

Spam Email II

What Should I Do If I Receive Spam Emails?

Delete and do not open or reply to suspicious spam emails. If you reply to these spam emails, you are confirming to the unknown sender that your email address is a valid one. As a result, more spam emails may be received.

Check the "sent" folder of your email account to see if there are any outgoing emails that were not sent by you. If there are such emails, your computer may have been infected by malicious code or used by spammers to send emails. You should disconnect from the Internet immediately, activate your anti-virus software to scan your computer and reset the password of your email account.

Consider discarding your current email address and creating a new one if your email account becomes clogged with spam messages.

Report the case to your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and attach the header of the spam email. Depending on the policy of your ISP, a spammer may be warned, have their service suspended or even terminated.

Preventive Measures

Preventive measures include protecting email addresses and personal information as well as protecting your computer.

- Be careful when filling personal information online (such as subscribing to free email account services). Check the terms and conditions of use as well as the privacy policy of websites or companies.
- Do not publish your email address on public websites, contact directories, membership directories or chat rooms.
- Use separate email addresses for different purposes whenever feasible. For example, use two different email addresses for chat rooms and personal communication.
- Avoid using an email address that contains simple dictionary words or common names. Spammers may use automated software to form email addresses for spam purpose by combining common words in the dictionary,

names, letters and numbers.

- Install email filtering software which can reduce the amount of spam emails you receive by filtering and deleting spam emails automatically. Although you cannot stop the spammers from sending you spam emails by email filtering software, you can stop the emails from showing up in your inbox.
- There are many types of email filtering methods and email can generally be filtered according to the sender's email address, domain name or the email's subject or content. For example, users can configure or use some blacklists (i.e. a list of email addresses rejected to receive from) to filter emails.
- Furthermore, you must apply basic security measures on your computer including installing anti-malicious code software (such as anti-virus software), firewall and latest security patches, scheduling a full scan at least once a week, and enabling the Auto Update feature.

To learn more about information security, please visit the InfoSec website at:
<http://www.infosec.gov.hk>