Yum. Cookies.
another tasty computer club treat

Today's Agenda

What is a cookie?

What does a cookie do?

What are *tracking* cookies?

Are cookies dangerous? Should you delete them?

What is a cookie?

A cookie is a small file* that a website sends back to your browser for saving.

This has been part of the HTTP (browser/server) communication standard since Netscape invented it at the beginning of time**

* less than 4,000 bytes
** or about 1994

Example Cookie File

Browsers will either store a cookie as a single file or as a row in a private database in the browser configuration area. This is usually hidden and hard to find.

Example cookie file name: bankofamerica.com.txt
Inside the cookie file

```
name=hanmade@gmail.com
     ^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^   this is the bank's saved user id
                         NOT the password.
```

Example Cookie File #2

Example cookie file name: bankofamerica.com.txt

```
name="y/f?Mg/pxDmAgE/Lt/pfg/O0Lxmg/?/VDppVg/h0x/?ttg?x?
zmg/O?Ag//GLp/G?ODmVI/Wf?
p/I0L/Ogg/Dz/pfDO/WDzE0W/DO/pfg/O0Lxmg/h0x/pfDO/t?eg!"
```

This is an encrypted cookie which might contain your login session information.
id=hanmade@gmail.com
session_start=Fri Feb 19, 2016 10:10am

Example Cookie File #3

Example cookie file name: amazon.com.txt

```
name="y/f?Mg/pxDmAgE/Lt/pfg/O0Lxmg/?/VDppVg/h0x/?ttg?x?
zmg/O?Ag//GLp/G?ODmVI/Wf?
p/I0L/Ogg/Dz/pfDO/WDzE0W/DO/pfg/O0Lxmg/h0x/pfDO/t?eg!"
```

```
user_id=hanmade@gmail.com
```
session_start=Fri Feb 19, 2016 10:10am
shopping_cart_id=4573934577344577123

Third Party or *Tracking Cookies*

1. You go on amazon.com and search for "lifesized-blowup dolls"

2. Amazon creates a unique ID and sets a cookie on your browser

3. Amazon **also sets a cookie for admanager.com** with that ID

4. You go to yahoo.com which also sends the admanager.com cookie (with your unique Amazon ID) back to Admanager.com.

5. Now Admanager.com knows you've been to Amazon **and** Yahoo.

6. Yahoo now knows what you shopped for at Amazon and it displays an ad for "Cheap Blowup Dolls" on the right side of the screen.

Creepy Yes?

Should You Delete Cookies?

Do you want Amazon to remember what you searched for last time?

Do you want your browser to remember your Yahoo email ID?

Do you want your web experience to be fluid and friendly?

Do you want to type in your password to every website EVERY time?

Q. Will cookies slow down my PC? **A. No**

Q. Will deleting cookies make me safer? **A. No**

Q. Should I add cookie cleaning malware to my PC. **A. BIG FREAKING NO!!!**