IF YOU THINK YOUR DEVICE HAS A VIRUS...

You've probably heard spine-tingling tales around the digital campfire about computer viruses and the chaos they leave in their wake.

Sluggish devices, sensitive information purloined, a laptop transformed into an expensive, inoperative paperweight. Viruses and malware are very real hazards swarming around the internet, but you can bushwhack them away with concerted action and a quality antivirus program, and then you can take proactive action to keep their tendrils from vining around your device!

Common symptoms of a computer virus:

- **Suddenly slow computer performance**
- **Computer unexpectedly shutting down or restarting**
- **Overworked hard drive causing your computer's internal fan to run often**
- **Frequent error messages and unexpected pop-up windows**
- **Unknown applications (like web browser toolbars) that appear without you downloading them**
- **Frequent system crashes**
- **Lagging web browser or your web browser constantly redirects**
- **Malfunctioning antivirus programs or firewalls**
- **Missing files**

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1. **Run a full system scan with your antivirus software.**

2. **Restore your computer to an earlier backup if you cannot delete the infected files. Run a full system scan again.**

3. **Delete all the temporary files on your device.**

4. **Go Safe Mode: if you cannot delete all the temporary files, try booting up your system in "Safe Mode" and attempt to delete them again.**

5. **If you still cannot get rid of the virus, wipe the entire hard drive and reinstall your operating system.**

This is called "reimaging your machine" and will delete all your files and documents (which is why we recommend practicing good backup habits). Although there are rare instances where a computer virus survives a drive reimaging, this will generally eliminate the vast majority of viruses.