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by Jeff Bohr

10 THINGS TO DO WHEN YOU GET A
NEW COMPUTER OR DEVICE

Getting a new device often causes opposing emotions, joy and fear. The joy is from the excitement of getting a new and updated device, the fear is the dread of getting a new and updated device. This article will help you make the transition with an abundance of joy and very little fear.

1 Disable automatic login. If your computer or device is set so that when you turn it on or wake it up you are already signed in and ready to go, this is not secure, as anyone can access your device and its contents. If it is portable device, create a passcode or password, and do the same for your laptop and desktop computers.

2 If you have a Mac computer, enable File Vault. File Vault is an encryption method that password protects the entire computer and its contents. If it is stolen or someone attempts access, they are locked out and cannot access any files or bypass File Vault. There are several other ways to get into a Mac even if it is protected by a normal login password. File Vault offers bulletproof encryption that cannot be penetrated. If you have a Windows computer, the VeraCrypt program will protect your computer much like File Vault does.

3 Implement a backup system. If you have a computer, back up to an external drive or cloud service, devices can also be backed up to a computer or cloud service. Both iPhones and Android phones can back up to Apple's or Google's cloud service. Remember: If you don't back it up, you can't get it back!

4 Have a remote support option for your computer. On Apple computers, you can share screens remotely using iMessage, there are other programs such as TeamViewer that work on both Mac and Windows machines. Having knowledge of this can save you from having to carry your desktop computer into a shop some day.

5 Turn on automatic software updates. Since most people have several devices that often sync information such as address books and calendars, keeping the software on each device updated is key to keeping these syncing services working together. As the software updates, it improves both security and efficiency, so having it happen automatically is one less thing to worry about.

6 Start using Cloud services for documents and other files that you use. Dropbox and iCloud are two of the services that everyone has access to, and they are great for backing up files, sharing files and accessing files from any device, anywhere.

7 Use a password manager. Now more than ever, passwords are an integral part of our digital lives. The requirements for passwords are becoming more complex, and we have all been notified to change a password when a database somewhere has been hacked. Using a password management program such as 1Password or LastPass will help you secure all your passwords as well as help you create complex passwords that the program will remember for you.

8 Have an alternate web browser. It is always good to have an alternate web browser such as Google Chrome for those times you may have trouble accessing a site through Safari or Edge. Chrome also includes built-in software to view Flash websites without having to download the software from Adobe, which seems to need an update every few weeks. Flash will finally be retired in 2020.

9 Use an antivirus software program on Windows computers, and use an anti-malware program on both Windows and Mac computers. These can prevent future headaches by stopping these programs before they start causing problems.

10 For portable devices, enable Find my iPhone for Apple devices, and Android Device Manager for Android devices. Theses services can help you locate a lost device via GPS, remotely lock or even erase a device remotely. On Apple computers, you can also enable Find My Mac to locate a lost laptop easily.

Next time you are thinking about replacing a device, refer to these steps first and your concerns and fears will be replaced by the joy of having a new, gleaming device to replace the old! Always make sure to responsibly recycle your old electronics!