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WHEN IS IT SAFE TO ENTER PERSONAL INFORMATION IN A WEBSITE?

It is embedded in our brains that we must constantly look out for ourselves when using the Internet. It is also good to do the same in everyday life as well as crossing the street. As long as you are being wise regarding where you enter your credit card number, all will be fine. Let me give you one very important hint. When you are on the Internet (no matter what browser you are using) there is an address line way up at the top. The line begins with http://... As you navigate to a site where you may be spending money you will see some changes. Let's say you go to Amazon.com for instance. As you cruise around looking for that perfect item the http does not change. After you place an item in your "cart" and proceed to the checkout, the site becomes a secure webpage that is encrypted and cannot be read by third parties. When you get to the page where they ask you for your credit, debit or even PayPal number the address changes in the browser's address bar (line). Now the http: has changed to https: (notice the s). This means secure. This company has paid for protection aimed at the consumer. You should feel perfectly safe in entering your personal information in a secure webpage.

WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU RAN A COMPLETE SCAN OF YOUR PC?

I hope and pray you have an anti-virus running on your computer at all times. Whether you pay for software or use AVG or something like this, you must always be sure the virus definitions are up to date (probably daily). Most software does this automatically but to be extra safe do it manually once a week at least. You should have a scheduled scan in place for a complete interior look at all your files, programs and directories. I run this every day. I never take chances on my data. The complete scan will let you know if there is anything that has snuck in while you were unaware. The anti-virus software is running indicated by an icon on your task bar, near your clock in the lower right-hand corner of your screen. If you have not paid annually for the software the icon may be there but nothing is protected. You may have gotten reminders that you over looked. Remember if you decide to discontinue paying for software and use a free version, you **MUST** remove all evidence and fragments of any anti-virus software before installing another. If you need help doing this, give me a call and I will come take care of all these pesky details of keeping your computer running its best.

I MAKE HOUSE CALLS:

I offer a 20% discount on my hourly rate for those aged 60 and over. I will come to your home or office and help you with almost any predicament including REPAIRS and upgrades. I have an endless amount of patience and knowledge. Give me a call at 419-318-9112. Don't forget to sign up for my FREE NEWSLETTER online. Subscribers will get unpublished hints and tips. References are always available upon request.

Janis Weber, B.A., owner of Ohio Computer Training, is a personal computer instructor & tutor. E-mail any specific questions or comments to jwpctutor@gmail.com or contact her for assistance at 419-318-9112. Public classes are listed on her website: www.OhComputerTraining.com.