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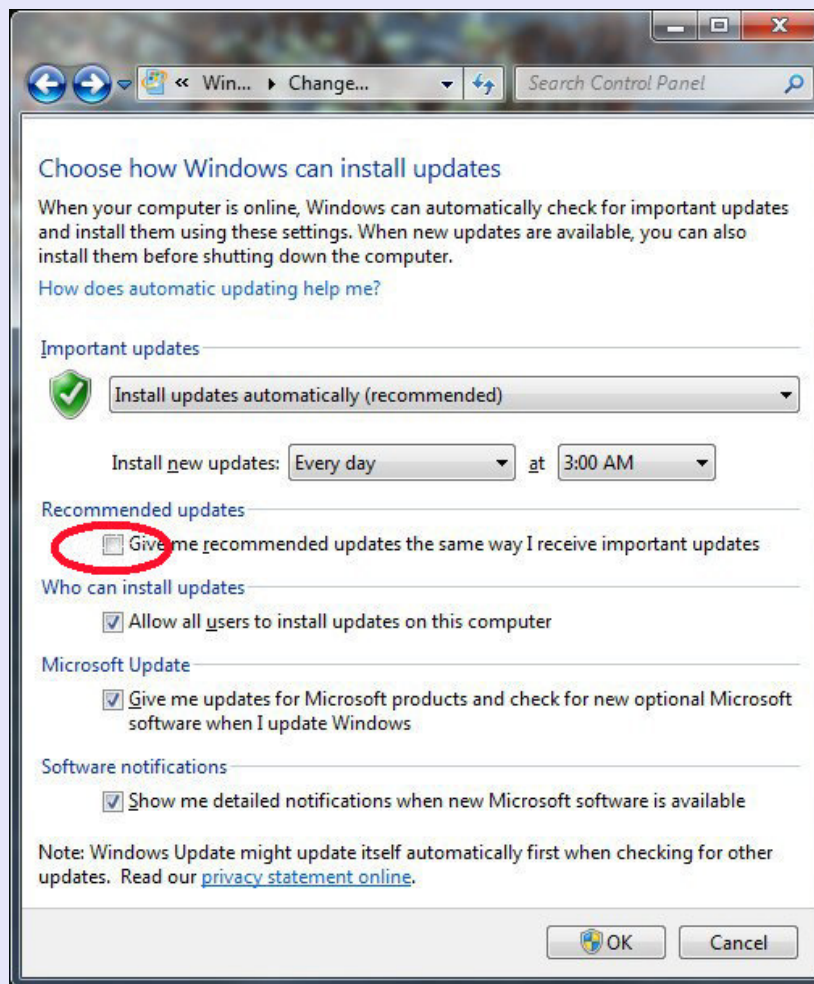
Managed IT Services, PC Service and Sales in Central Maryland

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Recommended Updates: Just Say No.

ACTION ITEM for WiFi & Cell Data Users

by Jerry Stern



Before the second service pack for Windows XP back in August 2004, the standard recommendation from most techs was to ignore Windows Update, leave it turned

off. But virus writers were growing up, and were switching from attempts to look cool by showing off how many computers they could control to using them for sending out SPAM. In other words, they grew up and got jobs that made real money.

So we had to turn on Windows Updates in order to keep the known Windows security holes patched up. Until last week, my recommendation for nearly all users has been to turn on Windows Updates, to the 'Install updates automatically (recommended)' setting, and also check all the other boxes, for recommended updates, other Microsoft Products (usually MS Office), and to notify when updates are available.

There are exceptions. I've told some of you to manually check for updates before traveling with a notebook overseas, and then turn off ALL auto-updates until you get back, mostly to save connection fees and avoid patch downloads and reboots while traveling.

But last week, Microsoft changed the rules. Early next year, those of you who don't have Windows 10 yet, but do have eligible systems, basically Windows 7 & 8.1 with no incompatible software, will see that not only does the Windows 10 upgrade show up as a 'Recommended Update', it will download automatically in the background. And it's a 6 Gigabyte download. On a cable modem, that's 45 minutes if it monopolizes the entire connection, or on a DSL connection that's over 4.5 hours. How about 3G cellular? Around 10 hours, at full-speed, block all the other traffic, mine-mine-mine behavior.

So if you're using a cellular hotspot for your computer data plan, and I know that some of you do that for mobility or because you're just too far from any wired options, then you need to turn off the 'Recommended' option, in Windows Updates, to save your data budget and your wallet.

Notebook users who work with WiFi connections should also make this change. A 6 Gb download while you're at a client site or working on battery power is a problem.

I'll take it one step beyond that. Unless you've decided to install Windows 10 right now, turn off Recommended Updates, as shown above, on all machines. It isn't needed--when you're ready for Windows 10, it's available as a downloadable DVD, and that's the method we use here on the bench for the *backup, upgrade, and backup again process* of installing Windows 10.

More information on Microsoft's stealth download is here:

<https://blogs.windows.com/windowsexperience/2015/10/29/making-it-easier-to-upgrade-to-windows-10/>

Finally, once a computer is running Windows 10, there is an option in Updates that

will prevent updates from being downloaded while on a metered connection. But until then, just say no.

Compatibility Update

We're building a list of existing software that works or doesn't work with Windows 10. Call if there's a program you need an answer for, but here are some highlights:

Microsoft Office: 2007 version and newer are OK.

QuickBooks Pro: 2015 and newer are OK.

TurboTax (consumer version): 2014 and newer are compatible.



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