HOW TO FIX A SLOW COMPUTER

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A slow computer can transform the most patient human being to an angry monster. Before you throw your computer out the window, there is a couple of things you can try out first.

How old is the computer

Time flies. It’s very common to misjudge the age of a computer. Ponder over how old your computer is. If it’s 4 – 5 year old, it’s time to order a new one.

The computer boots slowly

A cup of coffee in the morning with the colleagues could be nice. But if you are forced to it, every morning, because of your computer it’s soon gets boring.

One solution could be to stop programs from automatically start when the computer does. Even if you use the program frequently, it’s better to start it when needed then stealing CPU power when not in use.

PC:

- Right click the Taskbar at the bottom of the screen and select Task Manager.
- Open the Start-up tab.
- Select the program you don’t want to start automatically and click Enable at the bottom right.

Mac:

- Open System Preferences and select Users & Groups.
- Select your user account and open the Login Items tab.
- Deselect the programs you don’t want to start automatically. In some cases you may need to set this in their respective settings.

Free disk space

A common problem is a full hard drive, which give the computer little virtual memory to work with.

Store your files on the network folder provided by the university to save space on the local hard drive. This also give you a backup of the files if something happens to your computer.

Remove files

If your local hard drive is full, you need to remove files from your documents. Your documents, nothing else. Don’t delete files if you don’t know what it is. There is a big risk the computer goes from being slow, to not functional at all.

A good place to start is images, movies and music folders. They often take up much disk space. It’s fun to have pictures of the children, summer cabin, the dog or cat to show the colleagues but they don’t belong in an office computer. Remove any duplicates, unnecessary and obsolete files. Don’t forget to empty the Recycle bin when you’re done. Move mutual files to a shared folder.

Don’t store important files on external hard drives or USB memory. The IT support have a slim chance to restore files from this kind of storage.
Delete temporary files

Applications and browsers stores temporary files on the computer e.g. to store information off visited webpages. Even if not big in size, they tend to multiply like rabbits after some time.

PC:

- Open Start menu.
- Write Disk Clean-up.
- Check the boxes for the files you wish to remove. E.g. downloaded program files, Temporary internet files, recycle bin and temporary files.
- Click Ok.

Mac:

There are no similar program on the Mac like Disk clean-up for PC. Instead, you need to manually remove temporary internet files from each of the web browsers you use.

Uninstall programs

Do you have programs on the computer you doesn’t use anymore. Uninstall them so they take up unnecessary space. Never uninstall things you don’t know what it is. It could be updates or drivers for the network, audio or graphic. Whithout them the computer doesn’t work properly.

PC:

Applications installed from Microsoft Store:

- Open the Start-menu.
- Right click the program and select Uninstall.

Every other program:

- Open the Control panel.
- Select Programs & features.
- Uninstall programs no longer in use.

Mac:

Application installed from App Store:

- Open Launchpad.
- Click and hold until the icon starts to shake.
- Press the X to uninstall.

Every other program:

- If the X is missing in Launchpad, open Finder and select Programs ( ⌘A).
- For programs in folders, open the folder and select Uninstall.
- If there´s no folders or uninstall options, drag the program to the Trash. Don’t forget to empty the trash when you’re done. Observe that the program are permanently deleted first after you empties the trash.
The computer gets slower during the day

Does the computer work just fine in the morning, but gets slower and slower during the day? Then it's time to revise your working habits. The more programs, web pages and files there are open at the same time, the slower the computer gets. Close the stuff you don't use at the moment.

Install updates

Sure, it's annoying, the little pop-up that tells you that the computer has to be restarted because of an update. However, it is necessary to install updates to e.g. security reasons, reduce the risk of viruses, improve software or install new drivers. If these updates never are fully installed, they have a tendency to really slow down a computer and make it hopeless to work with. Which leads us to the next subject.

Shut down the computer

How many times has someone asked you; “Did you restarted the computer?” This may sound strange, but the oddest problems has been fixed automatically by something that simple.

Make it a habit to shut down the computer after a day’s work, and you will have a computer that works better and lasts longer.

Virus

Not many things can make a computer so slow and hopeless to work with like virus.

Things NOT TO DO if you suspect a virus: Hand it over to “a friend that’s good with computers”, Panic and start to install stuff found online, Think that’s not a problem, I handle it later. Better to do this:

- Think about what you did just before. Did you install a program, click on a link on a web page or in an e-mail.
- Start your antivirus program and do a complete scan. On a PC the standard program is Windows defender. It’s easy to find in the bottom right, beside the clock.
- Contact the IT-Support.