

Is Big Brother watching you?

The job of marketers is to collect information about us. On the Internet this is quite easy to do it in theory. We often fill out online forms with our choices and preferences. On the other hand, most people avoid giving personal details, or they lie about them, so the marketers use other techniques.

The purpose of “spyware” is to collect information about a PC and its user. Some of the most popular downloads on the Internet include these secret programs. It is a way for software writers to make money, but the consumer doesn't pay anything. The problem is that spyware usually gets into your system, but you don't know it is there.

These are some of the things spyware can do:

- monitor the keys you press when you work at your PC
- scan files on your hard disk and modify them
- monitor which websites you visit and how often
- change your homepage and other personal settings

It's difficult to remove spyware and it can cause problems. Your computer can start working more slowly and sometimes crash. Spyware is normally legal. Programs with spyware normally include a warning in the licence agreement. Unfortunately, most people don't read licence agreements because they are long and technical. If you click on “I accept”, the supplier can legally spy on you, so next time you install a new program, read the small print.



Ex. 1 Find in the text the English equivalents of these words:

1. formularz
2. wybór
3. cel
4. użytkownik
5. konsument
6. klawisze
7. pliki
8. ustawienia
9. ostrzeżenie
10. licencja

Ex.2 Complete these expressions from the text with the words from the box:

change / collect / fill / install / make / press / remove / scan / use / visit
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1. to _____ information
2. to _____ out a form
3. to _____ techniques
4. to _____ money
5. to _____ the keys
6. to _____ files
7. to _____ websites
8. to _____ settings
9. to _____ spyware
10. to _____ a program

I know English idioms!

In this lesson we read about spyware, the kind of software that can cause users a lot of trouble. In English, when we want to speak about a difficult situation, we can use this idiom:

- tight spot

e.g. The computer company has been in a tight spot since the shortage of computer chips appeared.

Phrasals, phrasals...

This lesson's reading text lists such a sentence: "We often fill out online forms with our choices and preferences." The underlined expressions is a useful phrasal verb which means "to write the necessary information on an official document" (wypełnić). Another form of this verb is "to fill in", e.g.

Please fill in your name and address in the space provided.

It took me several hours to fill out the application form.

Grammar corner

A sentence from the text reads: It's difficult to remove spyware and it can cause problems. The sentence uses the word "it" twice, in different meanings: first, as an impersonal structure (Trudno...) second, as a reference link to the previous part (to może powodować...)

Ex. Try and say this in English using the word „it”:

1. To nie najlepszy moment.
2. Łatwo jest się pomylić.
3. Miło z twojej strony
4. To mnie stresuje.

GLOSSARY	
marketer	specjalista od marketingu
to collect	zbierać, gromadzić
in theory	w teorii
to fill out	wypełniać
form	formularz
choice	wybór
preference	preferencja
to avoid	unikać
personal details	dane osobowe
to lie	kłamać
technique	technika, sposób
purpose	cel
spyware	oprogramowanie szpiegujące
user	użytkownik
download	„ściągnięcie” (pliku z Internetu)
software	oprogramowanie
to include	zawierać
consumer	konsument
to monitor	śledzić
keys	klawisze
to press	naciskać
to scan	skanować
file	plik
hard disk	twardy dysk
to modify	zmieniać
homepage	strona domowa
settings	ustawienia
to remove	usunąć
to crash	paść, zepsuć się
warning	ostrzeżenie
licence agreement	umowa licencyjna
supplier	dostawca
to spy on sb	szpiegować
small print	drobna czcionka

ANSWER KEY

Ex.1

1. form
2. choice
3. purpose
4. user
5. consumer
6. keys
7. files
8. settings
9. warning
10. licence

Ex.2

1. to collect information
2. to fill out a form
3. to use techniques
4. to make money
5. to press the keys
6. to scan files
7. to visit websites
8. to change settings
9. to remove spyware
10. to install a program

Ex. Grammar corner

1. it's not the best moment
2. It's easy to make a mistake
3. It's nice of you.
4. It makes me stressed.