All About the Internet

Identity Theft

Follow these easy steps to help protect your personal information online:

1. If you need to update your information online, open a new browser window and manually type in the company's Web site maintenance page (e.g., EarthLink's myaccount .earthlink.net).
2. If a Web site address is unfamiliar, it may not be legitimate. Please note: legitimate companies won't ask you to send your credit card number or other personal information in an e-mail.
3. Always report fraudulent or suspicious e-mail to your Internet service provider. EarthLink subscribers should report any spam to junkmail@earth link.net.
4. Make sure you're on a secure site when submitting personal information. Look for the lock icon at the bottom of your browser and "https" at the beginning of the Web site address. Also, if the Web address includes a string of numbers separated by periods, it may be a fraudulent site.
5. Contact the legitimate company directly if you have any doubts about a Web site or an e-mail you received.

spam

Spam is unwanted and unsolicited e-mail that attempts to market or sell products to you. It can quickly fill up your inbox. Follow these tips to keep your inbox clean:

1. Choose an uncommon e-mail address. Some spammers use programs that target e-mail addresses made up of common words, names, and phrases.
2. Don't publicize your e-mail address on the Internet. Set up a public e-mail address for surfing the Net and a private one for family and friends.
3. Never reply to spam.
4. Pick an Internet service provider, such as EarthLink, that blocks spam.
5. Before you fill out an online form, look for a privacy statement that states whether the site shares information with outside parties.
6. Report spammers to your Internet service provider.

The Internet is a collection of thousands of individual networks and organizations that are interconnected and can share information. EarthLink is an Internet service provider (ISP), a company that provides Internet access and software to give consumers the best possible Internet experience.

Words to Know

Using the Internet requires a whole new vocabulary. Use the following list to navigate your way.

- **Address Bar:** Where the name of any Web site (such as www.start.earthlink.net) can be typed.
- **Browser:** Software, such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla, and Safari, that is used to view Web pages.
- **Click:** The action of pressing down on a mouse button.
- **Desktop:** The first screen that you see when a computer is turned on.
- **Download:** Transferring files from another computer or Web site to your computer.
- **E-mail:** An abbreviation for "electronic mail," messages that are sent directly from one person to another via the Internet.
- **E-mail Address:** The unique Internet address to which messages are delivered. A person's e-mail address has a similar function to a street address—it allows the computer to know where to send your e-mail.
- **Home Page:** The main page of any Web site.
- **Identity Theft:** Stealing another person's credit card number, Social Security number, or other personal information.
- **ISP:** Internet service provider, a company that provides access to the Internet, such as EarthLink.
- **Jukebox:** A music program that allows computer users to listen to the radio, play CDs, or purchase music.
- **Link:** A word or phrase on a Web site that automatically brings you to another page. Links usually appear as underlined words and/or in a differently colored typeface.
- **MP3:** A digital version of any sound, music, or audio file (such as a newscast).
- **Online:** This means "on the Internet."
- **Personal Start Page℠:** A customizable portal to the Internet.
- **Phisher Site:** A Web site that pretends to be a legitimate company's site but is really a vehicle for stealing your personal information.
- **Privacy Policy:** The promise that Internet retailers and Web sites make that guarantees the safety of their customers' personal information.
- **Pull-down Menu:** A list of options that appears below a word on which you have clicked.
- **Search Engine:** Software that locates information on the Internet.
- **Toolbar:** A row or column of buttons on the computer screen that activate certain functions, such as saving, printing, or sending e-mail.
- **Upload:** Moving programs or files from your computer to a Web site.
- **www:** An acronym for "World Wide Web," which is where the term "Web site" comes from.