

## GIVE YOUR GUESTS THE GUEST ACCOUNT

### **Can a person get to my personal stuff while using my computer to check his or her e-mail?**

When people borrow your computer to check e-mail, they can browse through all your files and folders. They can browse your desktop search results. They can go places online you would never go. They can change your settings, or download garbage or worse.

There are a couple of ways that you can handle this. Let's start with setting up a password-protected screen saver. It's a simple way to have the computer, not you, deny access. Following are the instructions for Windows XP:

1. Press the Windows key (next to Ctrl) and the letter D. That will close all windows and leave you at the desktop. Right-click an empty area of the desktop. Select Properties and then, the Screen Saver tab. Under Screen Saver, click the down arrow and select any entry other than (None). Use the Wait box to decide how long the computer must be idle before the screen saver runs. You don't want it coming on every time you pause in a document! Place a checkmark next to "On resume, password protect" (XP Professional) or "On resume, display Welcome screen" (XP Home). Click Apply>>OK.
2. When people move the mouse or touch the keyboard, they'll be prompted for a password. So you must have one to make this work. If you don't have one, click Start>>Control Panel. Double-click User Accounts. Click your account. Click "Create a password." Enter the password twice. Click Create Password.

All versions of Windows offer a password-protected screen saver. Pre-XP versions are similar to XP.

Another way to handle this in XP is to use a **Guest account**. That account bars access to your personal files. **Guest** is a pre-built restricted account, but it's usually hidden. To activate the **Guest account**, click **Start>>Control Panel. Double-click User Accounts. You'll see your account and the Guest account. Click the Guest account. Then click "Turn on the guest account."**

Now you can switch between accounts if others need your computer. **To make the switch, first click Start>>Log Off.** Then you'll get the option to **Switch User or Log Off.** If you choose **Switch User**, you'll remain logged on. That means the programs and documents you're working on will stay open. Meanwhile, the **Guest account** can be used. Although your programs and documents are running, they are invisible. The **Guest account** cannot access them. Afterward, you can resume your work undisturbed. Just use **Switch User** again.

If you choose **Log Off** initially, your programs and documents will be closed. Then the **Guest account** can be used. This is not as convenient, but it requires less memory.

To make all of this work, you will need a password. Otherwise, the guest will be able to enter your account at will. **To create a password, click Start>>Control Panel. Double-click User Accounts.** Click on your account name. **Click "Change my password."** You'll first be prompted for your old password. If you've never created a password, leave it blank. Then enter a new password. You can also enter a password hint in case you forget your password.

The **Guest account** does not have access to others' user folders. Those include My Documents, Desktop, Start Menu, Favorites and Cookies. So keep your private documents and information in those folders. The **Guest account** cannot change its account type or password. The latter is academic; a Guest password is irrelevant. A person using **Guest account** can go online but downloads are not permitted.

A **Guest account** also can be set up on Windows 2000. The procedure is similar.