

Spyware and Adware

Spyware is software that transmits personally identifiable information from your computer to some place on the internet without your permission or notification. Adware is similar to spyware, but it transmits aggregated information instead of personally identifiable information and causes advertisements to pop up on your Internet browser window. This information is largely used for marketing research and pop-up ads.

In addition to sending out your personal information, spyware and adware can also slow your computer down and cause problems with other programs.

How do you know if you have spyware or adware? If you look at webpages or download things from the Internet, there is a very good chance that you have at least some spyware or adware on your machine. If you've been getting lots of annoying pop-ups, or noticed your computer running more slowly than normal, you almost certainly have spyware or adware.

How do I remove spyware and adware? There are several utilities that can help you remove spyware and adware from your computer. A free one that we've found works well is Spybot Search & Destroy. You can download it at <http://www.safer-networking.org/>. Alternatively, Spybot can be downloaded by searching for it on this site: <http://www.download.com>. As with any software, be sure to read the instructions before using it for the first time.

For more information regarding spyware or adware see www.case.edu/its/infosecurity.html.