

# Malware & Viruses

**Malware =  
Malicious Software**

Malware could be as simple as a virus sneakily wrapped in an email. But it could be as complex as stealing your personal files and demanding payment to get them back.

## Who's to blame?



### Cyber criminals

Either stealing information, hijacking computers to send spam or use it for other dodgy purposes.



### Pranksters

Just creating problems for the thrill of it.



### Activists

These want to damage an organisation's operations or image because they disagree with their practices.



### Hobbyists

People with no actual objective other than to see if they can build and spread malware.



### Foreign governments

They can use their malware to spy on other countries, or to create disruptions within a targeted country.

## The Different Types

### Malware

Malware arrives in a 'phishing email' - which encourages you to open attachments or download files. The attacker can then take control of your computer.

### Virus

Malware that copies itself and spreads to other computers. They attach themselves to various programs and execute code when a user launches an infected program.

### Trojan/ trojan horse

Disguises itself as a normal file or program to trick users into downloading and installing malware.

### Ransomware

Ransomware encrypts your files so they're unreadable to you. It then demands a payment to purchase a decryption key to change them back.

### Botnets

A robot network. Cybercriminals use viruses to breach the security of several users' computers, compromise each computer, and organise them all into a network of 'bots', which they can remotely control.