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If you brought a PC (rather than notebook/netbook/laptop) in for servicing, then when plugging leads back in, almost all can only fit in one socket & only one way around! Speakers (green) & microphone (pink) could be connected incorrectly (it wouldn't damage them, but they wouldn't work), but plugs & sockets are often colour coded to help. Make sure all plugs are inserted firmly (some 'click' & some have thumb screws), but don't force any. If you've NOT just had Windows installed, you can skip ahead to paragraph 8, though you may find it informative to read the rest anyway!

- You will see at least two user accounts on the Windows login page: "Owner" - this is your normal, everyday account & "Emergency Access" (password="CornerStone") - this should only be used if the Owner account becomes infected/corrupted or it can't login. There may also be other accounts the manufacturer created. All account names can be changed via: *Control Panel, Users, select user, Change your account name*. If you create any new user accounts, programs will need to re-setup (e.g. Office, web browser, etc) & you may also want to setup data folders location: click *Start, user name*, right click (repeat procedure for each) folder, click *Properties, Location* & change the C: to (generally) D:; so files go to *Data* partition.
- If the manufacturer had included a Windows factory recovery system which was both viable & not too old, then only the software included in the recovery will be present. As programs cannot be copied, you'll need to reinstall any other software you had - for which you'll need the CD/DVD discs &/or licence numbers (most commercial software requires a licence number to install/register). If programs were downloaded from the internet, then you'll need to re-download them. If there was no viable recovery option, then you'll have a fresh installation of Windows, internal device drivers, internet security & safe web browsers (=basic). Optionally, we can also install an extensive software suite covering most people's needs (=standard) & install all Windows updates, saving you MANY hours (=deluxe - suitable for people with poor/slow internet, to save them doing the initial HUGE number of Windows updates!).

For *standard* & *deluxe* installs, your desktop icons will look like this: (NOTE: all icons are just shortcuts & also appear on the Start Menu, so can safely be deleted). If you have had our *basic* Windows installation & would later like the CornerStone software suite (below) installed, we charge £15.



MX5 browser



Opera browser



Skype



herdProtect



LibreOffice



Media Player Classic



Irfan Picture Viewer



Burning Studio



CCleaner



CornerStone Online Support

- MX5 browser
NOTE: click icon at end of address bar to select *'Retro'* for old websites or *'Ultra'* for new - default is *Ultra*, which is compatible with most sites. Maxthon has customizable 'user agent' (menu, settings, advanced), meaning it can force websites to detect it as any browser (e.g. Chrome, IE, etc). If website requests ad-blocker be disabled, update Anti-AdBlock (ABP, AdBlock Plus Options, Update now) & try again.
- Opera browser
web browser that compresses data to/from internet, meaning it's good for slow connections (e.g. TalkTalk, Sky, BT/EE, etc), or use a VPN, allowing access to websites that are blocked by region (e.g. in UK, but want to access USA streaming website), internet chat & reduced rate computer to telephone calls.
- Skype
passive anti-malware scanner using 68 engines - use to remove infections that got past active security.
- herdProtect
easy to use complete office package - compatible with Microsoft Word, Excel & PowerPoint.
- LibreOffice/WPS Office
Version depends on hardware capability - if CPU/graphics are good enough, then LibreOffice, else WPS Office.
- Media Player Classic
world's fastest & highest quality music/video player - installed with many audio/video codecs.
- Irfan Picture Viewer
fast, easy to use, picture viewer/converter/basic editor & video/music player.
- Burning Studio
CD/DVD/Blu-ray writer/ripper - use to backup files & read/write disc images or music CDs.
- CCleaner
system cleaner - removes temporary files from hard disc & redundant settings from Windows registry.
- CornerStone Online Support
remote online support at £5 per 15 minutes - saves you having to bring your computer in & allows us to remotely fix issues (providing it's not an internet connection problem!). But, either email, text or call first to arrange a time. Remember, if calling, we can't answer while serving customers, so please wait a minimum of 15 minutes before calling again.

- Additional software installed & accessible from start menu, but not displayed on desktop:
- Internet Security
Bullguard or, Qihoo or Kaspersky with ZoneAlarm (unless you (unwisely!) specified different security).
 - 7Zip
file (de)compression supporting most formats (e.g. 7z, zip, rar, cab, etc).
 - AOMEI Backupper Standard
easy to use backup for files, folders, partitions & drives (*deluxe* only).
 - Classic Shell
enhanced start menu - adds user friendly (similar to Windows 7) start menu to Windows 8 or 10.
 - CrystalDiskInfo
hard disc status - if reports "caution", make sure important files are backed up ASAP!
 - Foxit PDF
read/write Adobe PDF files - supports all formats, including 'active' documents - safe, fast & works, unlike Adobe Acrobat!
 - HWMonitor
lists battery capacity & temperatures of CPU, motherboard, graphics, hard drive & memory. If too high, clean heatsink & fan.
 - Paint.net
easy to use & feature rich picture/photo editor, supporting most picture formats (*deluxe* only).
 - Restore Point Creator
create or schedule system restore points to allow rollback in the event of corruption/infection (scheduled daily).
 - Software Update
checks known installed programs & alerts when updates are available.
 - Solitaires
a collection of 250+ patience/solitaire card games.
 - VSDC Free Video Editor
non-linear video editor with many templates & effects, supporting most video formats (*deluxe* only).
 - Microsoft runtimes
runtimes (e.g. Visual C++) & libraries required by many programs. Includes 32bit & 64bit (if applicable).

- NOTE: Java, Flash & PDF support are built-in to Maxthon & Opera browsers, so are generally NOT needing to be separately installed.
- Contrary to popular belief, Microsoft Office is not part of Microsoft Windows - although you will often see trial versions included with new computers. For *standard* & *deluxe* installs, we include an office suite called LibreOffice (the new name for OpenOffice) or, if hardware specification is low, then WPS Office. Both are FREE & compatible with Microsoft's Word (word processor), Excel (spreadsheet), PowerPoint (presentations) & LibreOffice also includes a database & drawing program. If you previously had Microsoft Office installed then you will need your licence number (& for older versions, the CD) to reinstall it. If you've lost the licence number, then you'd have to buy it again & it can be VERY expensive! Microsoft have download links on their website for various (recent) versions of Office (newer versions aren't sold on CD, you're expected to download it from the address specified on your licence card).
 - If you had requested a data backup, then your data files (i.e. contacts, documents, downloads, favourites, fonts, pictures, music & videos) will either be reintegrated, for single user backups, or stored in a folder called "My Backup", for which you should see a shortcut on the desktop. This folder will also contain any other files that can't just be 'copied back'. Alternatively, multi-user backups can have all previous users recreated & data integrated for £10 per additional user.
 - Windows AutoPlay is an easy & common way of getting infected via USB flash & external drives! For your safety, we disable this feature. Windows Vista, 7, 8 & 10 don't differentiate between different types of media (USB, CD, DVD, etc), so all are disabled (Control Panel, AutoPlay), but Windows XP does, so only removable media is disabled (TweakUI, My Computer, AutoPlay, Types). If playing a music CD/DVD video, insert disc, load Media Player Classic, click File, Open Disc, select disc. For software, insert disc, click Start menu, (My) Computer/This PC, double click disc... If that doesn't start the installation, look for setup.exe/install.exe & double click to start.
 - Windows supports very little hardware, so if you have any devices it doesn't recognize (e.g. printer, scanner, webcam, external WiFi adapter, etc), you'll need the CD containing it's device drivers & you'll need to install the software BEFORE connecting the device. If you've already connected any devices, unplug them & install the software before reconnecting them. If you've mislaid the CD or you've had a newer/different version of Windows installed (it's possible the driver CD will now be incompatible), then device drivers can be freely downloaded from the manufacturer's website (e.g. www.epson.co.uk). If you have Windows XP & are using a USB mouse & keyboard, Windows needs you to click 'Next' to support them, for which you'll need a PS/2 mouse or keyboard!
 - For email, if you use a 'web based' service (e.g. Yahoo, Outlook (the new name for Hotmail), Gmail, etc) then it's not stored on your computer so you just go to their website via an internet browser (after (re)connecting to internet (see below)) & sign-in to access your email & contacts as before. If you use 'client based' email (e.g. Microsoft Outlook, Thunderbird, Incredimail, etc) you will need to reinstall the email program, re-enter your email account details (e.g. email address, password, inbound/outbound mail servers, etc) & then import the email & contacts from the backup folder. Most internet providers include help on their website on how to do this. If you have had a newer or older version of Windows installed to that which you previously had, then it may not be possible to simply import the email into that version of Windows! In such cases, using Mozilla's 'Thunderbird' (mozilla.org/en-GB/thunderbird) is recommended as it's more compatible & secure than others & can import email (use ImportExportTool plugin) from lots of different email programs.
 - If you have a router for your internet connection & it was already setup & previously in use, do NOT install ANY software from your internet provider - nothing more is required to reconnect to the internet. If you use a network cable from the router, just plug it into the LAN port on your computer & you're connected! If you use a built-in wireless connection, click the connection icon by the clock & it will display available, in-range networks... select yours from the list, enter your wireless password (either the password entered when router was setup or whatever was assigned by the internet provider - often either printed on a sticker on the router or supplied on a card) when prompted & you're connected. The only time software is required is if you use an external device (e.g. modem or plug-in wireless adapter) & Windows needs the device drivers to recognize it. Until connection is (re)established, you CANNOT browse internet, check email, search/access/download/update ANYTHING from the internet!



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9. For internet security we recommend either Bullguard or, Qihoo or Kaspersky with ZoneAlarm firewall. In our experience, these are easily the best security programs available offering significantly better protection than Norton, McAfee, AVG, Avast, Avira, F-Secure, Panda, TrendMicro, Microsoft, etc. If we installed Bullguard security, it will be the full version of the program on a 60 day trial subscription, unless you supplied us with existing account details (Bullguard registration requires an email address & password- if these weren't supplied then we'll make up a 'dummy' email & the password will be "password"(!) - these are easily changeable from within Bullguard). Whichever has been installed, it will have been setup & updated to the current version & latest definitions. We sell 1xPC Bullguard licences for only £17.99 & 3xPCs for £20.50 & Qihoo, Kaspersky & ZoneAlarm are free! Qihoo reports how long Windows took to boot, this is a useful indication of a problem if the time is increasing! Qihoo also shows sponsored links for 3rd party programs (this can be disabled in premium version) - as a general rule, ignore all (just click [x] to close box)! NOTE: more than one active anti-virus will heavily slow down computer, so if using Qihoo or Kaspersky with ZoneAlarm, do NOT active ZoneAlarm's anti-virus (which is actually the same as Kaspersky's!).
10. When computer connects to a new network, the firewall might prompt you to confirm location type (trusted/home/work/public), but if not, you may need to change firewall settings else it could block access to secure websites (e.g. banking, shopping, email, etc) or limit device sharing (e.g. printers, files, etc). In ZoneAlarm: View Firewall Details, View Zones, change any trusted Public connection to Trusted (double click, select Trusted).
11. Although Bullguard & Qihoo automatically upgrade when new versions are released, Kaspersky & ZoneAlarm require manual upgrades (check monthly). For ZoneAlarm, right click icon (by clock) & select *update now* (leave it too long & you'd need to manually download & install the new version!). For Kaspersky, check their website (or softpedia.com) to see if there's a new version & then manually download & install over top current version.
12. If using a sandbox (e.g. Qihoo can isolate programs from the main Windows installation allowing potentially unsafe programs to still be run without harming the rest of Windows) & it prompts for an unknown program, select *Run* for programs you know to be safe, else *Run in Sandbox* if you're unsure.
13. For wireless security on your router, make sure you're using WPA2 encryption (check router's manual for how to access settings). WEP (slow) & WPS are both easily 'crackable' & WPA1 isn't encrypted at all! Additionally, always change the default router name & password as there's software available to display default passwords based on router name. If someone (nearby) can access your router & they use your internet YOU could be faced with a large usage bill if they take you over your limit. It's illegal (fines & prison) & you should report such activity to the police! Most modern routers would already be set to WPA2, but if yours isn't, although it isn't required you change settings, obviously, it's highly recommended!
14. We recommend two internet web browsers: Maxthon (fast & safe) & Opera (can speed up browsing on slow internet connections) - whilst you may use whatever browser you wish, try not to use Microsoft's Internet Explorer - it's slow, incompatible with many websites & can be VERY unsafe (we rename the shortcut to remind you). Microsoft themselves say, after 20 years of trying, they cannot make it safe! It was responsible for attacks on Google, Adobe, the Australian government & many other major corporate organizations! Every day, we see Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox (even slower than IE!) infected - all are slow, unsafe, incompatible & have very few features. In addition, internet security will NOT protect you from web browser infections (use AdwCleaner (toolslib.net) to check/remove browser infections)! Whichever browser you use, it is highly recommended to use it's online synchronization feature (included in most modern browsers) to save your favourites/bookmarks/settings/passwords/etc online. This allows access between different computers & ensures you won't lose them when hard drive fails!
15. If we've installed graphic device drivers & you have a separate monitor (i.e. not built-in), since we're not going to know it's size & capabilities, we set the screen resolution to 1024x768 & the refresh rate to 60Hz as most modern monitors can cope with these values. This will look awful(!) if your monitor can support better, so you should change (right click on desktop, select screen resolution/graphics properties) the resolution to whatever you find comfortable (with a flat screen, this MUST be it's maximum else the image is very 'fuzzy') & refresh rate to as high as it will go. When changing monitor settings, click "Apply" to test & "Ok" if readable. If settings are incompatible, wait 15 seconds & Windows reverts to the previous settings. If you also change font size (e.g. 125% or 150%), many programs will look 'fuzzy' due to not supporting high DPI screens - this could be addressed in a later version of that program.
16. Every month there are updates to Windows to address security issues & even when the latest version is installed, it will still have many updates available that should be downloaded & installed straight away. This can take MANY hours, depending on computer & internet speed & number of updates available. Whilst updates are being deployed, computer will be so slow as to be practically unusable, so it's important they are done ASAP. Since almost all updates are security fixes, not doing them makes Windows unsafe allowing infections & attacks that can bypass internet security!! If the Windows installation is not at the current service pack (XP=SP3 (unofficial SP4 available), Vista=SP2, 7=SP1 (Convenience Rollup (SP2) available), 8=8.1 Update, 10=Creators (1703)) then it may need to be downloaded from Microsoft's website (www.microsoft.co.uk) & manually installed first (i.e. Windows Update may not do it for you). After installing updates, check again until no more are listed. For Windows XP & 7, there will be a shortcut on the desktop containing the latest security rollups & service pack & these should be installed BEFORE connecting computer to internet & after installing, can safely be deleted. If you disable Windows 7 updates (Control Panel, Windows Update, Change settings) before installing & then re-enable afterwards, they'll install quicker! Whilst it's not compulsory you install these updates, not doing so will result in Windows constantly running VERY slow & the automatic updates will take DAYS to complete, so it's highly recommended!!
17. Whilst it's important to keep Windows up-to-date, it's equally important to keep your internet security up-to-date (for obvious reasons) & also ALL other installed software! Any program can have a security vulnerability that would allow an attacker to gain 'backdoor' access to your computer & as the term suggests, your internet security may not be able to prevent it! Software updates are CRITICALLY important to help prevent infections as, for many years, this has been the primary method of attack. However, VERY few programs auto-update & most won't even alert you when new versions are available! Realistically, this means manually checking programs & their websites, at least monthly, to see if updates are available! A software update checker (we install Glary Software Update) can help. After updating programs, you should re-check their setup/options to see if features have been added or changed & need (re)configuration.
18. Google themselves say they are NOT a search engine(!) - they haven't been one for many years - they are a content provider, displaying mostly sponsored links. You'll often see the "did you mean..." message. However, virus writers & scammers pay Google for links to malicious websites, so check the link looks genuine before clicking it. Yahoo & Bing find substantially more applicable hits & are far safer.
19. Most of the computers we see with virus, spyware or malware infections got infected via Facebook, Google or email! Due to their popularity, they are specifically targeted by virus writers & scammers. To reduce the chances of getting infected, follow one simple rule: if something doesn't look right, or it just seems suspicious, then it most likely isn't safe, so don't click on it!
20. The world's greatest internet threat is the rise of ransomware infections - these encrypt all your data files & then demand £100's payment within a short time to decrypt them else they are permanently lost! They are mostly distributed by email & malicious websites (accessed by Google or malvertising (fake adverts)). ALWAYS backup important files & make sure Windows & ALL installed software is kept up-to-date.
21. Before downloading ANY software, check the link on the browser status bar matches a 'likely' address. When installing, select custom/options/advanced/etc to exclude unwanted settings or other included software. These are common methods for how adware/malware gets installed.
22. We get a lot of customers telling us they've had callers, often saying they're from Microsoft or BT, claiming to have detected infections or problems on their computer & asking to allow access - which they use to upload programs or infections to support their claims - it's a scam that often costs £100's! Just say you don't have a computer! If you've already been a victim of this scam, contact the police & report it to your bank - you've been robbed!
23. Any important files (e.g. documents, pictures, music, videos, etc) should be 'backed up' each time they change - if you work on your computer weekly, then you backup weekly, if you work daily, then you backup daily! ALL hard disc drives fail - no exceptions - & infections/attacks can corrupt files! Make copies on external hard disc, USB flash drives or online storage, but, ideally, not CD/DVD discs (short life span & unreliable).
24. Dust gets into computers & clogs up fans & air vents causing components to overheat & if temperatures get too high, they'll burn out! This can often be a costly repair, sometimes more than computer is worth! Check regularly for dust build up & clean when necessary. Thermal paste (between chip & heatsink) should be replaced if dried out. If portable computers have air vents on base or contain mechanical (rather than solid state) hard disc drive, they MUST be used on flat & steady surfaces to limit overheating & drive damage (movement, while powered, causes heads to hit disc surface, damaging disc!). Additionally, a Windows product key sticker (generally stuck on base of computer for XP/Vista/7) can easily wear off, which would be required to reinstall Windows if there's no recovery option & these cost over £80 to replace! Since batteries are for portable use, after charging, remove when mains powered (switch off first!) else computer will actually be reducing battery capacity! Top up battery every few months to keep it 'alive'.

There are several useful websites we recommend: www.softpedia.com huge library of free & trial software with reviews of every program
www.sourceforge.net biggest library of open source software
www.gametop.com high quality free arcade & puzzle games
www.websiteproxy.co.uk allows access to commonly blocked websites (e.g. torrent & streaming)

Our 'Hints & Tips' guide contains a list of common 'good & bad' software & a comprehensive list of 'how to' procedures... get it, together with price guides & servicing details via our website: www.CornerStone.me.uk

Thank you for using CornerStone Computer Centre. This document gets updated frequently - the latest version is available via our website.

Opening hours: Monday-Saturday:0800-1800, Sunday & Bank Holidays:0800-1400

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