



Directory | Offices A-Z | UT Maps | Calendars | UT Direct | UT Mobile | Search | Site Map

Quick Links

[ITRC Home](#)
[Search ITRC](#)

Tips for Preventing Spam

The University will take whatever measures we can to prevent spam within the limits of the law; however, we do not have the technical capability of preventing all spam from reaching you. So, while spam is an unavoidable part of having an e-mail account, there are ways to reduce the amount you receive. The following best practices will help you manage unwanted e-mail.

- Use **rules and filters** to screen unwanted mail.
- Learn how to **view complete headers in spam messages** to make filters and rules more effective and to enable ITS Help Desk staff to better assist you.

• Avoid the "unsubscribe" feature included in spam messages. Most spam includes instructions on how to "remove yourself from the list." More often than not, these removal instructions do not work. Instead, when you click on the link to unsubscribe you are verifying that you have a valid e-mail address and spammers will then permanently add you to their list or sell your address to others.

• Do not reply to the spam message. This also lets spammers know they have found a valid e-mail address.

• Install anti-virus software and update it often. Current students, faculty and staff can download anti-virus software from the **BevoWare** site.

• Consider where you share your personal information online. Spammers harvest e-mail addresses from Web pages and USENET news groups. Any address posted to a Web page or used in online forums will almost certainly be used by spammers.

Be wary of filling in address, phone number or e-mail information on non-secure sites. Some users create "junk" e-mail accounts with a free service to use on Web forms so their real e-mail address doesn't receive large amounts of spam.

Also, don't share any information on a site that is not secure. A secure site will start with "https" and will display a locked padlock in the status bar at the bottom of the browser window. (Please note: In Microsoft Internet Explorer, the status bar may be hidden. To view the status bar, go to the **View** menu and select **Status Bar**.) Below are some samples of how the locked padlock should look in different browsers.



Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 for Windows



Connection to utdirect.utexas.edu is secure (RC4-128)
 Microsoft Internet Explorer for Mac OS X



Netscape 7 for Windows



Safari (Mac OS X)

• Some spammers use graphics files in their HTML messages to discover if an account is active. When you read the message, the e-mail client downloads the graphic, alerting the spammer. To avoid this, deselect the option to automatically download HTML graphics. In Eudora, this option is found under the **Tools** menu in **Options** in the **Display** category. Uncheck the **Automatically download HTML graphics** checkbox.

[Introduction](#)
[Preventing Spam](#)
[Viewing Full Headers](#)
[Using Filters and Rules](#)
[Reporting Spam](#)
[UT Spam Policy](#)
[Spam Filtering](#)

For assistance:

ITS Help Desk
 475-9400

Resources:

[Index A-Z](#)
[System Status](#)
[IT News](#)
[IT Jobs](#)
[About ITRC](#)

ITRC topics:

[E-mail & Accounts](#)
[Internet & Web](#)
[Help, Support & Training](#)
[Network Connections](#)
[Labs & Facilities](#)
[Security & Policies](#)
[Systems & Software](#)
[Voice & Video](#)
[Organizations](#)

- **Report** the problem to the spammer's provider and, if it violates **ITS policies**, the ITS Information Security Office (ISO).

- Contact the University's **ITS Help Desk** for additional help.

- Always abide by the **University's Responsible Use Policy**. Specifically, you must not:
 - Threaten violence or vandalism against the site or user that sent you spam.
 - *Hack into the site.*
 - Mail-bomb, ping-storm, SYN-flood or otherwise attack the site or user.

Last updated April 7, 2004.

Copyright © 2001-06, Information Technology Services at The University of Texas at Austin.

All rights reserved. For privacy concerns read our privacy policy.

Comments to ITS at UT Austin