



STOP | THINK | CONNECT™

## BOTS AND BOTNET FACTS AND TIPS

### WHAT ARE BOTS AND BOTNETS?

There's no question that the internet is awesome; it makes our lives easier and connects us to the rest of the world. Unfortunately, there are bad guys out there who harness that convenience to do harm. One of the common types of cybercrime infects connected devices with specific types of malware, turning them into what are known as bots.

Once a device becomes a bot, it is usually part of a botnet – a larger network of other infected devices that are all controlled remotely by hackers. Cybercriminals use bots for financial gain or to steal, send spam to infect more devices or attack websites. A botnet can have anywhere from a few hundred to many thousand devices at its disposal.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Help protect yourself and others against bots and other malicious attacks by following these STOP. THINK. CONNECT. tips:

#### Keep a clean machine

Having the latest security software, web browser and operating system is the best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats.

#### Back it up

Protect your valuable work, music, photos and other digital information by regularly making an electronic copy and storing it safely.

#### Make better passwords

A strong password is a sentence that is at least 12 characters long. Focus on positive sentences or phrases that you like to think about and are easy to remember.

#### When in doubt, throw it out

Links in email, social media posts and online advertising are often how cybercriminals try to steal your personal information. Even if you know the source, if something looks suspicious, delete it.

#### Plug & scan

USBs and other external devices can be infected by viruses and malware. Use your security software to scan them.



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