

Dust, dust it's everywhere...

...or the does and don'ts of cleaning your PC

We all know that Desktop PC's have the nasty habit of attracting dust. This is not just on the outside but also inside the case. The main reasons of course are the multitude of continuously running fans that cool the components of the PC.

So, what to do and when? Let's start with the "when". If you can see a black case turn greyish brown near the grills where air is drawn in or blown out, it is a sign to wipe the outside of these grills down with a dry cloth. This will certainly increase airflow within the case and increase fan life.

If you hear a loud noise when the PC starts that subsides after 10 minutes or so, a fan is starting to go. Please notify MIS and we will change the fan. Defective fans, over time, allow the processor and other components to run at higher temperature, which can lead to component failure.

If you see large dust bunnies, it is probably a good idea to remove such excessive dirt from inside the case. Two options, one call MIS and we'll blow the dust into your office, or, if you absolutely must, do this yourself. In the latter case, here are a few helpful hints:

1. DO NOT UNINSTALL COMPONENTS – it's the old if it ain't broke don't fix it thing. You are performing preventative maintenance, not a repair.
2. DO NOT USE A VACCUUM TO CLOSE TO ELECTRONINC COMPONENTS – vacuum cleaners are powerful enough to unseat and suck chips, jumpers, etc. right of a main board or component.
3. IT IS BETTER TO BLOW AIR INTO A CASE – just don't use a compressor set at 90 psi. You could get similar results as the vacuum effect with the added danger of getting small particles flying towards your eyes (so wear glasses please). The compressed air cans are probably best. Do not use them for long periods at a time; they get freezing cold from the accelerant.
4. USE A SOFT BRUSH – these wonderful cleaning devices let you reach the smallest places. Again, do it gently.
5. DO UNPLUG THE PC FROM POWER – this is standard practice. Also note that you should wait 30 seconds before you open the case. This allows the capacitors to drain and reduces the possibility of inadvertently damaging components.

Happy computing...

MIS