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**Recommended software and hardware for
speeding up computers and housekeeping**

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Disclaimer

This document lists the housekeeping software that the author currently uses to keep computers running well. It is presented here as a service to readers without warranty or guarantee of effectiveness. No liability will be accepted for any oversights, wrong instructions or results of following the instructions. However, it is presented in good faith. Any suggestions for improvements are welcome.

Hardware

- Install at least 4GB of RAM, the more the better. New computers typically have 4-32GB. Approximately $50-$100/GB depending on the age of the computer. If you have 2GB or less and upgrades are not possible physically or economically, consider investing in a new computer. Expect to spend about $2000 for a good computer. You will get what you pay for.

- Obtain an external (min 500GB) USB backup drive. Currently available from Officeworks by mail order for <$100.

Software

- Avast! Ultimate at $80 per year. Includes Avast Cleanup, Anti-Track, Premium Security and VPN, and you can get a 10 pc licence.) Or just rely on Windows Defender for anti-virus.

- My Housekeeping spreadsheet, for recording the results of sessions. Available from Rob's free software page at https://rbh49.com/software.php

- Ccleaner – free.

- Spybot – free.

- Malware Bytes'ADWCleaner – free.

- MS Malicious Software Removal Tool (MSRT) – free.

- Fortect similar to Avast Cleanup but tends to find different stuff.

- **T**he **U**ltimate **T**roubleshooter (**TUT**) – about $40. Useful diagnostic tool.

- Hitman Pro – free trial for 30 days. Only needed to remove tenacious malware.

- My backup program – free. Makes three cyclic backup COPIES of specified folders. Must be installed by me.

- Google calendar to set up reminders to run housekeeping software.

Notes

- **TUT** can be a challenge to figure out but is worth learning. It will tell you everything you always wanted to know about what is running on your computer (*but were afraid to ask*). Seriously, a very useful tool. You will end up with a lot less unnecessary baggage and a faster computer as a result. I have not included instructions for TUT because it would take too long to write. But there is a good tutorial included in it. And I am always available for tuition.

- I am happy to help with installation and setup of any or all of the above, it typically takes a few hours to work through the lot.

- Run Java update monthly unless you have it set to get updates automatically.

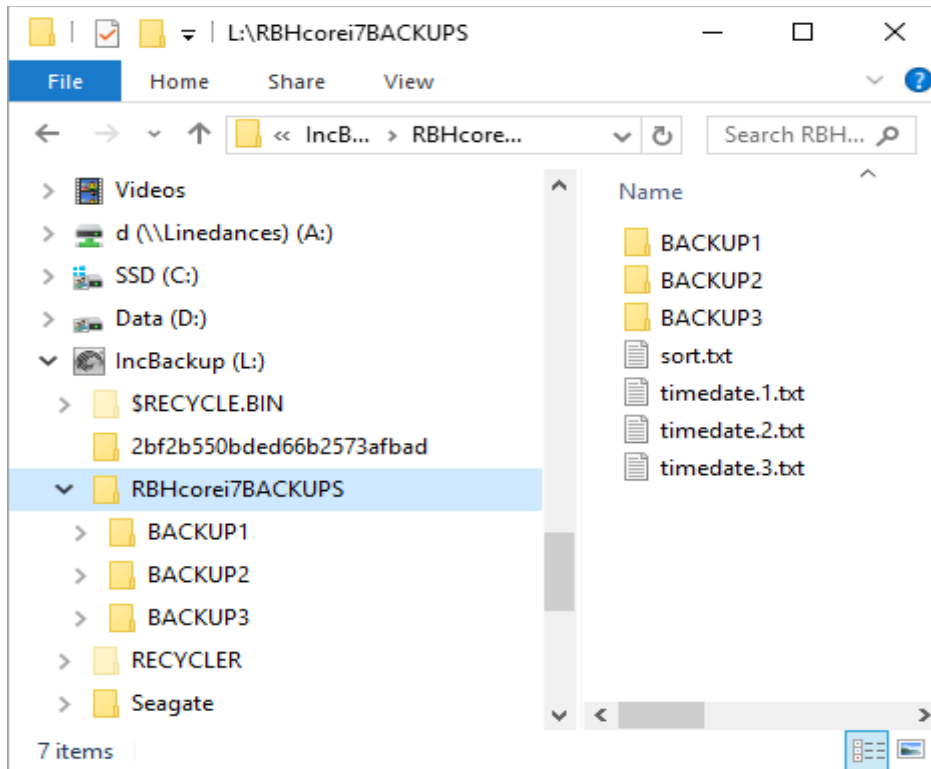- No instructions are provided for Hitman Pro. It should only be needed in case of serious infections.

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Instructions for running Incremental Backup
Run this program <u>daily</u> before turning off the computer.
Note - This program has to be set up in conjunction with your backup drive, by RBH.

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1. Click on the "Incremental Backup" icon on the desktop. The MSDOS (command prompt) screen will open and some introductory info will be shown. When you have finished reading it (optional), click any key to continue.

2. The program searches through all the drive letters A: to Z: until it finds the identifying file that is on the backup drive. This is necessary, as drive letters can vary with portable drives.

3. If the backup drive is not found, you are prompted to connect it. Click any key to exit the program, connect the backup drive and try again.

4. If the backup drive is found, the program finds out which is the oldest backup set and displays the creation times and dates of all the backup sets found (usually three), showing you which one has been selected to be overwritten.

5. Press any key to continue, or CTRL+C then Y and then ENTER to abort the backup.

6. If continued, the program will then copy any file that has changed since the backup you are overwriting was done (ie the previously backed up version is older or absent).

7. When the backup is finished, the amount of space left on the backup drive is shown in bytes.

8. If an error occurs, it may be caused by anti-virus software. An error message will appear just before the free space message. To check this, temporarily disable the anti-virus program (right click on the anti-virus icon) and run the backup again.

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Instructions for restoring files from the backup.

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1. Use Windows File Explorer to find the "*computername*BACKUPS" folder on your backup drive. See screenshot below.

2. The 3 folders BACKUP1, 2 and 3 contain backups done in cyclic order. The timedate.1, 2 and 3 txt files contain the dates and times of each backup. This can also be seen in the "modified" dates of each of these files in Windows Explorer.

3. Open the backup folder that you want and navigate to the file(s) to be restored.

4. Open a new Explorer window and drag the backed up file to the original folder on the computer. You can open a backed up file just by clicking on it to check its contents. All files are simply copied to the backup drive.

Instructions for running Java Update
Run this program __monthly__.

1. Enter "https://java.com/en/download/" into your web browser's address bar, or click on the "Java Update" icon if available. Or click the above link (holding down the CTRL key).

2. Click on "Agree and Start Free Download". Save the file when prompted.

3. In your Downloads folder, left click on the "jre ..." file. This will install the latest java version on your computer.

4. When a new version has been installed, there may be a message suggesting the removal of older versions. Proceed with that.

Instructions for running Avast! Cleanup
Run this program __weekly__.

1. Close all other running applications such as email, web browsers, word processor etc.

2. Left click on the desktop "Avast Cleanup" icon to start the program.

3. Run the "Maintenance" scan and record the results in the Housekeeping spreadsheet. Select any suppressed cleaning tasks. These have no ticks in the white squares that appear beside the tasks after the scan, usually the last two items, "Tracking and other cookies" and

"Browsing and download history".

4. Work through the other cleanup jobs, including "Speed Up" (puts idle software to sleep), "Free up space". and "Fix problems".

Instructions for running Ccleaner
Run this program <u>weekly</u>.

1. Close all other running applications such as email, web browsers, word processor etc.

2. Left click on the desktop "Ccleaner" icon to start the program.

3. (optional) Left click on the "Options" button at the LHS of the screen, then left click on "Cookies" and check that any cookies you want to keep are shown in the "Cookies to keep" column.

4. Left click on the "Check for updates" link at the bottom RHS of the screen and follow the instructions to ensure that you have the latest version of the program.

5. Left click on the "Health Check" button at the top LHS of the screen, then on "Next" to see the explanations or "Skip to start Health Check" to just run the checks.

6. Ccleaner will delete all the clutter left in temporary files etc, mainly by web browsers. When finished, it will show you how much has been deleted.

7. **MOST IMPORTANT FOR SPEEDING UP COMPUTER**. Left click on the "Registry" button at the LHS of the screen. Note that this does the same thing as "Slow PC Fighter" or other registry cleaners.

8. Left click on the "Scan for issues" button at the bottom LHS of the screen.

9. When the scan has finished, there will be a list of problems that were found in the Registry. Now the "Fix selected issues" button will be available (this was greyed out previously).

10. Left click on "Fix selected Issues" at the bottom RHS of the screen.

11. You will be asked whether to back up changes to the Registry. **ALWAYS DO THIS**. Accept the default file name and storage location.

12. When the issues have been fixed, the list will be empty and the message "No issues were found" will be shown. Exit the program.

Instructions for running Spybot S&D
Run this program <u>monthly</u>.

1. Left click on the "Spybot S&D Start Center" icon on the desktop. When the program has loaded, the "Start Center" screen will appear. "S&D" is "Search and Destroy".

2. Click on "Update". If any errors occur during this process, repeat it. You may need to do it two or three times.

3. Next, click on "Immunize". This applies "passive protection" within your web browsers. You may have to click on "Apply Immunization" to start the process. When it has finished, close the Immunization window.

4. Now click on "System Scan", then on "Start a Scan". This will start the scan for the now updated list of threats. It can take several hours to complete the scan. Just let it run, you can

minimise the window and do other things while the scan is running, including running the other anti-spyware progams.

5. When the scan is finished there will be a list of threats. Tell Spybot to fix all threats found. In rare cases this may involve rebooting the computer. Allow Spybot to run again after such a reboot if it wants to. Note that you will not be able to use the computer while the new scan is happening after a reboot. You can let this happen at a time when you don't need the computer for anything else.

Instructions for running ADW cleaner
Run this program <u>monthly</u>.

1. Left click on the "ADW cleaner" icon on the desktop. This will open a web page "MalwareBytes" and a dialogue box asking you to save the latest version of adwcleaner. Click the "save file" button in the dialogue box.

2. Open your Downloads folder and left click on the recently saved "adwcleaner" item, and run the program.

3. Follow the instructions when the program has finished. This may involve rebooting the computer. If so, be sure to save any open files INCLUDING the Housekeeping file.

Instructions for running MSERT
Run this program if required.

1. Left click on the "MSERT" icon on the desktop. Run the program.

2. If any threats are found they will be removed automatically.

Instructions for running MS malicious software removal tool
Run this program if required.

1. Go to
   http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/malicious-software-removal-tool-details.aspx

2. Uncheck optional downloads.

3. Click Continue, wait for the download to complete.

4. Open the downloaded file. This will start the tool. Follow the instructions. A full scan is recommended.

Instructions for running Fortect
Run this program <u>monthly</u>.

1. Left clickk on the "Fortect" icon on the desktop. Run the program.

2. Click on the circular icon above the centralised words "START FULL SCAN".

3. Wait for the scan to complete. The progress is shown. When finished. Click on Start Repair

4. Click Start Repair again in the new window. When finished record the results in the Housekeeping spreadsheet.