

Malware Warning Signs Checklist

Malware (short for "malicious software") is an umbrella term for any unwanted software designed to infiltrate your computer. Malware ranges from annoying pop-up ads to truly malicious viruses and programs.

Many people imagine that malware infiltrates computers through targeted attacks. While this can be true, especially for businesses, individuals generally aren't specifically targeted. Rather, malware today most often enters via user carelessness. (Watch this short video on my channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/hudodwkdL6Q>)

Malware often slips onto a computer quietly, but it rarely stays silent. Most infections leave behind tell-tale warning signs. This simple checklist will help you spot potential problems early so you can act quickly and keep your computer — and your personal information — safe.

Common Warning Signs

- ! Your computer suddenly slows down or freezes frequently.
- ! You begin seeing unexpected pop-ups, alerts, or ads — especially ones claiming your PC is infected.
- ! Your homepage changes without your permission, or your searches redirect to strange websites.
- ! New browser extensions or toolbars appear that you didn't install.
- ! Programs take much longer to open, or some won't open at all.
- ! Your antivirus shows repeated threat alerts — or suddenly stops working.
- ! You notice unfamiliar programs in your Start Menu or Task Manager.
- ! Files won't open, are missing, or have been renamed (a serious warning sign).
- ! Friends or family receive strange emails or messages from your accounts.
- ! The computer's fan runs constantly, even when you're not doing much.

What To Do If You Notice These Signs

- ✓ Run a full antivirus or anti-malware scan right away. (There are many reputable names in antivirus protection; see <https://tech4me2.com/software>.)
- ✓ Restart your computer and update Windows and your browser. Updating regularly helps your computer's defenses to stay current.
- ✓ Remove any suspicious browser add-ons or extensions.
- ✓ Disconnect from Wi-Fi if you suspect ransomware or identity theft.
- ✓ Change your important passwords once your system is clean.
- ✓ When in doubt, get help — malware often gets worse if ignored.

Recognizing these early warning signs can protect your files, your privacy, and your peace of mind.

For more step-by-step guidance, visit www.Tech4Me2.com and watch for my upcoming guide:

- PC Safety Made Simple – A Clear, Friendly Guide to Protecting Your Digital Life.