



### **Which spyware program is right for you?**

This question depends largely on how often you use the internet. If you are online less than twice a week and are trying to watch your expenses then Spybot Search and Destroy 1.3 would probably be best to suit your needs.

On the other hand, if you are constantly surfing the net at the office, home, or classes then you would probably want to invest the \$39.95 into buying Spyware Doctor.

### **Where can I find these programs to try out for myself?**

Each of these programs can be found at [www.download.com](http://www.download.com); they are all free to try and include an uninstaller tool.