

Tips and Tricks to Avoid Having to Come See Us

When students arrive on campus, many make the same exact technology mistakes; and those of us who work in the YDS IT office usually have to try to fix whatever mistakes we can. That being said, it is always better to avoid problems by being proactive in the way that you operate your computer at YDS.

Therefore, here are a few tips and tricks to keep you from running into common but serious issues or to minimize the damage when something unexpected and unpreventable happens to you.

1. If you have an issue that you cannot resolve on your own or with the documentation that we have provided, emailing us first about it and setting up an appointment is always preferred.
2. **BACK UP YOUR DATA!** Do it weekly and every time you write a new paper! Without fail hard drives tend to fail, USB sticks stop working, computers fail to boot, files corrupt, and motherboards bite the dust right around mid-terms and finals. It happens every semester. Make sure that you have the data you do not want to lose (including music) in at least two separate locations on two separate drives. If something does fail, we might be able to recover it, but do not expect to get your computer back for at least a week. Repairs take time. We have included a brochure on your thumb drive about backing up your computer. Also, here is a simple website from Yale's ITS department about backing up your data:
<http://www.yale.edu/its/stc/faq/GettingStarted/BackingUp.html>.
3. Netbooks, iPads, and Macbook Airs were not meant to function as primary computers. Please do not expect them to do so. Since their abilities are limited and they are often slow compared to laptops (especially netbooks), please do not expect them to do what they were not meant to do. Using them for taking notes or while traveling is fine, but make sure you have a more complete computer that you use as your main computer. You will need to use your main computer as the place where you synchronize and keep an active copy of all your files, in addition to having an alternate backup of all of your data (see point two above).
4. NEVER respond with your NetID, password, or personal information to emails that request this information, even if those emails look like they came from a Yale address, including Yale's Information Technology Services (ITS). These are phishing emails that are trying to scam you and Yale, and Yale has been hit especially hard in recent months with these types of cyber-attacks.
5. Please install Yale's **free** antivirus software from Symantec ("aka Norton Antivirus"). It is probably better than the one that came with your computer. You can download it from the software library here: <http://www.yale.edu/its/software/>.
6. If you have a PC, install and run Malwarebytes at <http://www.malwarebytes.org> and/or SUPERAntispyware at <http://www.superantispyware.com/> (you will want the Free Edition), in addition to doing step 5 above. Update the definitions and do a full scan of your computer, especially if your computer is not brand new. You may be surprised to find that your computer may, in fact, be infected. Two of the key signs of viral infections are a very slow computer and frequent popup ads while surfing the web. If you have these, you need to perform a full virus scan on your computer using Symantec (or something equally as good) and either Malwarebytes or SUPERAntispyware. We do offer free viral infection cleaning services, but these services

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come with the caveat that you may not have your computer available for a few days as we work on it.

7. DO NOT "FILE SHARE" COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS! This includes downloading movies, music, pictures, software, or TV shows using Bittorrents, which *require* you to share when using them. Because Yale is such a high profile university, the RIAA targets Yale even more than most universities (and it tends to target universities more than other places). In the past, Divinity School students have been targeted and nearly fined for what they were doing, but the university stepped in to prevent the RIAA from going through with a full fining process. If you are caught file sharing, the University will shut off your Internet access by blocking your network card, so that you will not be able to get on the Internet anywhere on campus. We recommend that you avoid this by not file sharing.
 - a. However, file sharing of non-copyrighted materials, such as Word documents that you have written or documents shared for academic purposes, such as those posted on Classes V2 (professors often have to get permission to post these materials), are acceptable forms of file sharing, because they are not copyrighted material or have been shared with permission.
8. Get a pop-up blocker or a browser that has one, such as Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer 8 (or higher), or Google Chrome. Also, avoid watching movies on sites like ninjavideo.net, which tend to generate popups that can infect your computer. You will likely get a virus, a trojan, or both. Besides, the legality of the content of such sites is questionable. However, corporate video sites such as YouTube.com, Hulu.com, and theWB.com are examples of safe sites. The links that you may find in a YouTube video to another site, however, may not be safe. Click them at your own risk.
9. While we do offer services, including repairs, at no additional charge to you as a student, we cannot always accommodate every request due to the technical limitations of this office to fulfill more complicated levels of technical support. Also, these services are **for YDS students only** and do not extend to friends or family members.