

Computer Problems YOU Can Fix

8 TIPS FOR TROUBLESHOOTING YOUR COMPUTER ISSUES

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We all have computer issues at one time or another... or all the time, right? We can't fix it all ourselves unless we're THE computer guy, but sometimes there are simple fixes that help get you back on the right track. Let's go through 8 common issues people have.

1. Computer is SUPER slow and/or buggy!

Often this issue can be resolved with a simple shutdown and restart of your system. Many computer users rarely restart their systems, but it's necessary. There are many processes happening in the background that need to be refreshed, not to mention computers are working, moving equipment that may just need a break once in a while to cool down. So save your stuff, close your programs, and click the "Shut Down" button if things are super slow or seem buggy. Another thing to check is how much free space you have left on your harddrive. Windows needs room to operate, and if your drive is maxed out, performance declines. To solve this, you can delete unnecessary files, add storage to your computer, or consider migrating that data to an external drive.

2. My computer locked up and I can't click anything!

If your computer stalls and seems to be unresponsive, before you force shutdown or unplug, try hitting three keys together: **Ctrl**, **Alt**, and **Delete**. This doesn't always work in this situation, but if it does, you will see a new screen with a handful of options, one of which is "**Start Task Manager**". Click it! Task Manager will list all the current programs you are running. Do you remember which program you were using when the computer locked up? Select it and click "**End Task**". If that doesn't do the trick, consider closing all programs, one at a time. At this point, you may opt to restart your computer, or continue working as you were before. (HINT: Restart!)

3. I'm printing but nothing happens!

The first thing to check is that you have all your connections. Are there any wires loose? Check the printer power cord too, both to the outlet and to the back of the printer. If you are connected wirelessly, make sure you are still connected to your wireless network. You can also go to the start menu and click "Devices and Printers" to check and see that your control panel still lists your device/printer as an option. If it's not there, you may need to reinstall it. Is there paper in the printer? Are there any empty ink cartridges that need replacing? Try restarting your printer. On your computer, click the printer icon in the task bar... is your print job in the queue behind a handful of other print jobs?

4. NO INTERNET! It's the end of the world!

Even though no internet may be the best thing ever to happen to humanity, never fear! Always keep in mind that internet downtime could be a provider issue. These outages are always temporary but it can

be hard to determine how long it takes to fix. To test inside your system, first make sure you are within range of your wireless router. Second, make sure your computer's wireless card has the latest drivers. Third, allow Windows to run troubleshooting by clicking the Wi-Fi icon in the taskbar.

5. Pop-up ads keep, well, popping up!

If you are not surfing the web and the pop ups are still popping, you probably installed adware. I hear you, you didn't install ANYTHING... that you know about. These installations are tricky – they are hidden amongst other downloads that seem legit or you click something that instigates the download in the background. If you think you have adware, malware, or spyware, you can run your current anti-virus program to do a full scan of your system to help identify warning areas that need to be cleaned up or removed.

6. Google (or whatever website) doesn't look quite right.

If the webpage looks a bit different than normal, double check the website address at the top to make sure you didn't misspell something. Was that link sent to you in an email? Maybe the email was spam. There are many look-alike webpages made with the malicious intention to try and collect (or rather STEAL) your personal data and install unwanted adware, spyware, and malware onto your system.

7. I can't get this attachment to send in my email!

In most cases, an attachment will not send only because the file size is too big. Email servers cannot process emails that have a total of 10 MB of files or more, and some systems have 5 MB or 2 MB limits. Try sending one file at a time or in smaller batches. If you're sending images, resize them first if the recipient does not need a full size image.

8. I can't OPEN an attachment!

Most often, if you can't open an attachment, it's because you don't have the right "reader" program or you don't have the latest version. If you have an older version of Microsoft Word, for example, you cannot open more recent version file types unless you download the compatibility software (<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=3>). Adobe PDFs are a pretty common file type because Adobe Reader is free. You can download it here: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. And yes, PDF files can have version issues too, so you may need to update your PDF reader.

If unsure, do not explore! Sometimes you can do more damage than good if the steps you are trying do not appear rock solid. If you complete these steps without success, it may be time to get help from a professional.

We hope that these computer saving tips help you along the way!