

# The Human Virus

A scary title I know. But fear not, there isn't some horrific virus out to get you. But the title does define this article well.

computers get viruses all the time. Most people have seen their effects from time to time. But do you really know what a virus is, where it comes from and why it attacks you? ... I didn't think so.

Lets start where the virus starts.

a virus is nothing more than a program written by someone with nothing better to do. they can range from harmless messages to catastrophic file eaters. A computer may seem very intelligent but in fact they are quite stupid. you see a computer does nothing more than read ones and zeros. this is called binary code. a one is read by the computer when it detects voltage on a specific line. and a zero is read when there is no voltage. in this way the computer reads a set of instructions known as computer code (a program) to tell it what to do. Anyone with the knowledge of how to write a program can make your computer do whatever they want.

Because of this it is a constant battle between computer programmers who like to write destructive programs and the everyday computer user. and the battle works like this.

A computer programmer decides one day to write a program that will tell your computer to delete all the files on your hard drive and delete all the drivers for your hardware, thereby making your computer useless. While there are several ways to do this the simplest way would be to write one program that does all of this work. Now he wants you to install this program and run it but obviously you wouldn't want to run this program. So he names it "sportsfever.exe" the same name as a popular computer game that you like.

The game would normally cost you \$79.99. While you would love to play this game the price is just too high for you to justify buying it in the store.

But one day you're checking your email where you received an ad (sent to you by the programmer above) that looks like this:

to: [youremailaddress@wherever.com](mailto:youremailaddress@wherever.com)  
from: [sportcenter@yehoo.com](mailto:sportcenter@yehoo.com) (<==fake address)  
Subject: play sport fever for free

## Sport Fever

**Click here to play for free**

You think this game looks awesome so you click on it and follow the instructions to download and install it.

And now he has you. because you see the installation program was called "sportsfever.exe". sound familiar. When you thought you were installing this great game the program was deleting your entire hard drive and drivers for all your hardware. as you try to run programs you find nothing works right anymore, and perhaps the computer freezes. You try to restart the computer but your files are gone and the computer won't reboot. you just got a virus.

So who's fault is it.

the computer programmer who wrote the program is to blame however these programmers are to numerous to track down and arrest all of them and even if you did there are so many of these programs out there that the problems would continue for years and years to come.

So what do you do.

it comes down to you. You must defend yourself from these attacks. these programmers don't know who you are and they don't care. People love to pass on emails they receive to all their friends so this is one of the most popular ways to spread viruses. and just like a virus that would infect a human, the best way is to avoid the infection. Emails that come from someone you don't know, or have been forwarded hundreds of times should simply be deleted and not read. especially not passes on.

Never fall for the something for nothing ad. there is always a catch and NOTHING is for free. Don't download free music, software, movies from anywhere unless you are experienced enough to deal with the viruses that often come with them. Special "vaults" must be set up and special scanners must be used to determine the validity of these files. While sharing files can be great if you are not the person originating the file or you don't know who is then these files are best left alone.

In this new age of cd and dvd copying you should always stay away from cd's and dvd's that you don't know the creator of. even then run a virus scanner on any cd or dvd you put into your computer. you wouldn't put food in your mouth if you didn't know who handled it before you. the same rules go here.

In conclusion, Viruses, adware, spyware, trojans, etc are all bad news, unfortunately they are a fact of life. They are not caused by a bad piece of hardware or a faulty computer. they are simply programs. use a protection program to find and eliminate these threats before they destroy your files. these programs can mimic hardware failure and cause any amount of problems. they can even be installed on your computer in many pieces that are put together. So the next time your computer slows way down or starts acting funny try running your virus scanner you may be surprised at what you find.

My favorite free virus scanner is AVG. find it here <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/1>