

Troubleshooting Microsoft Agent for End Users



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If you have difficulty running Microsoft Agent on your machine, please refer to the following list of symptoms and try the suggested steps to isolate and solve the problem. If these suggestions don't resolve the problem, let us know by sending us a bug report.

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Page Loading and Installation Problems

When I attempt to load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent, nothing happens.

This can occur if one of the following conditions exists:

- Check your browser's security options. Your browser must be set to enable the loading of ActiveX™ scripts and playing of ActiveX controls.

If you are accessing pages scripted with Microsoft Agent and using Microsoft Internet Explorer, you must have version 3.0 or later (download the latest version of Internet Explorer). In Microsoft Internet Explorer, open the View menu, choose Options, click the Security tab, and check all the Active Content check boxes.

- A Java applet on the page can also cause this error. To run Microsoft Agent on the same page as a Java applet requires version 2.0 of the Microsoft Java VM. For more information, see our Technical FAQ.

When I attempt to load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent, I get the message, "Unable to initialize Microsoft Agent."

This usually occurs when you don't have Microsoft Agent or some other control that page uses installed, and choose No when you are prompted to install the control. Try refreshing the page, though the page may work only if you install all the components it requires.

When I attempt to load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent, I get a scripting error: "Microsoft VBScript Runtime Error, Object required."

One of the following conditions may cause the message to display:

- Your security options for Microsoft Internet Explorer must be set to enable ActiveX controls and plug-ins. Check your browser's security page. In Microsoft Internet Explorer, open the View menu, choose Options, click the Security tab, and make sure the Enable ActiveX Controls And Plug-Ins check box is checked.

- You are running on a dual-boot Windows® 95/Windows NT system and you have installed Microsoft Agent on one operating system but are trying to access the page from the other operating system. Although the operating systems may share directories and files, the registry information used by Microsoft Agent is not shared, so you must install Microsoft Agent on the operating system you use to access Web pages scripted with the character.

When I attempt to install Microsoft Agent on Microsoft Windows NT, I get a message indicating that I need to be an administrator.

Because Microsoft Agent writes files to your system directory when it installs, you must have administrator (not user) privileges to install.

When I attempt to install Microsoft Agent on Windows NT 4.0, I get the following error: Process (Regsvr32 /s Progra~1\Micros~2\AgentCtl.dll). Error while creating this file. Cannot find this file.

Installation of Microsoft Agent requires the proper installation of Regsvr32.exe (and other OLE dlls). The best way to ensure that all the correct system files are present is to install Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.02 or later.

When I attempt to load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent using Netscape Navigator (or other Internet browsers), I get errors.

Microsoft Agent is implemented using ActiveX interfaces. You can use it only with a browser (such as Microsoft Internet Explorer) that supports embedding ActiveX objects through script on a page, and only on systems running Microsoft Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0. If you are not using Microsoft Internet Explorer, check with your browser vendor for further information on ActiveX support.

How do I remove Microsoft Agent from my system?

To uninstall Microsoft Agent, open the Control Panel, then open the Add/Remove Programs object. You should find Microsoft Agent included in the list. Select the entry, then click the Add/Remove button.

The Microsoft Agent uninstall utility removes only the Microsoft Agent services. If you also installed the Lernout & Hauspie® TruVoice Text-To-Speech Engine for Microsoft Agent, select this and click the Add/Remove button. In addition, if you also installed Microsoft Command and Control speech recognition engine and you know that no other application uses it, you should select and remove the following entries:

Microsoft Command & Control Engine

Microsoft Speech Lexicon

Microsoft Speech API (3.0)

Does Microsoft Agent work in Internet Explorer 4.0?

Please note that Microsoft Agent will not run in Internet Explorer 4.0 Platform Preview, due to a bug in the Internet Explorer 4.0 Preview version. Install the final release version of Internet Explorer 4.0.

Speech Input Problems

The character does not respond to voice commands that I used to train it.

Voice training does not teach the character new commands. It does help the speech engine better recognize your voice input. The only way to teach the character new commands is to define voice commands as part of your Web page (application). Consult *Programming the Microsoft Agent Control* for further information on how to do this.

The character does not respond to voice commands on a sample page.

Not all sample pages support speech input. The Goodbye World sample on this site does. To speak to the character, press and hold the Scroll Lock key. If the character does not respond to any of these commands, check the following sections on troubleshooting voice input for additional recommendations.

The character does not respond to my voice input.

This symptom may be caused by a number of problems. Try the following to isolate the problem:

- Verify that your microphone is correctly plugged in. It is a good idea to test it with another sound input application to ensure that it works properly.
- Verify that a compatible speech engine is installed. When running a Microsoft Agent sample page, right-click the Microsoft Agent icon in the taskbar (near the clock display) and choose Microsoft Agent Properties. If the Speech Input page is disabled, a compatible speech engine is not installed. You can install the Microsoft Command and Control speech recognition engine from the Microsoft Agent site at <http://www.microsoft.com/workshop/prog/agent/agentdl.htm>.
- Verify that your sound card is compatible with Microsoft Windows 95 or Windows NT.

The best way to do this is to run the Sound Recorder application that comes with Windows. It can usually be found on the Start menu. Click the Start button, then Programs, then Accessories, then Multimedia, and then Sound Recorder. When the Sound Recorder window displays, click the Record button and talk into your microphone. The line in the window should animate in response to your voice input.

If the Sound Recorder application doesn't work on your system, contact the sound card manufacturer's technical support department for assistance. Your sound card may not be compatible with Windows or there may be a problem with the software drivers for your sound card.

- Verify that your sound input for speech input is set properly.
 1. Load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent. When the icon appears, right-click it and choose Microsoft Agent Properties from the pop-up menu.
 2. When the property sheet displays, select the Speech Input page.
 3. Choose the Adjust Microphone button. If this button appears disabled, a compatible speech engine is not installed or the speech engine you installed may not support automatic adjustment.
- Verify that no other application is currently using the audio output device.
- Verify that Microsoft Agent's use of MIDI is not blocking the audio channel (see "Applications that play MIDI have no audio output when Microsoft Agent is running" in the Output Problems section).
- If you followed the steps above but still have problems with speech input, verify that your sound card and driver software is compatible with the speech engine you are using. Check with the technical support for your sound card and your speech engine manufacturer. If you installed the Microsoft Command and Control speech recognition engine, check the troubleshooting information at <http://www.research.microsoft.com/stg/sndcard.htm>.

The character does not respond to voice input, but I can hear my voice through my speakers when I talk into my microphone.

Your sound card is not set up properly for use with Microsoft Agent. Choose the Adjust Microphone options on the Speech Input page of the Microsoft Agent property sheet. See the previous section for information on how to access this button.

Output Problems

The character doesn't produce any audio output when it speaks.

This symptom could have several causes. Try the following to isolate the problem:

- Verify that your speakers are plugged in and your sound card is compatible with Windows. It is a good idea to test them with another sound application to confirm that audio output is working properly.

- Verify that no other application is currently using the audio output device.
- Verify that the character you are using has been configured for spoken output. (You may need to check with the Web site or application supplier.)
- Verify that your Microsoft Agent settings are enabled for spoken output using the following procedure:
 1. Load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent. When the Microsoft Agent icon appears in the taskbar, right-click it and choose Microsoft Agent Properties from the pop-up menu.
 2. When the property sheet displays, select the Output page.
 3. Set the Play Spoken Output option and click OK.
- If the character uses a text-to-speech (TTS) engine to produce spoken output, verify that you have installed a compatible TTS engine. For example, when installed as an IE4 add-on component, only the core components of Microsoft Agent are installed. The core components do not include the Lernout & Hauspie TruVoice Text-To-Speech engine. Without this TTS engine (or a Microsoft Speech API-compatible engine), Microsoft Agent sample characters will not produce spoken output. The Lernout & Hauspie TruVoice TTS engine can be found at the Microsoft Agent download page at <http://www.microsoft.com/workshop/prog/agent/agendl.htm#speech>.
- Verify that Microsoft Agent's use of MIDI is not blocking the audio channel (see the next topic, "Applications that play MIDI have no audio output when Microsoft Agent is running").

Applications that play MIDI have no audio output when Microsoft Agent is running.

Microsoft Agent uses MIDI to play a tone when you press the Listening key. If you find that this interferes with other applications that play MIDI, you can turn off the Play Tone When You Can Speak option in the Microsoft Agent properties using the following procedure:

1. Load a page scripted for Microsoft Agent. When the Microsoft Agent icon appears in the taskbar, right-click it and choose Microsoft Agent Properties from the pop-up menu.
2. When the property sheet displays, select the Speech Input page.
3. Uncheck the Play Tone When You Can Speak option and click OK.