(Approx. 376 words)

Keeping Records Helps Organize Computer Maintenance  
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My background is enterprise computing, having worked in a high-tech company's data center and for a vendor selling software to organizations large/medium/small. So it's second nature to me -- a habit developed over my career -- to keep records of changes I make to computer hardware and software, even when it's my PC.

The change log is useful for many reasons, knowing:

* what hardware and software is installed (important for debugging, upgrading, and replacing the PC)
* when I changed something (important for tracking the origin of odd behavior)
* how to replicate desired settings in a new computer (to avoid struggling to remember everything I've done to tailor/customize software)
* what I've done from my infinite to-do list (to avoid worrying about what I might have forgotten)
* what's left on the list (this is a separate section of the log)
* what I've spent on the computer
* how other devices are maintained and configured (such as a separate section for router settings and firmware updates information)

It's easiest/best starting such a log when a new PC is bought or built, but it's worth creating one by catching up as much as possible on what's been done and maintaining it going forward. Making this a habit means it's simple and quick creating entries, and the log will be a helpful reference.

Here are sample entries for my Windows 10 system:

05/26/20 Install Firefox 76.0.1  
05/26/20 Install Office 2019  
05/26/20 Install Kedit 1.6.1  
05/26/20 Install Belarc 9.5  
05/26/20 Install Sysinternals Process Explorer 16.32  
05/26/20 Install Thunderbird 68.8.1  
05/26/20 Install Malwarebytes 4.1.0

08/16/20 Install CutePDF 4  
08/16/20 Change Computer name to Gabes-Windows10-Deskt  
08/16/20 Change User name to Gabe  
08/16/20 Install Audacity 2.4.2  
08/16/20 Install iCloud 13.3.59.0  
09/06/20 Set Firefox browser.search.openintab --> True  
09/06/20 Define local HPLJ printer

01/18/22 Set Kedit currbox on/on  
01/18/22 Use Kedit Margins 2 72 -3  
01/19/22 Install Firefox add-ins InFormEnter+, NoScript, Print Preview  
01/19/22 Disable NoScript -- broke too many websites  
01/20/22 Set Taskbar option to NOT show desktop when the cursor moves to lower right corner  
01/20/22 Install Firefox add-ons, Privacy Badger, Adblock Plus, Ghostery, Don't Track Me Google  
01/20/22 Set Kedit RecentFiles 25