

TroubleShooting

Introduction

This Help file is designed to help you overcome problems you may encounter with memory, speed, display - anything to do with our multimedia products.

Reference

[I need more speed.](#)

[I need to free more memory.](#)

[I am having trouble viewing pictures.](#)

[I am having troubles viewing videos.](#)

[I am having problems hearing any audio.](#)

[I am having startup, or installation problems.](#)

Speed

There are many ways that you can increase the speed of operation of any CD. These include:

CD-ROM Drives

- Make sure that you are using Smartdrv (or another disk caching program) on your CD-ROM drive. When using Smartdrv, this may involve entering the command SMARTDRV D+ (assuming your CD-ROM is drive D) at the MS-DOS prompt before starting Windows. Also, make sure that the SMARTDRV line in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file appears after the line that begins with MSCDEX. Some earlier versions of SMARTDRV cannot cache CD-ROM drives - you may need to upgrade to a later version of MS-DOS or Windows.
- Of course, single speed CD-ROMS are not as fast as the double, triple and quadruple speed CD-ROMS that are now available.

Memory

- Free more memory, or buy more memory. See the Memory section in this help file.

[Click here to learn how to free memory.](#)

Screen Drivers

- Try a different screen driver. Some screen drivers are optimised for a certain amount of colours, or resolution. See the Screen Drivers section in this help file.
- Some sections of this multimedia program (such as videos - see below) use multiple optimal palettes, or 24-bit images. This means that to display them on 256 colour display, colour dithering must take place. This can take a little bit longer than when running in high-colour modes, such as 32,000 or 64,000 (or more) colours.

[Click here to learn how to change screen drivers.](#)

Videos

- If you have poor video performance (i.e. videos do not play very well), try playing these videos at full screen. You will often get better results.
- The videos in this multimedia program are 24-bit videos - this means that they are created with millions of colours. In order to play correctly on machines that display only 256 colours, some dithering is done, which takes a little longer, and may slow the video down a little. Try running in a different video mode, say 32,000, 64,000 or even more colours.

[Click here to learn how to change screen drivers.](#)

General Operation and Installation

- When installing, select the Fast Install option. Although this will take some hard disk space, many operations (particularly searching) will occur more quickly. Reinstall if you have to.
- Try using Browse Mode, the command found in the Controls menu of the multimedia program. This mode allows you to move through pages at a rate of knots, as pictures are loaded at a very small resolution. This does allow you to much more quickly locate a specific page, much in the fashion as you used to do with books!

Memory

There are many ways that you can free memory. Anyway that you can free memory will help all programs to run more smoothly. You will also be able to run more programs at once. The speed may also increase dramatically. Try some of these steps.

- Reduce the amount of programs in memory at once. This applies in Windows, but perhaps more importantly in MS-DOS. Make sure that your CONFIG.SYS file and AUTOEXEC.BAT files are loading only the drivers and programs that are required.
- Make sure you are running the latest version of MS-DOS. Older versions of MS-DOS do not have the memory management features of newer versions - this can result in freeing quite a bit of memory.
- Try a new display driver. Many display drivers require more memory as you increase the amount of colours displayed. In other words, although running Windows in millions of colours, it may be much more memory hungry than running Windows in thousands, or 256 colours.

[Click here to learn how to change screen drivers.](#)

- If you have a Windows background bitmap, use the Desktop program in the Control Panel to remove it. It only uses more memory.
- Select the Options command from the Multimedia program, and select the option 'No Background Bitmap'. This will remove the background bitmap from the multimedia program itself, again freeing more memory.
- Sometimes, the longer Windows runs for, badly behaved programs fail to release memory and resources as they should. Consequently, it often helps to restart Windows, and start with a clean slate of memory and resources.
- For best results, use the 386 Enhanced program in the Control Panel to make sure you have a permanent swap file set. This may increase performance and memory management dramatically. This swap file, for machines with under 8Mb of memory, should be at least 20Mb in length.
- Physically increase memory. Programs as graphical as most multimedia programs thrive on 8+ Mb of RAM. If you have less than this, perhaps you should think about upgrading your RAM. Contact your dealer for more details.

Screen Drivers

Unfortunately, not all screen drivers (this is the software that determines how Windows displays on your system) are not all they should be. Consequently, when programs as graphical as a multimedia program is run, some shortcomings become apparent. If you are having problems with display, memory, or videos, it is possible that the direct fault lies with the screen driver you have currently loaded.

Your screen is capable of running in several different modes, ranging from perhaps 16 colours through to millions of colours, and 640 x 480 pixels, up to 1280 x 1024 pixels and higher. Some screen drivers are optimised to work at certain numbers of colours or resolutions - unfortunately it is often you who has to find out which one is best for your system

Generally, to install a new screen driver, you use the Windows Setup program from the Main group. This will allow you to select a new Video driver. If your machine has been correctly set up, you may find you have a choice of several screen drivers (you should perhaps consult a manual, or your dealer, to determine which drivers can be used. There will be some drivers in this list that will simply not work on your system at all.

Some video drivers are changed using a totally different program - for example, many machines using ATI drivers must run an ATI desktop program in order to select a new resolution or number of colours. Again, consult your manual or dealer for help if you are unsure.

If you cannot find any drivers that work well, or are unsure, you may see a driver in your list marked 'Super VGA (640x 480, 256 colours)', and 'Super VGA (800x 600, 256 colours)'. These are standard Windows drivers (provided with Windows 3.11, or available from Microsoft), and work well with almost video cards.

Pictures

Sometimes you may have trouble viewing pictures. This may be for any of the following reasons.

- Bad, or outdated screen drivers.

[Click here to learn how to change screen drivers.](#)

- You are running low on memory.

[Click here to learn how to free memory.](#)

- The CD is not inserted correctly. If no pictures appear, make sure that the correct CD-ROM is inserted, and restart the program. If the problem persists, try reinstalling the software.

Videos

Sometimes you may have trouble viewing videos. This may be for any of the following reasons.

- Bad, or outdated screen drivers.

[Click here to learn how to change screen drivers.](#)

- You are running low on memory.

[Click here to learn how to free memory.](#)

- The CD is not inserted correctly. If no pictures appear, make sure that the correct CD-ROM is inserted, and restart the program. If the problem persists, try reinstalling the software.
- If the video runs very slowly, use the Size button to make the video smaller, or ironically, to run at Full Screen. Videos run at full screen size are often much smoother than smaller videos.
- If nothing appears to help, or you get an error message when running videos, reinstall Video for Windows. To do this, close down the multimedia program. From the CD, run the SETUP.EXE program from the WINVID11 directory. This will then install, or update, Video for Windows, ensuring that all the correct drivers are on your system.

Audio

Sometimes you may have trouble hearing audio. This may be for any of the following reasons.

- Ensure that you have a sound card, and that the correct sound card software is installed. You may need to consult your manuals if you are having trouble with this step.
- Ensure that your speakers are working, and are connected properly.
- In the options dialog box, you can set the volume for both audio and video (on most machines, that is). If you can do this, ensure that the volume has not been set to zero.
- All sound cards can set volume using either a knob, or software. make sure that the card itself has had its volume set correctly.

Startup Problems

- If you experience any startup problems, try using the switch /nostart. This means to start the program REPTILES.EXE, enter the command (from the Program Manager's Run command) 'REPTILES /nostart'. This will bypass the opening screen and go straight to the Contents screen.
- If, as you start the program, a dialog box appears asking you to insert the correct drive letter for your CD-ROM drive, insert the letter you think your CD-ROM drive is, and click on OK. If this does not work, make sure that the correct CD-ROM is installed.
- If all else fails, reinstall the software. This does not take long at all, and often solves all problems.

