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4 part guide to avoid installing Adware and Viruses

Virus and Adware creators are trying hard to get people's money. Be it by installing viruses that monitor what is done on a computer and trying to steal information, or by installing adware that slows down the computer and tries to get money for fake antivirus or other products.

Having a quality Antivirus is not enough to completely keep viruses and Adware at bay. No Antivirus can detect EVERY virus, and some adware and viruses can circumvent Antivirus Software as soon as they are clicked on.

What it comes down to is that computer users need to be informed, and be able to decide which items should not be installed. All it takes is one mis-click, and a computer can shortly be infected, or re-infected if it was recently cleaned.



1. Know what the installed Antivirus and System Update popups look like!

Some Adware and Viruses try to mimic Antivirus software to scare users into thinking their computer is compromised so that they click on the popups. Doing this either installs a bogus Antivirus which will take Credit Card information and say it is cleaning the computer which it really is not, or will install other types of adware onto the computer.

The first thing to know is what the installed Antivirus popups look like. Most often there will be an icon in the lower right hand side by the clock that will spin or change color depending on what is going on. Popups with information about virus databases being updated may show up in that corner above the icon. Popups about potential threats will also show up there. If a popup shows up anywhere else on your screen, or in a browser window, it is most likely an attempt to install a virus or adware. The "X" or "Cancel" or "Close" button should not be clicked to close these popups. Read section 3 to learn how to close popups safely.

On the next page are some pictures of what the popups for the free version of Avast look like. If another antivirus installed, icon and popups will be different.



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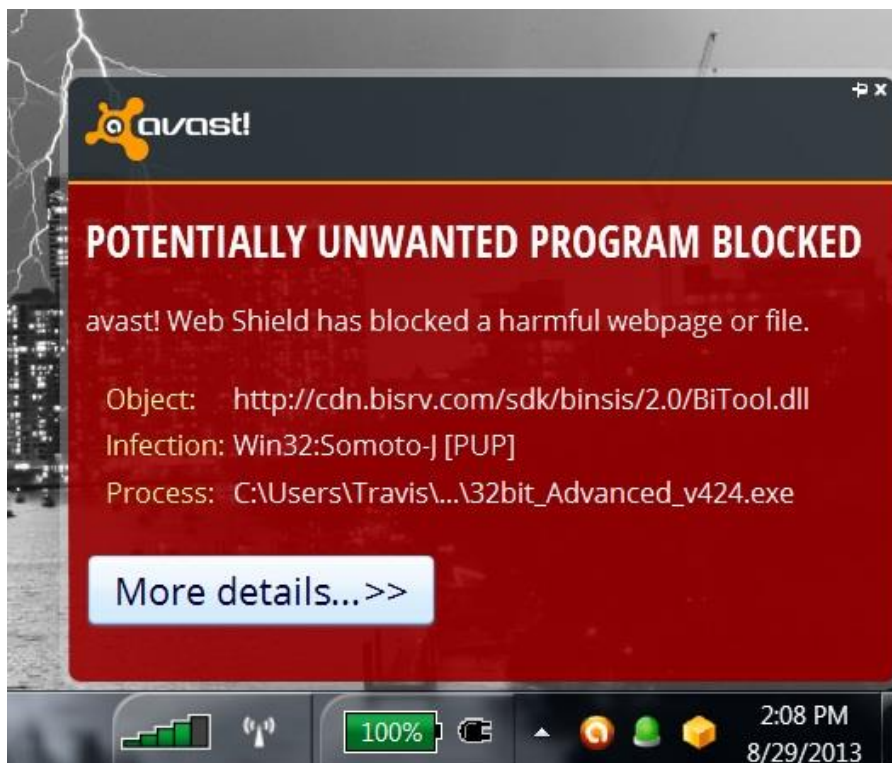
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Avast popup stating virus definitions are updated. The Avast icon is circled in red.



This is Avast's warning popup stating that there may be a Potentially Unwanted Program being installed. Click on "More details" for more information.



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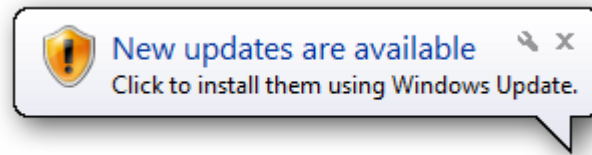
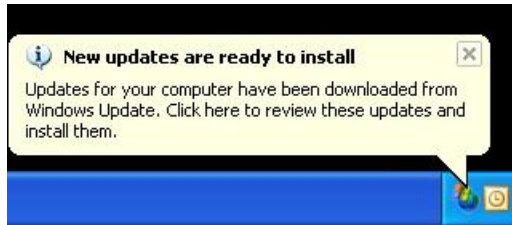
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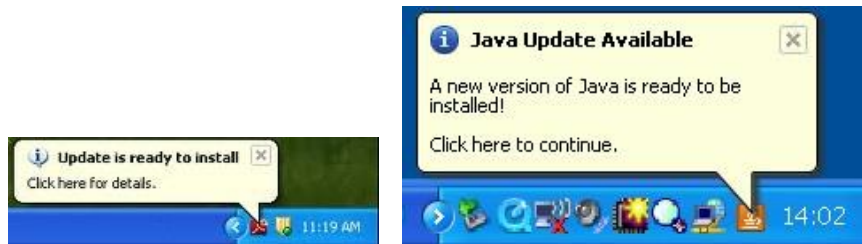
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These are examples of what system update popups will look like. They will ALWAYS show up down by your clock, and seem to come from the windows update icon. XP is on the left, Vista and 7 are on the right.



These are examples of what an Adobe and a Java update notification will look like on XP. Later versions of Windows will look similar. Notice how they are down by the clock, and are coming from the Adobe and Java Icon. Adobe and Java software should be updated to help keep your computer secure.



2. Know what popups that can cause trouble may look like.

Next is what popups that can install Adware or Viruses look like. Coders are always updating these to look more and more like legitimate antivirus software, so they are constantly changing. These popups will usually be more towards the middle of the screen so they grab a user's attention.

Most "Contests" that you "win" also install Adware or Viruses. The old saying is that there's nothing for free. That's only partially true on the internet. You won't get the item that is supposedly won, but the adware and viruses are usually free

The "X" button in the upper right hand side should not be used to close the popups. Nor should any "Cancel", "Quit", or "Close" buttons in the browser or popup windows be used to close them. Coders of these popups are getting clever and making any attempt to close the popups install adware or viruses. To safely close these popups read part 3.





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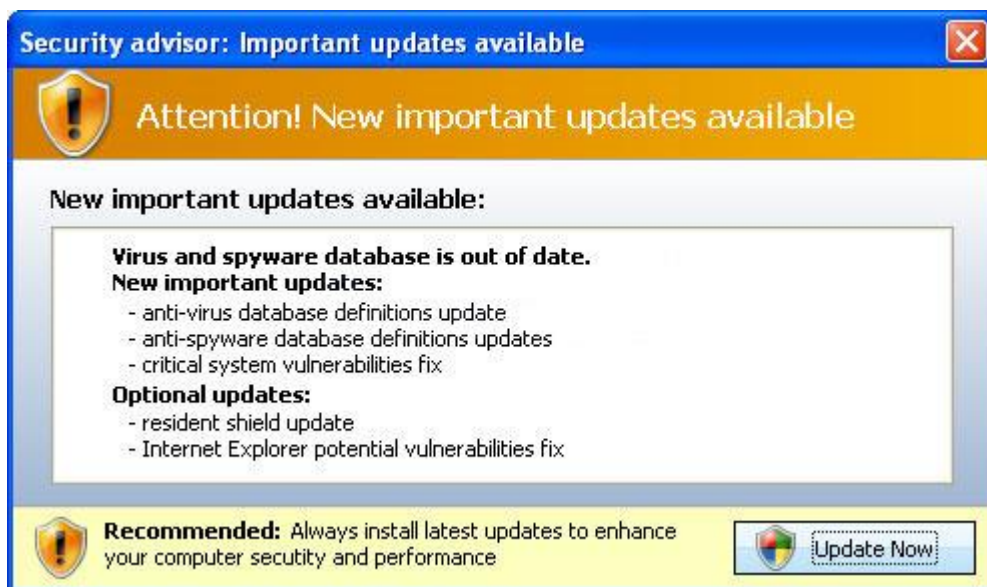
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Fake virus and system warnings; read section 1 to help learn what installed antivirus and system popups look like.



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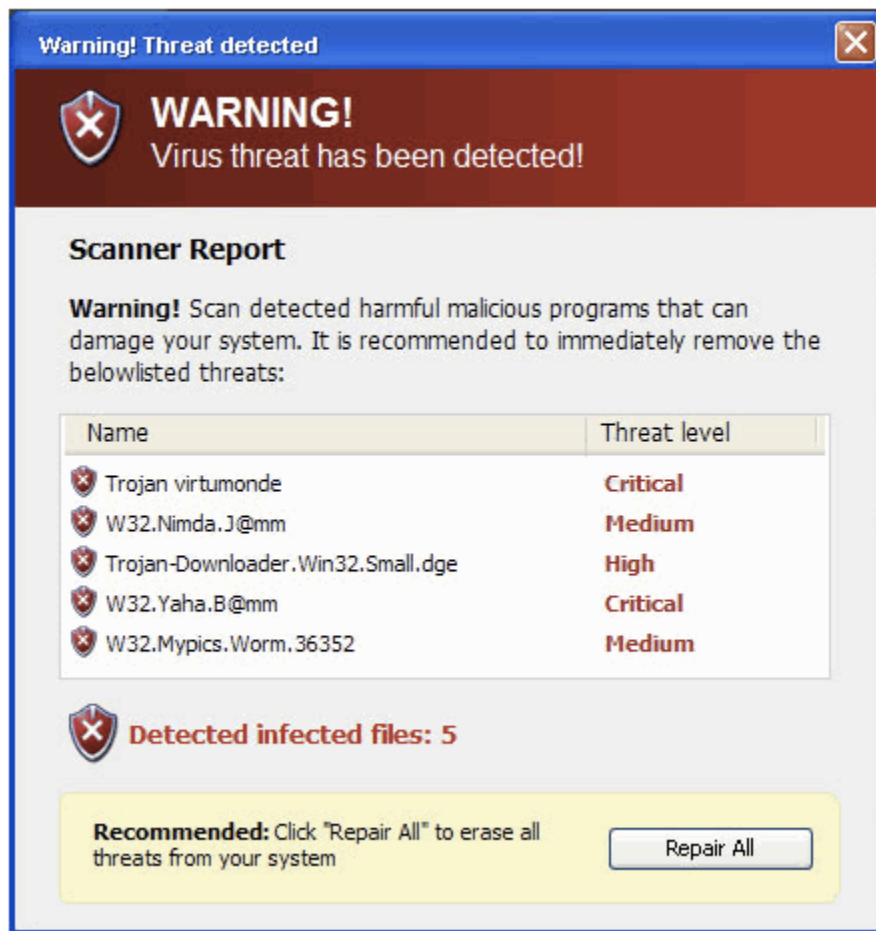
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More fake virus warnings.



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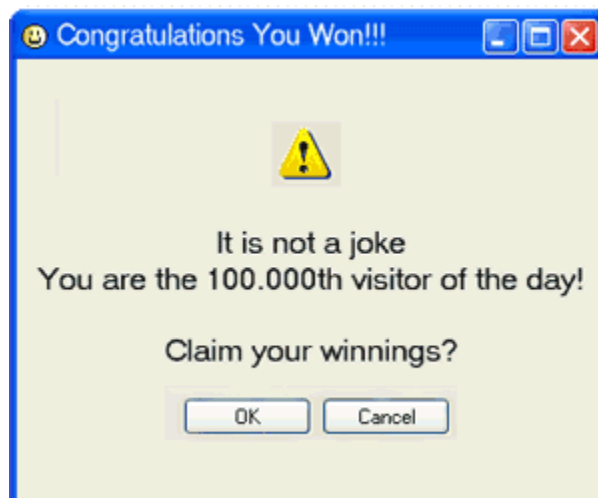
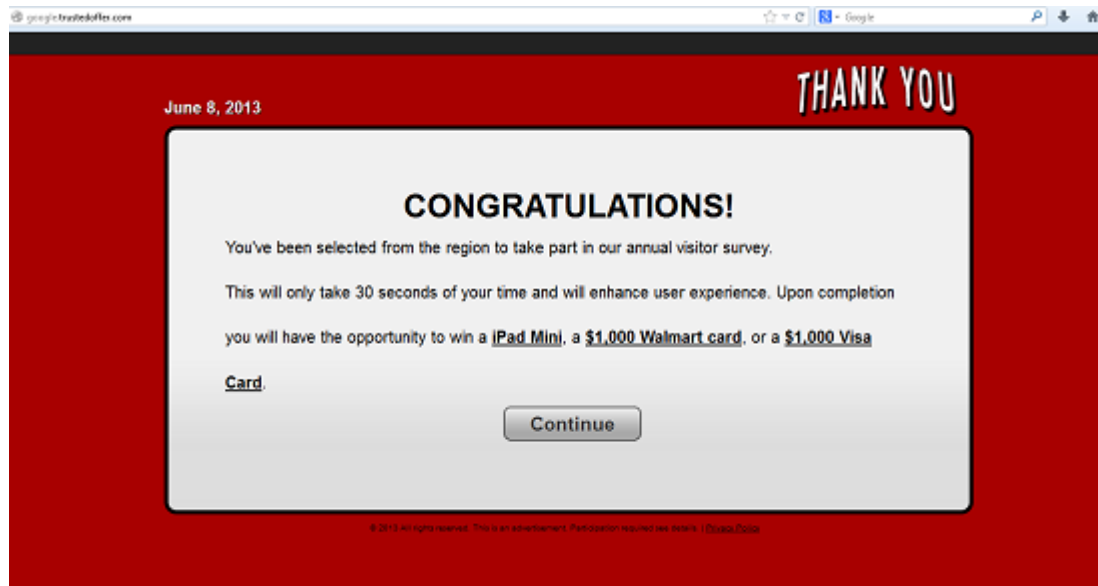
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The only thing free from clicking on these is a virus or malware.



3. How to safely close malicious popups.

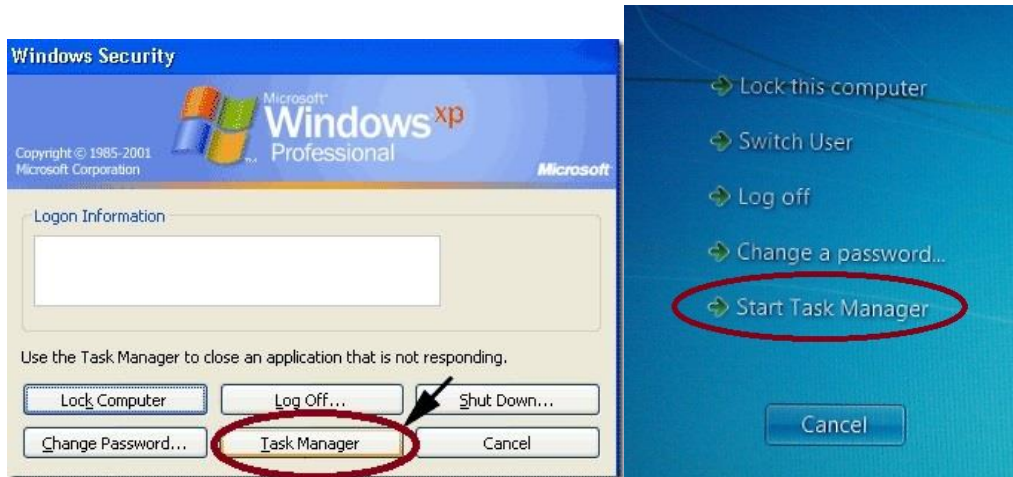
So there are some malicious popups on the screen, but hitting the “X”, “Close”, “Quit”, “Cancel”, or any other button may install a virus. So how does someone close these popups safely?

Hold down the Ctrl, Alt, and Del keys at the same time on the keyboard. This will bring up a window which will allow the opening of the “Task Manager”. After the Task Manager opens up click on the “Processes” tab and find the process for the browser that is in use. Single click on that process to highlight it, then click on “End Process” in the lower right hand side. This will close that browser.

There will often be more than one instance of the browser running. It is safest to close all the instances to prevent the popups from installing Adware or Viruses. Below are pictures which show the steps.



Hold down the Ctl, Alt, and Del keys down at the same time.



After holding Ctrl, Alt, and Del, the Windows Security window/screen will show up (XP left, Vista or 7 right). Click on the circled button to start Task Manager.



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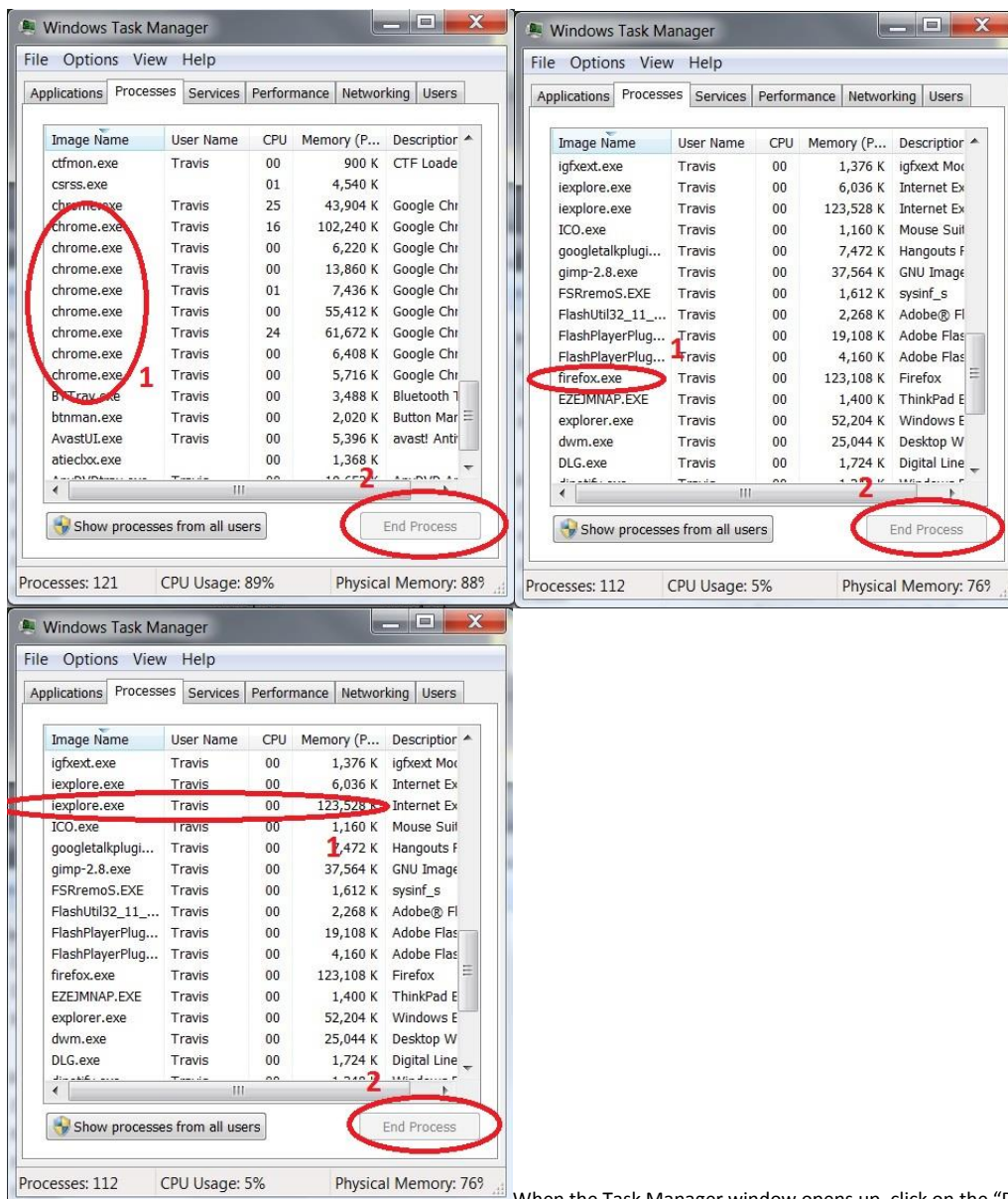
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When the Task Manager window opens up, click on the "Processes" tab. Then click on the process of the browser you are using (clicking the top of the column where it says "Image Name" will sort processes alphabetically, clicking it again will sort reverse alphabetically.) Finally click the "End Process" button to close the browser. Make all instances of the browser are closed to get rid of all the popups.

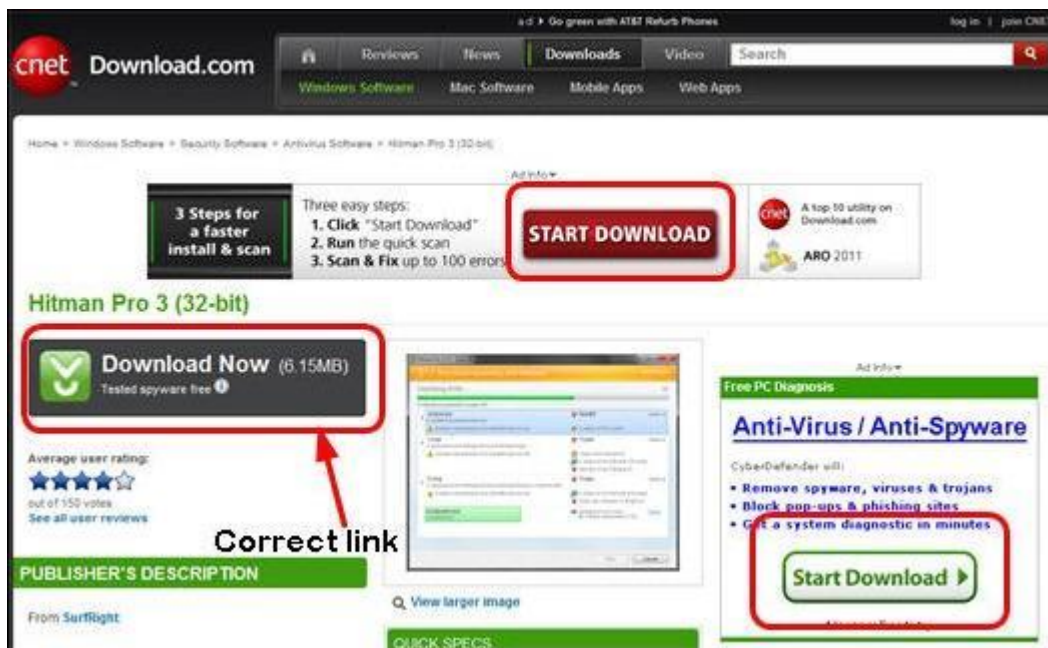


4. How to not install extra toolbars, etc. with wanted software.

Many reputable software vendors are packaging their free software with installers that try to get users to install toolbars, antivirus, and other products. They may be doing this because they want to be sure computers are running well, or they may be doing this to get some sort of monetization from people using and installing their free tools.

Also pay attention to which download button or link to click on the software's download page. Sometimes it can be difficult to select which one to click. There may also be options to bundle other software with the download, make sure those are unselected if you don't want them.

Either way, pay attention to what options are checked and what other software is being installed with the software you download. Below are images of what to keep a lookout for.



This is a download from cnet's Download.com. Some of the advertisements look like the download button of the software. Make sure that there is not an "Advertisement" link above the download button you click. Some other less reputable sites leave out the "Advertisement" notice and purposely make it confusing to find the correct download button in hopes that a pay software or virus and adware will be installed.



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This is an example of extra software being bundled with the download. If software is already installed that takes care of the tasks listed, there is no need to install another.



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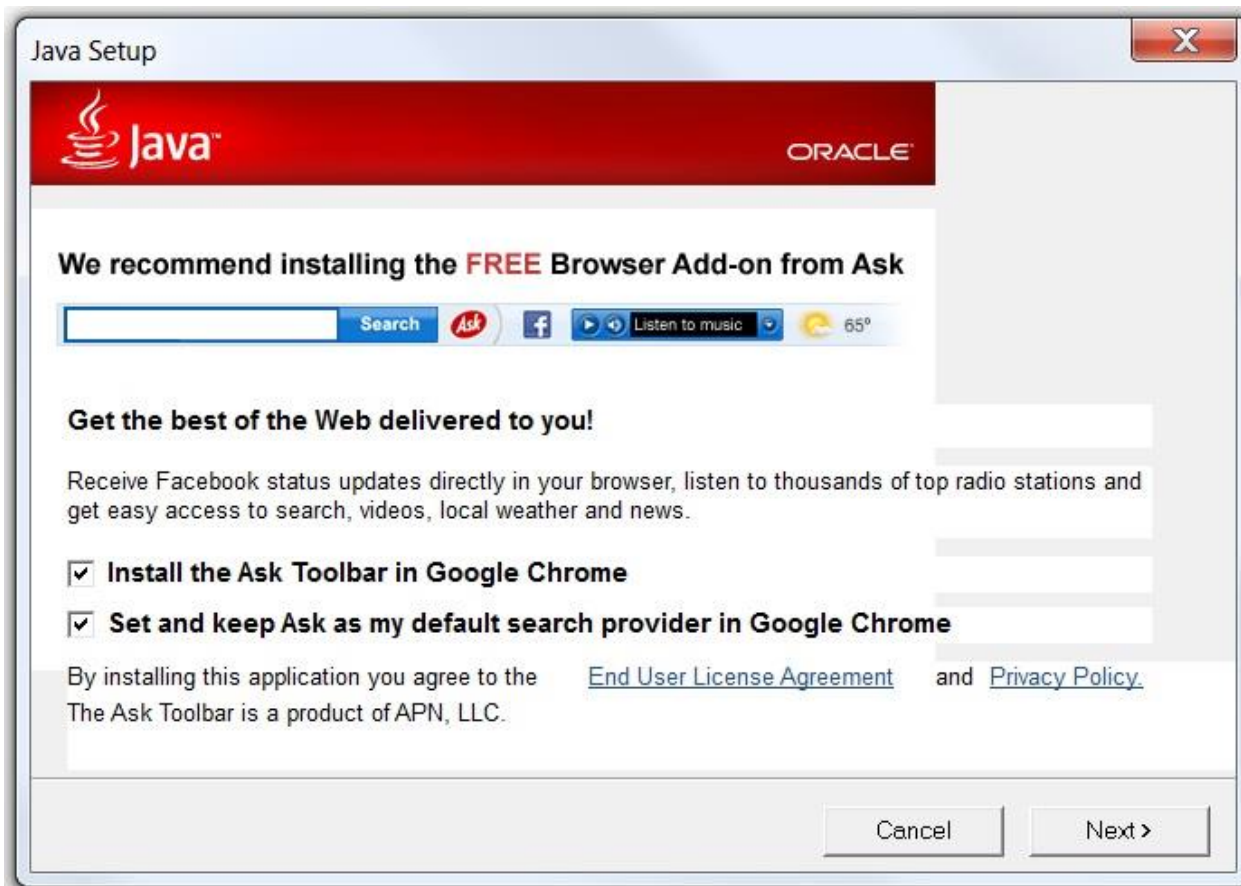
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This is an example of software that is trying to install a toolbar and also change the search provider in the browser. There can also be options to install other software. Pay attention to what is checked, and uncheck as needed.

If there are problems with a computer, contact a professional such as [Advanced Solutions In Technology](http://www.AdvancedSolutionsIT.com) to have it looked at and repaired.