



Updating Software

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Patching the holes is key

<http://its.uah.edu>

WHY ARE UPDATES SO IMPORTANT?

- Updating your operating system, applications, and browser plug-ins is essential to maintaining your privacy and security
- Vulnerabilities are bugs or weaknesses in your software that cyber attackers can exploit
 - New vulnerabilities are being discovered constantly
 - Software vendors, such as Microsoft and Apple, issue updates (or patches) regularly to correct these vulnerabilities

OPERATING SYSTEMS

- Microsoft Windows - includes a utility for checking and updating your system automatically
- Microsoft Update covers not only Windows but also many Microsoft applications you have installed, such as Office
- Mac OS X has a similar autoupdating feature for OS X and Apple applications

OPERATING SYSTEMS (Cont.)

- Some updates require rebooting your system before they take effect – When prompted, restart without delay
- Set your system to check for updates every day
 - Pick a time of day when your system will be powered on, awake, and connected to the Internet.

MOBILE DEVICES

- iOS, for mobile devices like the iPhone and iPad, does not include an auto-updating tool
 - Check iTunes periodically for updates
- Android 2.x has an auto-updater that covers both the OS and installed apps
 - It requires your permission when they are ready to install

SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

- Yes, all that software on your computer can be vulnerable too!
- The key to keeping your computer and mobile device apps updated and secure is to know which ones you have installed
 - Many do not have a built-in auto-update utility or it's not activated
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader, and Java, include an auto-updater
 - Use other software's update notifications as reminders to check things that won't autoupdate

SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS (Cont.)

- Uninstall unused software - The more apps you have installed, the greater the risk you run of having a vulnerable system
- On your personal machine – Use tools like Secunia PSI (Windows Only)
 - PSI scans your computer for known applications and attempts to determine which are out of date and provides links so you can update them
 - ITS is currently in the planning stages on implementing a patch management solution for campus – In the future, we'll be able to do this for you!

BROWSER PLUG-INS

- Small software applications that enhance the functionality of your browser
 - Adobe Flash Player
 - Apple QuickTime
 - Microsoft Silverlight
 - Many others
- Popular target for cyber attackers because they are difficult to keep updated

BROWSER PLUG-INS (Cont.)

- Qualys's Browser Check
 - Web-based tool that determines which plug-ins are installed, which are out-of-date, and how to update them
 - <https://browsercheck.qualys.com/>
- Mozilla provides a web-based tool for Firefox that detects third-party plug-ins and provides links to updates
 - <http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/plugincheck/>

BROWSER PLUG-INS (Cont.)

- Chrome disables out-of-date plug-ins automatically.
 - Click on “Update plug-in” - takes you to that plug-in’s website where you can download its latest version.
- Safari has automatic updating for plug-ins (extensions), but by default it is not enabled. To activate it:
 - Open the Preferences window in Safari and select Extensions.
 - Then select the Updates link at the bottom of the extensions list, and put a check in the Install Updates Automatically box

Questions?