

Ten commandments of computer ethics

[Technology](#), [Computer](#)



The Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics establish guiding principles for all of us to follow. Read on to know these Ten Commandments. Every sphere of life is guided by a set of rules of what is right and what is wrong. The difference between the 'right' and the 'Wrong' has to be demarcated in any walk of life. With the development of technology and the increase in its use, society had to confront ethical issues relating to the harnessing of technology.

Every science of life needs to base itself on ethics and so does computer technology! The Computer Ethics Institute came up with The Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics, in 1992. The intent behind the creation of these Ten Commandments was to establish a set of standards to instruct people to use computers ethically. Thou shall not use a computer to harm other people. This commandment makes clear that it is unethical to use a computer to harm another user. It includes harming or corrupting some other user's data or files.

The commandment states that it is wrong to steal someone's personal information by means of a computer. It is unethical to manipulate or destroy the files of other people through the use of a computer. It iterates the fact that writing a program intended to bring perform ethically wrong actions, is in itself unethical. Thou shall not interfere with other people's computer work. Worms are small programs built with intent to harm or disrupt the useful computer programs. Some viruses aim at overloading the computer memory by an excessive use of computer resources.

These viruses tend to fail a computer in executing the desired tasks. They lead to the dysfunction of a computer. The development or the spread of such malicious software is unethical. Thou shall not snoop around in other people's files. We know that it is wrong to read another person's letters. On similar lines, it is unethical to read another person's email messages.

Obtaining another person's private files is as wrong as breaking into someone's room. Snooping around in another person's files or reading someone else's personal messages is the invasion of his/her privacy.

In order to protect the information from being attacked, it is ethical to apply encryption schemes to it. Thou shall not use a computer to steal. The stealing of sensitive information such as the personal information of the employees from an employee database, or breaking into bank accounts for the retrieval of confidential information is nothing less than robbery. An illegal electronic transfer of funds is one type of a fraud. 1 OFF Computers are the easiest sources of spreading information to the masses by means of Internet.

This also means that false news or rumors can spread speedily and easily through the Internet. Being involved in the circulation of incorrect information is unethical. Spreading the wrong information by means of Internet is like taking an undue advantage of technology. Thou shall not use or copy software for which you have not paid. Like any other artists or literary work, software is also subject to copyrights. Software is the outcome of a programmer's intellect and it is important to respect talent and give due regard to his/her rights.

Obtaining illegal copies of copyrighted software is unethical. Thou shall not use other people's computer resources without authorization. Multi- user systems are supported by user specific ids and passwords. Breaking into some other user's password, thus indulging into his private space on the network is unethical. It is not ethical to hack passwords for gaining an unauthorized access to a password-protected computer system. Thou shall not appropriate other people's intellectual output. Programs developed by a programmer in an organization are his/her property.

Copying them and propagating them in one's own name is unethical. A creative work, a program or a design that a particular employee comes up with, is his/her ownership. It is the output of someone's intellect and efforts. Copying it with selfish intentions is indeed not ethical. Thou shall think about the social consequences of the program you write. Looking at the social consequences that a program can have, describes a broader perspective of looking at technology. A computer program goes a long way to reach homes of the masses.

In case a person is working for animation films or he/she is designing a video game, it is the programmers responsibility to pay heed to the effects of his/her creation. In case of software, it is important for the programmer to realize the prospective use of the software. Writing a virus, when one knows that it is going to serve as a mallard, is indeed unethical. If a particular content is intended for children or when children are prone to gain access to the content, it is necessary for the creator of such content to be careful about the social consequences it is bound to eave.

Thou shall use a computer in ways that show consideration and respect. In the real world, we face situation wherein we need to be courteous to our fellow mates. Many times, we need to cooperate with them and give each of the fellow individuals the consideration due. On similar lines, while interacting through a computer, a person needs to be nice to the ones he/she interacts with. The Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics are the means to build a set of regulations to guide the individual users to base computer related operations on ethics involved in the use of technology.