
 Information Services
and Technology



Computing at MIT: Basics

Phyllis Galt and Stuart Peloquin
Information Services and Technology
August 2007

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Key take-aways:

- Utilizing the MIT residential network
 - Responsible network behavior
- Safe Computing Practices
 - Protecting your computer and yourself while online
- Where to go for help
 - Computing resources offered by IS&T

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services
and Technology

The MIT residential network

- One MIT network port per pillow
- Wireless
 - Each dorm has 802.11b/g wireless - network name "MIT"
 - Some dorms have 802.11a connectivity available
- DHCP
 - Plug-in, register and go
 - Should be no need for extra configuration
- Open connection to the internet
 - There is no firewall on the MIT network

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services
and Technology

The MIT network and you, cont.

- Connectivity shared with nearby residents
 - Usually shared by residents on multiple floors
- Shared mediums (wired and wireless) are prone to saturation and congestion when abused
 - Sharing, serving or streaming files to or from your computer can severely impact the connectivity of those around you.
 - Most of the time, slow or loss of connectivity is a result of high bandwidth usage from a nearby resident.



Your MIT identity

- Kerberos Account
 - Also known as: MIT email account, kerberos principal, kerberos identity, email username, etc...
- MIT personal web certificates
 - <http://web.mit.edu/certificates>
 - Key to accessing supported software and many online resources
- Strong Passwords
 - Unique, multiple character types, change often





Computer security

- IT Security Support: Learn how to protect your system
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/topics/security>
- Patch your operating system
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/topics/security/patch.html>
- Backing up data
 - CDs, DVDs, External Hard Drives, USB keys, Athena Account, TSM, etc...
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/topics/security/backup.html>
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/topics/backup>





Antivirus and Firewalls

- Antivirus Software
 - MIT provides VirusScan for Windows, Mac OS X and Linux
 - <http://web.mit.edu/software>
- Most OS's have a built-in firewall
 - Should stay running at all times
 - Protect your computer from some unsolicited network connections
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/topics/security/firewall.html>

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Control Access to your Computer

- Require a password to log on and to turn off the screen saver
- Protect your MIT certificates with a password
 - Contact the MIT computing helpdesk or your RCC
- Physically lock your laptop
- Do not leave items unattended or in an unlocked room

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Secure Connections

- Use SSH, SCP, Secure FX (Windows), Fetch (OS X)
 - Required for IS&T supported Athena servers
- MIT offers Cisco VPN client software
 - Virtual Private Network
 - Encrypts traffic between your computer and a server on the MIT campus
- Use Secure websites
 - Look for the lock icon in your web browser or <https://>

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology


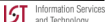
Identity theft

- Avoid phishing websites
 - Do not click links in email to get to your personal account information
 - Go directly to their known web page or call a publicly listed phone number
- Free Credit Report
 - <http://www.annualcreditreport.com>
 - Check your credit with each the three major creditors once per year

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



SPAM

- You will get SPAM in your MIT email account
- Use the MIT Spamscreen service:
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/services/email/nospam/>
- Update your allow/deny list
 - These lists can be use to flag email messages regardless of their “Spam Score”
- Internal SPAM
 - Use **MIT mail lists appropriately**

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



DMCA: Digital Millennium Copyright Act

- Respect intellectual property
- Engaging in unauthorized file sharing of copyrighted media (movies, music, games, software, etc...):
 - Is against the law
 - Can lead to notifications from the copyright holder
 - Multiple notifications can lead to disciplinary proceedings
 - Can lead to legal action from the copyright owners
 - May result in you losing your network connectivity

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Guidelines

- MIT Policies for IT use: <http://web.mit.edu/ist/topics/policies>
 - No extended networks: No hubs, routers, switches
- MIT network is shared
 - Use bandwidth responsibly
- Be careful with peer to peer applications
 - They use **A LOT** of bandwidth
 - Can cause network problems for nearby residents
 - Can open your computer to a possible data compromise
 - Copyright infringement is against the law

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Where to get help

- Networking in residence halls
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/helpdesk/rcc>, 8-9444
- Athena Consulting
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/helpdesk/athena>, 3-4435
- Computing Help Desk
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/helpdesk>, 3-1101

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Networking in the Residence halls

- <http://web.mit.edu/ist/helpdesk/rcc>
- Consultants available for each residence
- Submit help requests to the Residential Computing Consultants
 - <http://rcc.mit.edu> or x8-9444
- Support and advice for connecting to network, computers and other peripherals
- Typical response time is within 24 hours

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Help Desk Services

- <http://web.mit.edu/ist/helpdesk>
- Call Center
- Walk-in Service
- Computer Buying Advice
- Hardware and Software Services

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Help Desk: Call Center

- Hours of operation:
 - Mon-Fri, 8am - 6pm (Tuesdays 5pm)
- Contact us via phone, email or web
- Technical assistance for IS&T supported products and services
- Computer buying advice
- Refer clients to other sources of help

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Help Desk: In-Person Consultation

- Walk-in Hours (N42):
 - Mon-Fri, 9:15am - 5pm
- By appointment (one per hour) or walk in
- Computer buying advice
- 15-minute problem assessment at no charge
- If not resolved, you may choose to leave your machine for repair

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Help Desk: Computer Buying Advice

- MIT vendor partners: Apple, Dell, IBM/Lenovo
- Recommended desktop/laptop configurations that meet MIT computing requirements
- Purchase online
 - <http://web.mit.edu/ist/services/hardware/presales.html>

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology



Help Desk: Repairs

- Hardware service contracts for Apple, Dell, IBM/Lenovo
- Hardware upgrades
- OS and Software installation and upgrades
- Backup and restore
- Troubleshoot and remove virus, spyware, and adware
- Software repairs are fee based (\$60/hr)

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology

PC Repair recommends

- Back up your data frequently
- Keep your computer up to date with software and security patches
- Make sure you have anti-virus software installed and running:
MIT provides VirusScan to all MIT affiliates at no charge

 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  Information Services and Technology
