

If It Ain't Broke...

I've always believed in the old saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." And when it comes to Windows updates I've never been a firm believer in installing updates unless there is something wrong. Why mess up a good Windows installation by "updating it till it's broke?" In the past most Windows updates were simply performance or application improvements. Occasionally they might fix some glitch with your network or with the way Windows starts up or shuts down, but for the most part, most were really not necessary and only tended to make your Windows installation bigger and slower.

However, with the discovery of so many Windows security flaws in the last year it is almost essential for you to let Windows install any updates it thinks are necessary. Some of these security flaws will allow hackers to snoop around in your computer whether you've got an antivirus or not. Most reputable computer manufacturers will install the most critical security updates on your computer at the factory, but it is up to you to keep your computer updated. If your brother-in-law or the kid down the street built your computer, then chances are it has none of these updates on it and you need to get them on there ASAP.

So how does one update their Windows? In most cases you can click on the START button and go up and click on Windows Update. If that item is not there then simply open up your Internet Explorer, click on Tools and then click on Windows Update. Follow the on-screen instructions and answer yes to any message asking if you want to install any software from Microsoft. Be careful though, if you are on a dial-up connection, this could take several hours the first time you run this. Even on broadband it may take quite a while. After this is done, you should check for updates at least once a month and make sure you have a current anti-virus like Norton or McAfee installed.