How to Speed Up a Slow Computer?

Computers can have sluggish performance due to age, too many start up programs, old system files (cache), etc. It is an annoying situation for all users regardless of the task performed with the computer. Sometimes, this sluggishness may ultimately lock up the computer requiring a restart. So, it is important to know a few ways of speeding up a computer.

1. **Perform a Disk Cleanup**
   It is important to perform a disk cleanup for potential speed improvements. By cleaning up the disk space, you can remove "junk" such as old temporary files. The disk cleanup up utility is available in the operating system (Windows) itself and therefore you do not need to look for the assistance of any third-party app. Here is how to run a disk cleanup on Windows:
   Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Cleanup.
   (In Mac OS the same feature is available as "Disk Utility")

2. **Eliminate unnecessary Autostart Programs**
   Your computer may take a considerably longer time to start up if it has many auto start programs installed. You can experience a faster start time simply by disabling some of these programs. To do this: **Simply press the "Windows Logo" key together with the "R" key** to access the run command. Next type **MSCONFIG** in the box and hit enter. Then go to the **"Startup"** tab and view the list of available startup programs. All those programs are set to run as your computer starts. You can simply uncheck the boxes in front of the **programs you do not need** and press "Apply". Then restart your computer.

3. **Disk Defragmentation**
   During the defragmentation process, the computer rearranges the files located on the mechanical hard disk to optimize the speed of the disk and occupy the contiguous disk space.
   Go to Start> Accessories> System tools and find "Disk defragmenter".
   Also, you can customize this tool to perform defragmentation automatically at a scheduled time.

4. **Clean Internet Cookies and Cache memory**
   Regularly clean your browser's cookies and internet cache memory. Go to the "**Tool**" menu of your browser (assuming it is Internet Explorer) > **Internet options** and delete temporary Internet files, cache and cookies. Different browsers offer this option under different menus.

5. **Scan for Malware, Adware, and Viruses**
   Malicious software may be running on your computer without your knowledge. Perform a full and thorough scan of your computer and remove any viruses or potentially unwanted programs.

6. **Restart Your Computer**
   Simply restarting your computer will often improve performance.

Apart from all the tips mentioned above, there are hundreds of third-party programs claiming to speed up computers. Unfortunately, some of these programs are fake and it is better to stick to the basic optimization options that come with the respective operating system other than potentially making things worse.

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