

## Re: Recommends for spy software remover?

**Source:**

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**From:** g (ontiscal\_at\_tenup.com)

**Date:** 10/26/04

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Here a book on "Defense and Detection Worms" in the internet section:

[http://giuciao.altervista.org/free\\_books.html](http://giuciao.altervista.org/free_books.html)

"Shenan Stanley" <news\_helper@hushmail.com> wrote in message news:<u\$wSxKfuEHA.2808@TK2MSFTNGP14.phx.gbl>...

> *Brett wrote:*

> > *I'm using Spybot – Search and Destroy 1.3. It's a free program and  
> > seems to work fine. I know many of the Spy remover progs also put  
> > spy ware on the computer. Does any one know if Spybot does this? If  
> > so, where did you find the documentation?*

> >

> > *What are some good, free, spyware remover programs that don't add  
> > spyware to the computer?*

>

> *Scroll to the "SPYWARE/ADWARE/POPUPS/HIJACKS" section if that  
> is all you are interested in, but seeing your questyion, you may want  
> to look at the rest too!*

>

> *\*WARNING\* This is a LONG spill, all in plain text and simplified so that  
> even non-techs should be able to understand it. Hopefully this will  
> assist some people in not only repairing their systems, but in making  
> them faster and more stable tools for them to use. It contains advice  
> on many things, many considered "common knowledge" to 'IT' people  
> everywhere. It is split into major sections, hopefully this will make  
> it easier to navigate. \*WARNING\**

>

> *If you don't wish to follow all of the advice immediately, just want to  
> get rid of your current dilemma, then you are welcome to scroll down to  
> the section titled*

> *"SPYWARE/ADWARE/POPUPS/HIJACKS", where your problem as  
> stated should be resolved by the applications and suggestions found in  
> that section. If this helps solve your problem then I again HIGHLY  
> suggest you follow the rest of the advice below (matter of fact, I  
> suggest it either way.)*

>

> *Suggestions on what you can do to secure/clean your PC. Every attempt  
> has been made to be general and an assumption of a "Windows" operating*

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- > *system is made here as well – although in some ways, this could be*
- > *adapted to any OS.*
- >
- >
- > **GENERAL UPKEEP AND CLEANUP**
- > -----
- >
- > *You should periodically defragment your hard drives as well as check them*
- > *for errors. Only defragment after you have cleaned up your machine of*
- > *outside parasites and never defragment as a solution to a quirkiness in*
- > *your system. It may help speed up your system, but it should be clean*
- > *before you do this one.*
- >
- > *How to Defragment your hard drives*
- > <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=314848>
- >
- > *How to scan your disks for errors*
- > <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=315265>
- >
- > *How to use Disk Cleanup*
- > <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=310312>
- >
- > *You should also empty your Internet Explorer Temporary Internet*
- > *Files and make sure the maximum size for this is small enough not to cause*
- > *trouble in the future. Empty your Temporary Internet Files and shrink the*
- > *size it stores to a size between 10MB and 360MB..*
- >
- > *– Open ONE copy of Internet Explorer.*
- > *– Select TOOLS –> Internet Options.*
- > *– Under the General tab in the "Temporary Internet Files" section, do the*
- > *following:*
- > *– Click on "Delete Cookies" (click OK)*
- > *– Click on "Settings" and change the "Amount of disk space to use:" to*
- > *something between 10MB and 360MB. (Betting it is MUCH larger right*
- > *now.)*
- > *– Click OK.*
- > *– Click on "Delete Files" and select to "Delete all offline contents"*
- > *(the checkbox) and click OK. (If you had a LOT, this could take 2–10*
- > *minutes or more.)*
- > *– Once it is done, click OK, close Internet Explorer, re–open Internet*
- > *Explorer.*
- >
- > *Uninstall any software you no longer use or cannot remember installing*
- > *(ask if it is a multi–user PC) – but only if you are sure you do not*
- > *need it and/or you have the installation media around to reinstall if*
- > *you need to. <http://snipurl.com/8v6b> may help you accomplish this.*
- >
- > *If things are running a bit slow or you have an older system*
- > *(1.5GHz or less and 256MB RAM or less) then you may want to look into*
- > *tweaking the performance a bit by turning off some of the memory*
- > *using Windows XP "prettifications". The fastest method is:*

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- >
- > *Control Panel --> System --> Advanced tab --> Performance section,*
- > *Settings button. Then choose "adjust for best performance" and you*
- > *now have a Windows 2000/98 look which turned off many of the annoying*
- > *"prettifications" in one swift action. You can play with the last*
- > *three checkboxes to get more of an XP look without many of the*
- > *other annoyances. You could also grab and install/mess with one*
- > *(or more) of the Microsoft Powertoy's – TweakUI in particular:*
- >
- > <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.msp>
- >
- > *You should also verify that your System Restore feature is enabled and*
- > *working properly. Unfortunately, it seems to have issues on occasion,*
- > *ones that can easily be avoided by turning off/on the system restore and*
- > *make a manual restoration point as one of your periodic maintenance tasks.*
- > *This is particularly important right before installing something major*
- > *(or even minor if you are unsure what it might do to your system.)*
- > *(This, of course, will erase any previous restore point you have.)*
- >
- > *Turn off System Restore.*
- > <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=310405>
- >
- > *Reboot.*
- >
- > *Turn on System Restore.*
- > <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=310405>
- >
- > *Make a Manual Restoration Point.*
- > <http://snipurl.com/68nx>
- >
- > *Also, you should look into backing up your valuable files and folders.*
- > <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=308422>
- >
- > *And keep your original installation media (CDs, disks) safe with their*
- > *CD keys and such. Make backups of these installation media sets as*
- > *well and always use strong passwords. Good passwords are those that*
- > *meet these general rules (mileage may vary):*
- >
- > *Passwords should contain at least six characters, and the character*
- > *string should contain at least three of these four character types:*
- > *– uppercase letters*
- > *– lowercase letters*
- > *– numerals*
- > *– nonalphanumeric characters (e.g., \*, %, &, !)*
- >
- > *Passwords should not contain your name/logon name.*
- >
- >
- > *UPDATES and PATCHES*
- > -----
- >

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- > *\*\* Side Note: \*IF\* you are about to install Service Pack 2 (SP2) for*
- > *Windows XP, I suggest you clean up your system first. Uninstall any*
- > *applications you do not use. Update any that you do. Download the*
- > *latest drivers for your hardware devices. Defragment and run a full*
- > *CHKDSK on your hard drives. Scan your system and clean it of any*
- > *Spyware/Adware/Malware and for Viruses and Trojans. Below you will*
- > *find advice and links to applications that will help you do all of*
- > *this. If this advice helps you, please – pass it on. Print it,*
- > *email it, forward it to anyone you think it might help. A little*
- > *knowledge might help prevent lots of trouble.*
- >
- > *This one is the most obvious. There is no perfect product and any company*
- > *worth their salt will try to meet/exceed the needs of their customers and*
- > *fix any problems they find along the way. I am not going to say Microsoft*
- > *is the best company in the world about this but they do have an option*
- > *available for you to use to keep your machine updated and patched from*
- > *the problems and vulnerabilities (as well as product improvements in some*
- > *cases) – and it's free to you.*
- >
- > *Windows Update*
- > *<http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com/>*
- >
- > *Go there and scan your machine for updates. Always get the critical ones as*
- > *you see them. Write down the KB##### or Q##### you see when*
- > *selecting the updates and if you have trouble over the next few days,*
- > *go into your control panel (Add/Remove Programs), match up the latest*
- > *numbers you downloaded recently (since you started noticing an issue) and*
- > *uninstall them. If there was more than one (usually is), install them back*
- > *one by one – with a few hours of use in between, to see if the problem*
- > *returns. Yes – the process is not perfect (updating) and can cause trouble*
- > *like I mentioned – but as you can see, the solution isn't that bad – and is*
- > *MUCH better than the alternatives.*
- >
- > *Windows is not the only product you likely have on your PC. The*
- > *manufacturers of the other products usually have updates as well. New*
- > *versions of almost everything come out all the time – some are free, some*
- > *are pay – some you can only download if you are registered – but it is best*
- > *to check. Just go to their web pages and look under their support and*
- > *download sections. For example, for Microsoft Office update, you should*
- > *visit:*
- >
- > *Microsoft Office Updates*
- > *<http://office.microsoft.com/>*
- > *(and select "downloads")*
- >
- > *You also have hardware on your machine that requires drivers to interface*
- > *with the operating system. You have a video card that allows you to see on*
- > *your screen, a sound card that allows you to hear your PC's sound output and*
- > *so on. Visit those manufacturer web sites for the latest downloadable*
- > *drivers for your hardware/operating system. Always (IMO) get the*
- > *manufacturers hardware driver over any Microsoft offers. On the Windows*

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- > Update site I mentioned earlier, I suggest NOT getting their hardware
- > drivers – no matter how tempting. First – how do you know what hardware
- > you have in your computer? Invoice or if it is up and working now – take
- > inventory:
- >
- > Belarc Advisor
- > [http://belarc.com/free\\_download.html](http://belarc.com/free_download.html)
- >
- > Once you know what you have, what next? Go get the latest driver for your
- > hardware/OS from the manufacturer's web page. For example, let's say you
- > have an NVidia chipset video card or ATI video card, perhaps a Creative
- > Labs sound card or C-Media chipset sound card...
- >
- > NVidia Video Card Drivers
- > <http://www.nvidia.com/content/drivers/drivers.asp>
- >
- > ATI Video Card Drivers
- > <http://www.atitech.com/support/driver.html>
- >
- > Creative Labs Sound Device
- > <http://us.creative.com/support/downloads/>
- >
- > C-Media Sound Device
- > [http://www.cmedia.com.tw/e\\_download\\_01.htm](http://www.cmedia.com.tw/e_download_01.htm)
- >
- > As for Service Pack 2 (SP2) for Windows XP, Microsoft has made this
- > particular patch available in a number of ways. First, there is the
- > Windows Update web page above. Then there is a direct download site
- > and finally, you can order the FREE CD from Microsoft.
- >
- > Direct Download of Service Pack 2 (SP2) for Windows XP
- > <http://snipurl.com/8bqy>
- >
- > Order the Free Windows XP SP2 CD
- > <http://snipurl.com/8umo>
- >
- > Microsoft also have a bunch of suggestions, some similar to these,
- > on how to better protect your Windows system:
- >
- > Protect your PC
- > <http://www.microsoft.com/security/protect/>
- >
- >
- > FIREWALL
- > -----
- >
- > Let's say you are up-to-date on the OS (operating system) and you have
- > Windows XP.. You should at least turn on the built in firewall. That will
- > do a lot to "hide" you from the random bad things flying around the
- > Internet. Things like Sasser/Blaster enjoy just sitting out there in
- > Cyberspace looking for an unprotected Windows Operating System and jumping

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- > on it, doing great damage in the process and then using that Unprotected OS
- > to continue its dirty work of infecting others. If you have the Windows XP
- > FW turned on – default configuration – then they cannot see you! Think of
- > it as Internet Stealth Mode at this point. It has other advantages, like
- > actually locking the doors you didn't even (likely) know you had. Doing
- > this is simple, some helpful tips for the SP2 enabled firewall can be found
- > here:
- >
- > <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/community/columns/cableguy/cg0204.msp>
- >
- > If you read through that and look through the pages that are linked from it
- > throughout – I think you should have a firm grasp on the basics of the
- > Windows XP Firewall as it is today. One thing to note RIGHT NOW – if you
- > have AOL, you cannot use this nice firewall that came with your system.
- > Thank AOL, not Microsoft. You HAVE to configure another one.. So we
- > continue with our session on Firewalls...
- >
- > But let's say you DON'T have Windows XP – you have some other OS like
- > Windows 95, 98, 98SE, ME, NT, 2000. Well, you don't have the nifty built in
- > firewall. My suggestion – upgrade. My next suggestion – look through your
- > options. There are lots of free and pay firewalls out there for home users.
- > Yes – you will have to decide on your own which to get. Yes, you will have
- > to learn (oh no!) to use these firewalls and configure them so they don't
- > interfere with what you want to do while continuing to provide the security
- > you desire. It's just like anything else you want to protect – you have to
- > do something to protect it. Here are some suggested applications. A lot of
- > people tout "ZoneAlarm" as being the best alternative to just using the
- > Windows XP FW, but truthfully – any of these alternatives are much better
- > than the Windows XP FW at what they do – because that is ALL they do.
- >
- > ZoneAlarm (Free and up)
- > <http://snipurl.com/6ohg>
- >
- > Kerio Personal Firewall (KPF) (Free and up)
- > [http://www.kerio.com/kpf\\_download.html](http://www.kerio.com/kpf_download.html)
- >
- > Outpost Firewall from Agnitum (Free and up)
- > <http://www.agnitum.com/download/>
- >
- > Sygate Personal Firewall (Free and up)
- > [http://smb.sygate.com/buy/download\\_buy.htm](http://smb.sygate.com/buy/download_buy.htm)
- >
- > Symantec's Norton Personal Firewall (~\$25 and up)
- > <http://www.symantec.com/sabu/nis/npf/>
- >
- > BlackICE PC Protection (\$39.95 and up)
- > <http://blackice.iss.net/>
- >
- > Tiny Personal Firewall (~\$49.00 and up)
- > <http://www.tinysoftware.com/>
- >

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> *That list is not complete, but they are good firewall options, every one of  
> them. Visit the web pages, read up, ask around if you like – make a  
> decision and go with some firewall, any firewall. Also, maintain it.  
> Sometimes new holes are discovered in even the best of these products and  
> patches are released from the company to remedy this problem. However, if  
> you don't get the patches (check the manufacturer web page on occasion),  
> then you may never know you have the problem and/or are being used through  
> this weakness. Also, don't stack these things. Running more than one  
> firewall will not make you safer – it would likely (in fact) negate some  
> protection you gleamed from one or the other firewalls you run.*

>  
>

> **ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE**

> -----

>

> *That's not all. That's one facet of a secure PC, but firewalls don't do  
> everything. I saw one person posting on a newsgroup that "they had  
> never had a virus and they never run any anti-virus software." Yep – I used  
> to believe that way too – viruses were something everyone else seemed to  
> get, were they just careless? And for the average joe-user who is careful,  
> uses their one to three family computers carefully, never opening unknown  
> email attachments, always visiting the same family safe web sites, never  
> installing anything that did not come with their computer – maybe, just  
> maybe they will never witness a virus. I, however, am a Network Systems  
> Administrator. I see that AntiVirus software is an absolute necessity given  
> how most people see their computer as a toy/tool and not something  
> they should have to maintain and upkeep. After all, they were invented to  
> make life easier, right – not add another task to your day. You  
> can be as careful as you want – will the next person be as careful? Will  
> someone send you unknowingly the email that erases all the pictures of your  
> child/childhood? Possibly – why take the chance? ALWAYS RUN ANTIVIRUS  
> SOFTWARE and KEEP IT UP TO DATE! Antivirus software comes in so many  
> flavors, it's like walking into a Jelly Belly store – which one tastes like  
> what?! Well, here are a few choices for you. Some of these are free (isn't  
> that nice?) and some are not. Is one better than the other – MAYBE.*

>

> *Symantec (Norton) AntiVirus (~\$11 and up)*

> [http://www.symantec.com/nav/nav\\_9xnt/](http://www.symantec.com/nav/nav_9xnt/)

>

> *Kaspersky Anti-Virus (~\$49.95 and up)*

> <http://www.kaspersky.com/products.html>

>

> *Panda Antivirus Titanium (~\$39.95 and up)*

> <http://www.pandasoftware.com/>

> *(Free Online Scanner: <http://www.pandasoftware.com/activescan/>)*

>

> *AVG 6.0 Anti-Virus System (Free and up)*

> <http://www.grisoft.com/>

>

> *McAfee VirusScan (~\$11 and up)*

> <http://www.mcafee.com/>

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- >
- > *AntiVir (Free and up)*
- > <http://www.free-av.com/>
- >
- > *avast! 4 (Free and up)*
- > <http://www.avast.com/>
- >
- > *Trend Micro (~\$49.95 and up)*
- > <http://www.trendmicro.com/en/home/us/personal.htm>
- > *(Free Online Scanner:*
- > [http://housecall.trendmicro.com/housecall/start\\_corp.asp](http://housecall.trendmicro.com/housecall/start_corp.asp))
- >
- > *RAV AntiVirus Online Virus Scan (Free!)*
- > <http://www.ravantivirus.com/scan/>
- >
- > *Did I mention you have to not only install this software, but also keep it*
- > *updated? You do. Some of them (most) have automatic services to help you*
- > *do this – I mean, it's not your job to keep up with the half-dozen or more*
- > *new threats that come out daily, is it? Be sure to keep whichever one you*
- > *choose up to date!*
- >
- >
- > **SPYWARE/ADWARE/POPUPS/HIJACKS**
- > -----
- >
- > *So you must be thinking that the above two things got your back now – you*
- > *are covered, safe and secure in your little fox hole. Wrong! There are*
- > *more bad guys out there. There are annoyances out there you can get without*
- > *trying. Your normal web surfing, maybe a wrong click on a web page, maybe*
- > *just a momentary lack of judgment by installing some software packages*
- > *without doing the research.. And all of a sudden your screen starts filling*
- > *up with advertisements or your Internet seems much slower or your home page*
- > *won't stay what you set it and goes someplace unfamiliar to you. This is*
- > *spyware. There are a whole SLEW of software packages out there to get rid*
- > *of this crud and help prevent reinfection. Some of the products already*
- > *mentioned might even have branched out into this arena. However, there are*
- > *a few applications that seem to be the best at what they do, which is*
- > *eradicating and immunizing your system from this crap. Strangely, the best*
- > *products I have found in this category ARE generally free. That is a trend*
- > *I like. I make donations to some of them, they deserve it!*
- >
- > *Two side-notes: Never think one of these can do the whole job.*
- > *Try the first 5 before coming back and saying "That did not work!"*
- > *Also, you can always visit:*
- > <http://mvps.org/winhelp2002/unwanted.htm>
- > *For more updated information.*
- >
- > *Spybot Search and Destroy (Free!)*
- > <http://www.safer-networking.net/en/download/index.html>
- >
- > *Lavasoft AdAware (Free and up)*

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- > <http://www.lavasoft.de/support/download/>
- >
- > CWS shredder (Free!)
- > *\*\* No longer updated as of July 29, 2004 – however, still a great*
- > *product and should still be ran \*\**
- > [http://www.softbasket.com/download/s\\_8114.shtml](http://www.softbasket.com/download/s_8114.shtml)
- >
- > Hijack This! (Free)
- > <http://mjc1.com/mirror/hjt/>
- > ( Tutorial: <http://hjt.wizardsofwebsites.com/> )
- >
- > SpywareBlaster (Free!)
- > <http://www.javacoolsoftware.com/sbdownload.html>
- >
- > IE-SPYAD (Free!)
- > <https://netfiles.uiuc.edu/ehowes/www/resource.htm>
- >
- > ToolbarCop (Free!)
- > <http://www.mvps.org/sramesh2k/toolbarcop.htm>
- >
- > Bazooka Adware and Spyware Scanner (Free!)
- > <http://www.kephyr.com/spywarescanner/>
- >
- > Browser Security Tests
- > <http://www.jasons-toolbox.com/BrowserSecurity/>
- >
- > Popup Tester
- > <http://www.popupstest.com/>
- >
- > The Cleaner (49.95 and up)
- > <http://www.moosoft.com/>
- >
- > *That will clean up your machine of the spyware, given that you download and*
- > *install several of them, update them regularly and scan with them when you*
- > *update. Some (like SpywareBlaster and SpyBot Search and Destroy and*
- > *IESPYAD)*
- > *have/are immunization utilities that will help you prevent your PC from*
- > *being*
- > *infected. Use these features!*
- >
- > *Unfortunately, although that will lessen your popups on the Internet/while*
- > *you are online, it won't eliminate them. I have looked at a lot of options,*
- > *seen a lot of them used in production with people who seem to attract popups*
- > *like a plague, and I only have one suggestion that end up serving double*
- > *duty (search engine and popup stopper in one):*
- >
- > The Google Toolbar (Free!)
- > <http://toolbar.google.com/>
- >
- > *Yeah – it adds a bar to your Internet Explorer – but its a useful one. You*
- > *can search from there anytime with one of the best search engines on the*

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> planet (IMO.) And the fact it stops most popups – wow – BONUS! If you  
> don't like that suggestion, then I am just going to say you go to  
> [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and search for other options. Please notice that Windows XP  
> SP2 does help stop popups as well. Another option is to use an alternative  
> Web browser. I suggest "Mozilla Firefox", as it has some great features  
> and is very easy to use:  
>  
> Mozilla Firefox  
> <http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/>  
>  
> One more suggestion, although I will suggest this in a way later, is to  
> disable your Windows Messenger service. This service is not used frequently  
> (if at all) by the normal home user and in cooperation with a good firewall,  
> is generally unnecessary. Microsoft has instructions on how to do this for  
> Windows XP here:  
>  
> <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/using/howto/communicate/stopspam.asp>  
>  
>  
> SPAM EMAIL/JUNK MAIL  
> -----  
>  
> This one can get annoying, just like the rest. You get 50 emails in one  
> sitting and 2 of them you wanted. NICE! (Not.) What can you do? Well,  
> although there are services out there to help you, some email  
> servers/services that actually do lower your spam with features built into  
> their servers – I still like the methods that let you be the end–decision  
> maker on what is spam and what isn't. If these things worked perfectly, we  
> wouldn't need people and then there would be no spam anyway – vicious  
> circle, eh? Anyway – I have two products to suggest to you, look at them  
> and see if either of them suite your needs. Again, if they don't, Google is  
> free and available for your perusal.  
>  
> SpamBayes (Free!)  
> <http://spambayes.sourceforge.net/>  
>  
> Spamihilator (Free!)  
> <http://www.spamihilator.com/>  
>  
> As I said, those are not your only options, but are reliable ones I have  
> seen function for hundreds+ people.  
>  
>  
> DISABLE (Set to Manual) UNUSED SERVICE/STARTUP APPS  
> -----  
>  
> I might get arguments on putting this one here, but it's my spill. There are  
> lots of services on your PC that are probably turned on by default you don't  
> use. Why have them on? Check out these web pages to see what all of the  
> services you might find on your computer are and set them according to your  
> personal needs. Be CAREFUL what you set to manual, and take heed and write

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- > *down as you change things! Also, don't expect a large performance increase*
- > *or anything – especially on today's 2+ GHz machines, however – I look at*
- > *each*
- > *service you set to manual as one less service you have to worry about*
- > *someone exploiting. A year ago, I would have thought the Windows Messenger*
- > *service to be pretty safe, now I recommend (with addition of a firewall)*
- > *that most home users disable it! Yeah – this is another one you have to*
- > *work for, but your computer may speed up and/or be more secure because you*
- > *took the time. And if you document what you do as you do it, next time, it*
- > *goes MUCH faster! (or if you have to go back and re-enable things..)*
- >
- > *Task List Programs*
- > *[http://www.answerthatwork.com/Tasklist\\_pages/tasklist.htm](http://www.answerthatwork.com/Tasklist_pages/tasklist.htm)*
- >
- > *Black Viper's Service List and Opinions (XP)*
- > *<http://www.blackviper.com/WinXP/servicecfg.htm>*
- >
- > *Processes in Windows NT/2000/XP*
- > *<http://www.reger24.de/prozesse/>*
- >
- > *There are also applications that AREN'T services that startup when you start*
- > *up the computer/logon. One of the better description on how to handle these*
- > *I have found here:*
- >
- > *Startups*
- > *[http://www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup\\_content.php](http://www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup_content.php)*
- >
- >
- > *That's it. A small booklet on how to keep your computer secure, clean of*
- > *scum and more user friendly. I am SURE I missed something, almost as I am*
- > *sure you won't read all of it (anyone for that matter.) However, I also*
- > *know that someone who followed all of the advice above would also have less*
- > *problems with their PC, less problems with viruses, less problems with spam,*
- > *fewer problems with spyware and better performance than someone who didn't.*
- >
- > *Hope it helps.*
- >
- > --
- > <- Shenan ->