



Troubleshooting Guide

This troubleshooting guide provides you with information about *City of Heroes*[™]. You will find solutions to common problems that you might encounter while running the game in the Microsoft Windows 98 SE, Millennium Edition (ME), 2000, and XP operating systems with DirectX 9.0a.

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1. General Information

DISCLAIMER

This troubleshooting guide attempts to solve problems that you may encounter while playing the *City of Heroes*[™] computer video game. NCsoft Corporation and Cryptic Studios, Inc make no representation or warranty about the accuracy of the information provided in this troubleshooting guide, what may result or not result from following the suggestions contained in this troubleshooting guide, or your success in solving the problems that are causing you to consult this troubleshooting guide. Your decision to follow the suggestions contained in this troubleshooting guide is entirely at your own risk and subject to the specific terms and legal disclaimers stated below and set forth in the Software License and Limited Warranty and Terms of Use to which you previously agreed to be bound.

SEIZURE WARNING

A very small percentage of individuals may experience seizures when exposed to certain light patterns, flashing lights, or flashing images. Children and teenagers are more susceptible to seizure than adults, but even those with no history of seizure or epilepsy could experience them while playing or watching video games.

Symptoms of seizures include: lightheadedness, altered vision, jerking or shaking of the extremities, loss of awareness, confusion, twitching, or full convulsions. Convulsions can lead to other injuries by causing an individual to fall off of a chair and/or strike objects nearby.

If you or anyone in your family has an epileptic condition or history of seizures, consult your physician prior to playing this game – you could have an undiagnosed condition. If you experience any of the aforementioned symptoms of a seizure while playing, STOP PLAYING AND CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY. Parents should ensure their children are not experiencing symptoms.

In order to reduce the risk of photosensitive epileptic seizures, you should play NCsoft games in a well-lit room while you are alert and awake. Avoid poorly-lit rooms and playing when fatigued. If you experience any of these symptoms, IMMEDIATELY STOP PLAYING AND CONSULT A DOCTOR. Parents or guardians should watch for or ask their children if they are having any of the above symptoms – children and teenagers are reportedly more likely than adults to experience seizures from viewing computer software games.

INTERNET CONNECTION AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

NOTICE: You will need to obtain an Internet connection (using a computer meeting the minimum system requirements) in order to play the game associated with this software. If you do not use an Internet connection, you cannot play the game. Your Internet connection may require additional fees. You will also need a valid credit card or a paid game card to play the game. Additional recurring fees are required to play this game.

Supported Operating Systems

To be able to play *City of Heroes*, you must have Windows 98 SE, Millennium Edition (ME), 2000, or XP installed and configured correctly, and your computer hardware must be DirectX 9.0a compatible. To assure that your system is configured correctly, you may need to install the current Windows updates as well as the latest drivers for your particular motherboard.

If you are running Windows 2000 or XP, you must have local Administrator or Power User rights to properly install the game and run the game patcher. Only local Administrator rights will allow you to update DirectX in these operating systems.

Minimum System Requirements

- Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP
- Intel Pentium® III 800 MHz or AMD Athlon 800 MHz
- 256 MB RAM • 4X CD-ROM Drive
- 2 GB available HDD space
- GeForce 2 Series or ATI Radeon 8500 Series video card
- DirectX 9.0
- 16-bit sound card
- 56k modem
- Keyboard and mouse

Recommended System Specifications

- Windows® 2000/XP
- Intel Pentium® 4 1.7 GHz or AMD Athlon XP 1700+
- 512 MB RAM • 16X CD-ROM Drive
- 2 GB available HDD space

- GeForce 5600 or ATI Radeon 9600 Series video card
- 16-bit sound card
- Broadband Internet connection
- Keyboard and mouse with wheel

System requirements may change over time, and you may need to upgrade your current system (or obtain a new system) in order to play the game.

2. General Troubleshooting

City of Heroes is designed to run under Windows 98 SE, Millennium (ME), 2000, or XP with DirectX 9.0a. If the game unexpectedly freezes up, returns you to your desktop, or if you experience any other severe problems, you should try to properly shut down Windows and reboot your computer. (As a rule, you should never turn off your computer while the hard drive is active.) This will help prevent possible problems related to the error that you have experienced. It is especially important to reboot your computer before trying any of the troubleshooting tips included in this guide and before attempting to restart the game.

NOTE: If your computer reboots into Safe Mode, go to **Shut Down Windows** and choose **Restart the Computer**. This will put you back into Windows' normal operating mode.

I Cannot Launch *City of Heroes*. What Do I Do Now?

- Check to see how much room is available on your hard drive to make sure that you have enough free space for *City of Heroes* to run. It is recommended that you have at least 500 MB of free space after installing the game for the Windows swap/page file and save games.
- Check the settings for your firewall or Internet security program. Please refer to **Configuring your Firewall or Internet Security Software** in this section for more information.
- Check to see if you have any other applications running, such as memory managers, screen savers, firewall or virus protection programs. Please refer to **Should I have Other Programs Running in the Background** in this section for more information.
- Check that you have the latest, supported video drivers available for your machine. You can contact support@plaync.com to find the latest supported driver version for your video card.
- If none of the suggestions above help, you may have a corrupted installation. Try uninstalling then reinstalling *City of Heroes*.

Should I Have Other Programs Running In The Background?

Generally, we have found that it is not a good idea to run any other programs in the background while playing *City of Heroes*. Please turn off any active screen savers while running this game, as they may interrupt the game. Various video, sound, or memory problems may occur if other programs are running, including virus-detection utilities. You may need to disable or close programs that start automatically when Windows is started, such as the Microsoft Office Toolbar and the Live!Ware Creative Launcher. Some of these programs display icons on your system tray. If you have icons on your taskbar, right-click on each of them and select the option to disable, unload, or close them before running *City of Heroes*. The next time you start your computer, these items will load once more and the icons will return. If you cannot disable them from the taskbar and you experience problems running *City of Heroes*, we recommend that you consult Windows Help for information on how to remove shortcuts or how to keep other programs from running in the background.

Running On Low-End Systems

When running *City of Heroes* on a low-end system, you may experience some stuttering in the sound and graphics. This usually happens if other programs are running or your system resources are low. Freeing

up system resources may improve performance. Check **Performance** (Section 4) in this troubleshooting guide for more performance tips.

Configuring your Firewall or Internet Security Software

When running *City of Heroes* on a system with firewall or Internet security software, you may experience difficulties launching the game. If this occurs, please check the settings of your firewall or Internet security program. When running these programs, you may experience difficulties progressing past the Loading window. Please refer to the **Connectivity Devices and Issues** section for more information. You may also want to refer to your manufacturer's software manual for more information on how to configure your firewall settings.

Windows 2000 and XP Issues

Administrative Rights

Some of the steps noted in this troubleshooting guide regarding making adjustments to your system will not be available for you to modify unless you are logged onto the system with Administrative Rights. Without these rights, you may be unable to select the option because it is unavailable. You will be unable to play, patch, or install DirectX unless you are logged on with Administrative Rights.

3. Installation

Installing *City of Heroes*

Please check the amount of available hard drive space on your system before installing *City of Heroes*. Installation requires 2 GB of free hard drive space. We recommend that you have at least an additional 500 MB of free space available for the Windows swap/page file and patches. If you have too little free space on your hard drive after installing *City of Heroes*, you may be unable to start the program.

The default directory for installation is C:\Program Files\City of Heroes. You will be prompted to install DirectX 9.0a at the end of the installation if it does not detect that it is already installed on your system. Installation will place shortcuts to the Program Launcher on your Start menu and on the desktop.

Creating A PlayNC Account

In order to play *City of Heroes*, you will first need to create a PlayNC master account. At the end of the installation process, you will be given the option to immediately create your account if you do not have an account already. Once your PlayNC account is created, enter your *City of Heroes* game account serial code, your billing information, and then you can begin playing the game.

To create your PlayNC master account at a later time, please visit <http://www.coh.com/register>. You do not have to create your PlayNC account when you install the game, but you must create a PlayNC account at some point before you can play *City of Heroes*.

Installing DirectX 9.0a

During the custom installation of *City of Heroes*, you may be prompted to install DirectX 9.0a if this or a more recent version is not already installed on your system. If DirectX 9.0 is detected, you will not be prompted to install DirectX 9.0a. If this occurs, *City of Heroes* should work with that version.

Important: You must be logged on with Administrator rights in order to properly install DirectX on a Windows 2000 or XP system.

Shortcut Does Not Appear On The Desktop

The shortcut to *City of Heroes* may not appear on your desktop after installing the game. This occurs for the following reasons:

- The shortcut to *City of Heroes* may not appear on your desktop after installing the game when multiple users use one computer. This occurs if your system is configured so that each person has a separate profile. When your system is configured this way and the shortcut is created, it will only show up for the user that installed the game, rather than All Users. If this occurs, go to the Windows Desktop folder or the desktop of the user that the game was installed under and copy the shortcut to your current desktop. You can also copy the shortcut from the Start Menu to your desktop.
- You may have your desktop set up not to show icons. If this is the case, right-click on your desktop, select Arrange Icons by, and select the Show Desktop Icons option. This should show the desktop shortcut that the installer created.

Can I Move The *City of Heroes* Folder After I Install?

If you wish to move the *City of Heroes* folder to a new folder, uninstall first, then reinstall to the new location. Simply moving the folder will cause the game to stop working.

4. Performance

Performance Issues in *City of Heroes*

When running *City of Heroes* with the minimum system requirements, you may experience the following issues:

- There may be stuttering in the voice and sound.
- There may be pauses or hitching in the game.
- There may be slow downs or stuttering during gameplay.

This occurs most frequently when other programs are running or if your system resources are below 70%. Freeing up system resources may improve performance in the game. For more information, please refer to the **Close Other Programs Before Running *City of Heroes*** section below.

Improving Performance in *City of Heroes*

The following are a few suggestions that may free up system resources and improve performance in *City of Heroes*.

To run *City of Heroes* with optimal performance:

- No other programs should be running in the background.
- System resources should be at least 85% free.
- There should be at least 500 MB of free hard disk space after installation.

Close Other Programs Before Running *City of Heroes*.

This includes virus scanning, word processing, and Internet programs. Simply disabling these programs will not always help, as the programs will still use resources that are needed to run *City of Heroes*. If you experience problems after completely closing programs that are running, consult the documentation for those individual programs. This is a common problem when trying to completely disable virus-scanning software.

5. Connectivity Devices and Issues

This section lists some of the common connectivity issues that may occur and some information to help you avoid these issues. For more information, please refer to the *City of Heroes* Support Home Page at <http://support.coh.com>.

Connection Related Issues

You Need an ISP Account

You must have a connection to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to connect with other players and play *City of Heroes*. This includes Dial-Up Networking connections, Cable Modem service, xDSL service and Direct Corporate Connections. If you need help configuring your computer to use the Internet, contact your ISP's technical support.

Connect to the Internet Before Launching *City of Heroes*

Users must establish a connection to the Internet before starting *City of Heroes*.

The following items are known to be sources of connection issues and the information may be helpful if you are having problems connecting or staying connected to *City of Heroes*. We understand that some of these devices or technologies may have been in place for some time and have only recently begun to have problems, but we suggest that you try these troubleshooting tips.

Firewall, Proxy, or Anti-Virus Software

While an important part of home computer security or a way to provide connection sharing, these technologies can interfere with game connectivity. If you are having connection problems and are using one of these types of software you should, if only temporarily, disable or uninstall the software and then try connecting to the game. If the issues cease while this software is disabled or uninstalled, please refer to the **Configure Your Firewall or Router for Internet Play** section 2, General Troubleshooting.

PPPoE Connections

Point-to-Point Protocol over Ethernet (PPPoE) connections require a login and password as well as a phone number to dial into the connection. Please make sure you make note of this information so that when the time comes to input it, you have it available to you without contacting your ISP.

Unable to Connect to the Patch Server

If your connection times out while attempting to play the game via a 56K or broadband modem, check the following:

- Make sure you are connected to the Internet. The Patch Server needs a live connection to the Internet in order to patch any recent changes to the application.
- Check your firewall or Internet security software settings. Please refer to the **Configuring your Firewall or Internet Security Software** in the **General Troubleshooting** section of this guide for more information.

Connection to *City of Heroes* Lost

You may encounter connection issues at some point while playing *City of Heroes*. Receiving the **Lost Connection to Server** message while playing usually indicates connection issues.

This message signifies a loss of connectivity with the game servers. If you get this message you should check our server status on the server selection screen. If our servers are currently active, check your connection to the Internet and anything that may impede or block your connection.

NOTE: Connection issues result from different causes than general game crashing issues and should be treated differently. If you are experiencing game crashing problems, you may need to check other

sections of this document for additional troubleshooting tips.

Getting Disconnected After Starting *City of Heroes*

The following are reasons you may become disconnected from *City of Heroes* after entering a server:

- You might have disconnected from your Internet Service Provider. Some ISPs disconnect after a certain amount of inactive time, if too much data is being transmitted, or if they are doing unscheduled maintenance.
- You may be disconnected while playing *City of Heroes* if your ISP connection is set to automatically disconnect after a certain period of inactivity. You should disable this option in your **Internet Options** in the Windows **Control Panel** before playing *City of Heroes* to prevent being disconnected while in game.
- Your modem may not be installed or set up correctly. Make sure that your phone line or cable is securely connected to your modem and that your modem is set up and operating correctly in Windows. See your manufacturer's hardware documentation for proper modem setup and your ISP's documentation for proper account setup information.

Internet Performance Issues

The time of day can have an impact on your connection quality. If you have trouble playing *City of Heroes* over your Dial-Up Internet connection during peak hours, you might try playing later at night or at other times of the day to get a better quality connection. Setting the game to display at a lower screen resolution or lowering the Texture Detail setting in the Graphics & Audio Options menu might help other performance problems while playing *City of Heroes*.

Dropped Packets

Each piece of data that is sent over a network or the Internet is called a packet. It is important for all of these packets to be delivered intact and in a timely manner for a smooth multiplayer experience. The Internet can frequently drop packets (lose them) depending on the quality of your connection and the amount of congestion present on the Internet itself. If packets can't get through between a player and the *City of Heroes* servers due to a poor connection, some problems will occur.

Latency

Latency is a measure of the time (in milliseconds or ms) that it takes for data to travel round-trip from one computer to another and back over a network or the Internet. On the Internet, high latency can cause game performance to degrade severely. When playing any game over the Internet, it is important to have a low latency connection. High latency will contribute to poor multiplayer performance and decreased stability.

Connection Problems

If you are consistently having trouble with dropped packets or latency, the following are a few things you can try to help with your connection to the Internet:

- Disconnect and reconnect to your ISP.
- Make sure that you are using a 56Kbps modem or a broadband connection.
- Try another ISP. Some Internet providers have slow or congested networks and are not suitable for gaming. If you consistently have trouble joining games or lose connection after joining a game, you may have an unreliable ISP.

IRQ Conflicts for Win98/ME

Check if your network adapter/modem is sharing an IRQ with your video or sound card. To check for IRQ conflicts, right-click on the **My Computer** icon on your desktop and choose **Properties**. Next, choose the **Device Manager** tab and double-click **Computer** at the top of the device list to bring up the IRQ Resource window. If your network card is sharing an IRQ with your video or sound card then you may need to move one of those devices to a different IRQ to resolve the conflict.

Modem or Network Adapter Conflict

If you have a modem installed in your computer along with the network card for either your cable or DSL modem then it may cause conflicts. We recommend that you remove the modem from your computer completely, or at least disable it, so there is no conflict there between the modem and your network card.

Winmodems or Emulation-Based Modems

Winmodems or **emulation-based modems** are software-based and can cause numerous connectivity problems, not just in our game but in general. The reason is because the CPU is being used to "pump" the data in a software modem, as well as its other calculations. When playing a game, the CPU may not be able to make the necessary game calculations AND transmit data. We strongly recommend against using them.

6. How to Contact Customer Support

If you require technical assistance, please read through the City of Heroes Troubleshooting Guide provided on the game CD. The troubleshooting guide has solutions to many common problems you may experience with the game.

If you have questions regarding technical issues or your account and/or billing (i.e. registration, password recovery, subscribing, cancellation, etc.), please contact NCsoft Customer Service by one of the following methods:

Search Our Knowledge Base

You can visit our Knowledge Base via the web for a comprehensive auto self-help system that is up to date with the latest information and issues. The Knowledge Base is located at <http://support.coh.com>.

E-Mail Support

You may also reach us by e-mail at support@plaync.com. Before sending your e-mail, please specify the nature of your inquiry in the subject of your e-mail (i.e., technical issue, account issue, billing issue, in-game bug). A Customer Service Representative will respond to your e-mail as quickly as possible.

When contacting Technical Support, please have the following information available: computer brand and model, processor type and speed, video card, sound card, CD-ROM drive brand and model, and amount of RAM. Also, make sure to include the title and version of the game and a detailed description of the problem.

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