Update your Operating System

Why are updates important?

When a computer is connected to the Internet, computer-hackers look for "holes" in a computer's operating system (e.g. Microsoft Windows, Mac OS X). These holes, or vulnerabilities, allow them to spread viruses and worms on the Internet, many of which are destructive not only to your computer, but to other computers.

Software publishers, such as Microsoft, produce updates, or "patches", to their operating system software in order to plug the holes as they become aware of them. If you haven't installed these patches, then your computer is vulnerable to exploitation.

How do I Update my computer's Operating System?

Macintosh Users:

1. Click on the Apple menu in the upper-left corner of the screen and select the Software Update item
2. Select any updates with "Mac OS" or "Security" in their names and click "Install"
3. Enter the administrator password you selected when you set up the computer

Windows Users:

Manually:
You can go to the Windows Update website, where Microsoft will automatically examine your computer's installation of Windows and provide a custom list of updates for your computer to download & install. (Make sure you install all critical patches.)

Automatically:
As an alternative, you might find it easier to configure your Windows software to automatically check for and install the updates for you.

How to Enable Automatic Updates -- Windows XP:

1. Right click on the My Computer Icon and choose Properties
2. Click on the Automatic Updates tab
3. Put a check mark in "Keep my computer up to date..."
4. Choose one of the settings

How to Enable Automatic Updates -- Windows Vista:

1. Click the Start menu and choose the Control Panel
2. Choose Security
3. Turn on Automatic Updates, if they're not on already

How to Enable Automatic Updates -- Windows 7:

1. Click the Start menu, then choose Control Panel > Windows Update.
2. In the left pane, click Change settings.
3. Under Important updates, choose the option that you want.
4. Under Recommended updates, select the "Give me recommended updates the same way I receive important updates" check box, and then click OK. If you're prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.