



# Tech Info Library

## HyperCard Virus: Merryxmas Virus (11/94)

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TOPIC -----

The Merry Christmas (merryxmas) virus is written in HyperTalk, the HyperCard scripting language. It can't affect any files other than HyperCard stacks and does not destroy or damage data. The most common indication of the merryxmas virus is that stacks launch and run much slower.

DISCUSSION -----

Many stacks can function properly when infected, but the Service Source won't function properly with this virus present. When the Service Source CD-ROM is built, every stack on the CD is checked for the virus, which is eliminated if found.

Basically, the virus traps these messages:

```
openbackground
closebackground
idle
```

Then it looks in the Home stack script for itself, and if it isn't there it copies itself. From the Home stack it checks the currently active stack for itself, and if it isn't there it copies itself.

You can obtain the merryxmas vaccine and documentation on AppleLink.

The first thing you need to do is read the information about the merryxmas vaccine. Follow the instructions to ensure you don't infect the stack!

Then run the Virus prevention installer. The documentation is built into the stack. This will install the built-in script to prevent infection.

Merryxmas Vaccine HyperCard Stack Requirements

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This stack requires HyperCard v2.1. This is to handle System 7 aliases. System 7 isn't required. Color monitors will display "activity colors."

If you use a compression utility such as AutoDoubler, be sure to have adequate free space on the volume being checked. Stacks have a way of expanding as they

are being examined.

#### What The Stack Will Do

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This vaccine stack will quickly locate all the stacks on the volume of your choice; peek at the stack scripts (without opening the stacks); and replace the infected scripts without the virus code. A bonus feature is the option to let it compact those stacks that have free space available for compacting. Don't worry about locked stacks -- this stack will unlock and relock them.

#### How to Use The Stack

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- 1) Make a backup of all your stacks, if not your whole drive.
- 2) Click the Disinfect button.
- 3) Select the volume you wish to disinfect.

If you wish to test the stack first, use it to scan a floppy disk. It will scan locked volumes without making changes.

#### Script Segment That Will Prevent Infection

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As an alternative to the vaccine stack, you can add the following script segment to the script of your Home stack and all your commonly used stacks. This should prevent the stacks from becoming infected. Copy it exactly as it appears below:

```
-----  
--this must be here to prevent the merryxmas virus from  
--infecting this stack  
-- on idle --merryxmas  
-- on openbackground --merryxmas  
-- on closebackground --merryxmas  
-----
```

These articles can help you locate software updates mentioned here:

- Where To Find Apple Software Updates  
Lists online services for "free" Apple software updates
- Obtaining Apple Product Support in the USA  
Lists 800 numbers and online services for software updates, Apple support information, and a subset of the Apple Tech. Info. Library

#### Article Change History:

- 01 Nov 1994 - Changed title to exact name of virus.
- 19 Sep 1994 - Added script segment info on how to prevent infection.
- 15 Sep 1994 - Moved binary from TIL to Apple SW Updates.

#### Support Information Services

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