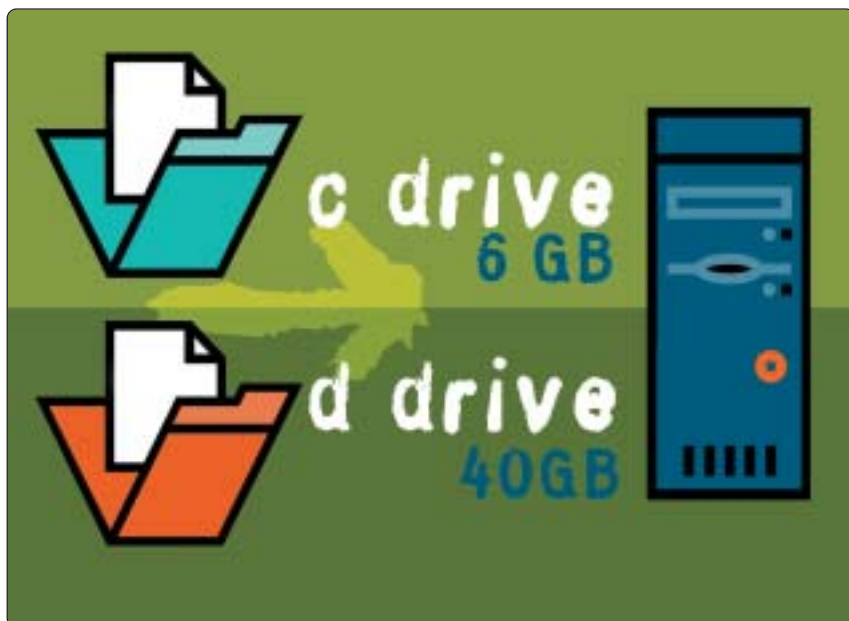




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↓ General

Q Is it possible to transfer everything held on my 6GB C drive to my 40GB D drive so that I can remove the smaller drive?

A It's possible, though it may not be quite as easy as you think. You should be able to drag and drop the contents of your C drive to the D drive. Make sure that the Windows Explorer folder options to show hidden and system files are enabled, so that when copying you don't miss any hidden folders or system files held in the root directory of your C drive. Alternatively, you could back up your C drive and then restore the files to the D drive.

You'll now need to make the D drive bootable or you'll see a 'Not a system disk' message once you remove your C drive and start to boot. If you're running a Windows 95 family operating system and have a boot floppy handy with copies of sys.exe on it then all you need to do is boot from the floppy and run the command 'SYS C:'.

If you're running Windows XP then making the D drive bootable is more difficult; you will need to use the Recovery

Console. Start the computer using the Windows XP CD-ROM. When the 'Welcome to Setup' screen appears press F10 or R to repair then C to start the Recovery Console. Copy the file ntldr from the i386 folder of the CD-ROM to the root directory of the C drive. You may also need to run the fixboot command to make the partition bootable.

Unfortunately, while the above steps should result in making a bootable C drive out of your D drive, you may start to receive errors when you try to run applications. The problem is that anything that was on your D drive now has a path starting with C and there may be many such incorrect pathnames hidden in configuration files or the Registry. It could be necessary to reinstall applications to overcome these problems.

There are utilities that can make this job easier and improve your chances of success. PowerQuest's PartitionMagic (www.powerquest.com) contains a tool that moves files from one partition to another and updates most, if not all, Registry entries that relate to the moved files.

If you have PartitionMagic or a similar utility then you also have the option of creating two partitions on your current D drive and moving the contents into the second partition. You can then copy the files from the old C drive to the first

partition on D, which will keep the drive letters the same once the smaller drive has been removed from your system.

Q I have a light aircraft simulator that I purchased in the mid-90s. I installed it under DOS 6.3 on a now-redundant notebook. The program works, but the display is squashed between two black bands at the top and bottom of the screen.

I recall that the developer, Digital Aviation, provided me with a command line that returned the display to full screen. However, I can't find a record of this command and the company now seems to have fallen by the wayside. Can you offer any advice?

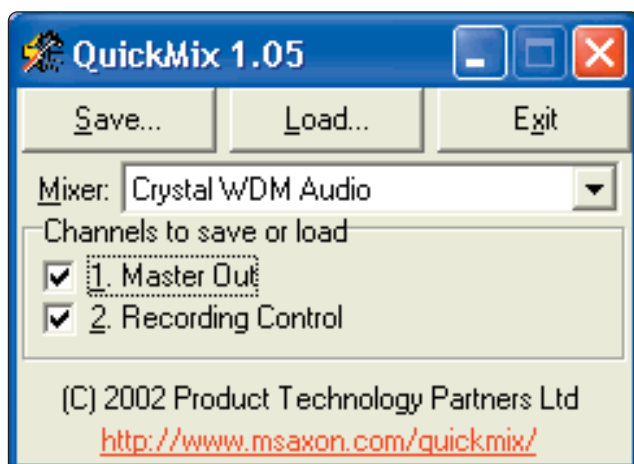
A The command you were given was probably something specific to this program or its graphics drivers. Unfortunately we couldn't locate any information on the web related to this program, apart from complaints from users who paid money for an upgrade that never appeared.

We presume that this flight simulator is a DOS program. As such it probably defaults to one of the DOS display modes such as EGA, which has a resolution of 640x350 pixels. This is the same number of pixels horizontally as the standard VGA mode, but 130 lines fewer vertically.

A conventional monitor is able to stretch this picture to fill the screen, but in a notebook display each cell must correspond to one pixel. This means that when a lower resolution mode is used the picture is smaller.

On many notebooks there is an option in the Bios Setup utility to expand lower-resolution modes to fill the screen. It would be worth checking for this in case you can use it. However, the expansion is achieved by drawing a double-thick line every few lines, so the results aren't very pretty.

Q I recently purchased a budget notebook and I'm happy with the quality. However, what seems to have been sacrificed in order to keep the price down is connectivity. There's no serial



← Use QuickMix to save and restore your sound card mixer settings

port, PS/2 port, infrared or FireWire, although there is a printer port as well as two USB ports and PC Card slots. Could a serial port or perhaps a PS/2 port be accessed through the USB connection?

A Yes. The use of USB-to-serial port adapters is, happily, quite widespread. Even on PCs that already have a serial port they are useful if you need more than the standard complement of ports. We don't think you'll find a USB to PS/2 adapter but that shouldn't be an issue – these ports are only used for mice and keyboards and there are USB alternatives available.

The PC Card slots will allow you to connect modems, Zip drives, CD writers and most other peripherals so your notebook's connectivity options aren't as restricted as you think.

C I bought a used notebook with a blank hard disk. I installed Windows 98 SE and it works fine except that it does not remember my sound card mixer settings after a reboot. The startup default settings are not what I want so this is very annoying. Can I fix it?

A The mixer settings are usually stored on the sound card itself, so it seems Windows is failing to read the settings from the sound card at startup. If Device Manager shows an error or conflict with one of the sound card drivers you should try to resolve this.

Also check that you have the latest Windows 98 drivers for your sound card chipset. If this doesn't work then try using QuickMix, a free program from Martin

Saxon Systems (www.msaxon.com/quickmix/), which is also on this month's cover disc. QuickMix will save and load mixer settings to suit different programs, so it's a useful tool for anyone who uses a lot of different audio programs.

You can add a parameter to the QuickMix command line specifying which saved settings file to load (shown above). If you put a shortcut to this command in your StartUp program group then this should restore your preferred settings each time Windows starts up.

C My PC has an AMD 2000+ processor and a SIS K75SA motherboard. It has performed perfectly until recently when I booted up to be confronted with the message 'Checksum Error'. I was given the option to 'Load default values' or 'Run setup'.

I loaded the default settings, with the result that the machine thought it had a 1.2GHz processor not an XP 2000+. When I went into Setup I discovered that I had lost all my settings for memory and front bus speeds as well. I corrected this but now the checksum error has occurred again. What's causing it and how can I stop it from happening in the future?

A The Cmos memory where your Bios settings are stored has become corrupt. The Cmos is a special small block of memory that needs virtually no power to retain information and runs off the same battery that powers the system clock. As your computer is quite new, and if the clock is keeping good time, it's unlikely a failing battery is the cause of this corruption but it's still a possibility.

There are a few viruses around that tamper with the Cmos and corrupt it, so

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a check of your hard disk with an up-to-date virus scanner is a must. If your scanner gives the all-clear, though, there's a fair chance that a hardware fault is causing the corruption.

It's extremely rare for the Cmos to become corrupted by external causes although static electricity (shocks when you touch the computer) and bad noise spikes on the mains supply can both cause PCs to play up. It might be worth trying a surge suppressor (your local PC store will have one) to rule this last possibility out.

More likely, though, is that either the Cmos itself is faulty (in which case it's a motherboard replacement job) or it's getting corrupted during power-up, which could be due to a power supply fault.

↓ Windows

Q In one of your back issues you mentioned using System File Checker to check for corrupted system files. Where is this facility? I can't find it on the Windows CD-ROM.

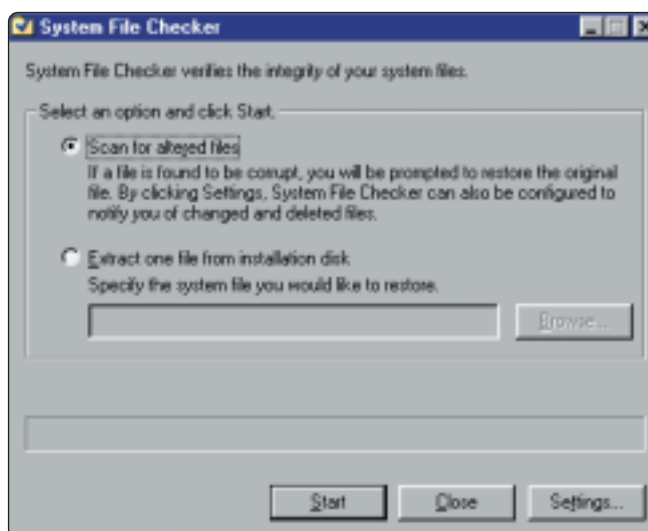
A SFC (System File Checker), shown above, is present in Windows 98 and Windows 98 SE. It's already installed but you won't find it on the Programs menu. To run it select Start, Run, type SFC and press Enter.

You won't find SFC if your PC runs Windows Me as its functionality was automated and built into the OS' System File Protection feature. Windows XP has an SFC program but it's a command line tool designed to be run by the system as part of the Windows File Protection feature.

Q My PC runs Windows 98 SE and occasionally when it starts up I receive the error: 'Spool32 caused an invalid page fault in module spool32.exe at 017f:00402015'. How can I correct this problem?

A To answer your question, we referred to The Ultimate Windows 95 Spool32 FAQ site, written by an ex-Microsoft tech support lady. You'll find it at www.starkreality.com/~callen/

→ System File Checker is a handy feature but it's only available under Windows 98



spool32.htm. She claims that if a module is generating an error in itself then the file is probably corrupt. It would therefore be worth using SFC (System File Checker), shown above, to install a fresh copy of spool32.exe from your Windows 98 CD.

However, we've seen a few reports posted on the web that are so similar to yours that we're not convinced this is the explanation, especially as corrupt files are extremely rare. Unfortunately the stock 'fixes' in the Microsoft Knowledgebase for Spool32 errors relate to ones that occur during printing.

Errors that occur intermittently at startup are usually caused by a piece of software doing something during its initialisation phase that upsets something else if it happens at just the wrong moment. The difficulty is to track down the culprit.

The only way to do this is to follow some advice given in Helpline many times before. Use the Startup tab of the System Configuration Utility (Msconfig) to temporarily disable the applications that run automatically at startup. This allows Windows to have a 'clean' bootup. If there's no evidence of the error you can then start re-enabling programs one by one until you find the app that appears to cause the error.

Since Spool32 errors are printer-related, another good idea would be to check that all is well in the printer department. Ensure that any drivers for long-departed printers have been removed and that the drivers for your latest model are the most up to date.

Q Before installing a program or running the disk defragmenter you are asked to close down all programs that are running. Perhaps this is a simple task for an old hand, but as a computing newbie I have a few questions.

How do I know what programs are running? How can I close them down? And will they start again automatically upon rebooting?

A The instruction to close all programs is standard advice for most setup procedures. The purpose is simply to avoid the problems that might arise if the installer needs to replace a shared file that something else is using.

A decent installer should be able to handle this situation, though there are a few we've come across that don't. We've also occasionally heard of cases where a viruschecker interfered with a setup program. So it's as well to try to follow the advice without being too obsessive about it.

The most important thing to do is to close all the programs you can actually see running. Obviously that means closing absolutely every last application: aim to have no buttons showing on the Taskbar. You should also try to close as many as possible of the programs that are running in the System Tray.

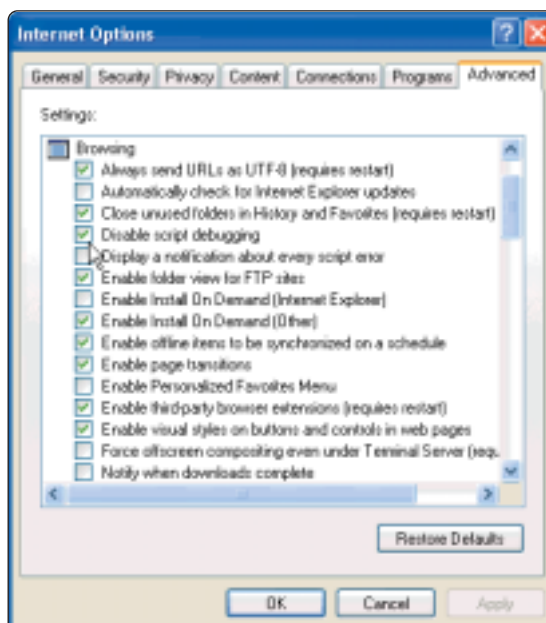
Right-click each icon and look for an option named Close, Exit or Unload. However, don't worry about things that you can't find a way to close, such as the loudspeaker icon that brings up the sound card mixer panel.

↓ Internet

Q Are there any settings in Outlook Express to enable pictures to be displayed in the emails I receive from companies like Dell and Novatech? Most of the important information is lost when you can't see the embedded images. Is there any way I can download the images with the emails?

A Not as such. The images contained in advertising emails are usually links to image files on the company's web server. They will only be displayed if you read the email while online. If you disconnect before reading your mail then Outlook Express won't be able to download the images when you open the message. Instead, they will be replaced by a box containing a red cross.

The solution is not to disconnect your internet connection until after you've read your mail. If you do this then the images should stay available for offline reading, at least for a while, as they will be cached in Internet Explorer's Temporary Internet Files folder.



← To stop those annoying script error messages when you surf, disable script debugging

Q Why do I sometimes see the message 'Error on page' when I go online? It doesn't seem to adversely affect the page.

A This message means that some script code in the page you are viewing has encountered an error. Unfortunately, there's nothing you can do

about it, as it's usually the result of a programming error or a side-effect of your chosen security settings.

The best thing you can do is suppress the message: select Tools, Internet Options and then click the Advanced tab. In the list of settings, under Browsing, check the box beside 'Disable script debugging' (shown above) then click ok.

Stamp on mail bugs

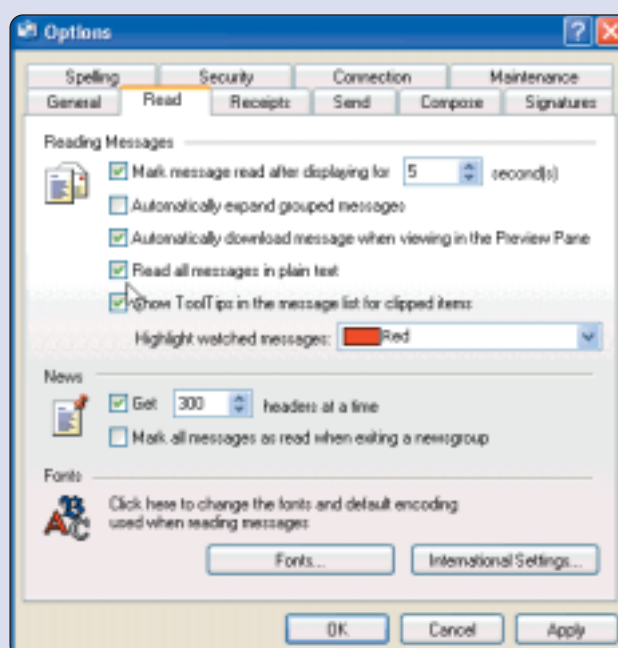
tip

A number of email-borne worm viruses use script code embedded in the body of a formatted message to do their dirty work. These viruses can be activated simply by clicking on the message in Outlook Express so that the text appears in the preview pane. If your copy of Outlook Express is bang up to date and you have a good viruschecker then there's little to fear from the current generation of worm viruses.

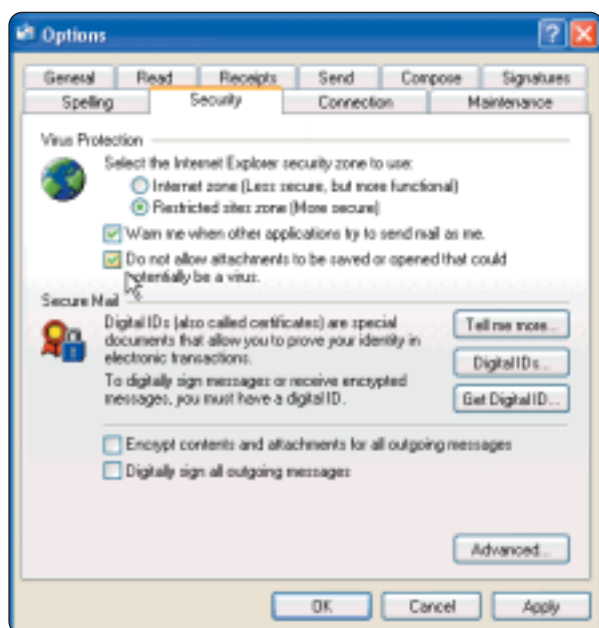
However, because of the problems these viruses have caused in the past, some security-conscious users are understandably wary of formatted emails. Many have turned to alternative mail clients that only display plain text. There's no way to conceal a virus in a plain text message, so it's the only way to be sure you're safe.

With Internet Explorer 6.0 Service Pack 1 Microsoft has finally taken the hint and provided Outlook Express with an option to read messages as plain text. They may not look as pretty when viewed this way, but no script code or other active content is run when a message is displayed as plain text.

To enable the new option click Tools, Options and select the Read tab. Under 'Reading messages' check the box entitled 'Read all messages as plain text'.



↑ At last – a safe way to read messages using Outlook Express



← Having all of Outlook Express 6.0's virus protection options selected may prevent you from being able to open harmless attachments

Express is blocking – for example, Jpeg files – select it and click the Advanced button. On the Edit File Type window you'll see an option that says 'Confirm open after download' (shown below).

This is the setting that Outlook Express uses to determine whether a file type is potentially dangerous or not. If you clear this checkbox and click ok then Outlook Express will no longer block access to files of this type. It's worth checking that this option is selected for the file types that are commonly used to spread viruses such as HTA, JS, JSE, VBE, VBS, WSF, WSH and DOT.

Other file types that can spread viruses include BAT, CMD, COM, EXE and PIF. Windows XP won't let you see the settings for these system files. If you use this operating system then you can assume that they are already correctly set.

I have Windows XP and Outlook Express installed on my PC. If I receive mail containing a photograph and click the large paperclip to view it then the header bar turns blue and the attachment won't open. If I click the small paperclip in the list of messages, the message opens in the preview pane and I can view the photo only by using the scrollbars to navigate the message.

Over the top of the image is a line that says: 'Outlook Express removed access to the following unsafe attachments'. I wouldn't mind if that was true but it even did this with a photo of my wife! How can I get access to these attachments so I can open them in a proper image viewer?

A Because so many viruses are spread using email, Microsoft introduced some virus protection features in Outlook Express 6.0. However, it did it in a rather brain-dead way. If you click on Tools, Options and select the Security tab, you'll see an option that says 'Do not allow attachments to be saved or opened that could potentially be a virus' (shown above).

This option is usually disabled by default, but as it sounds like a good idea many users enable it. Outlook uses a checklist of potentially dangerous attachments but unfortunately some harmless attachments are flagged as possible viruses and, as a result,

Outlook won't allow you to open them or save them to your hard disk.

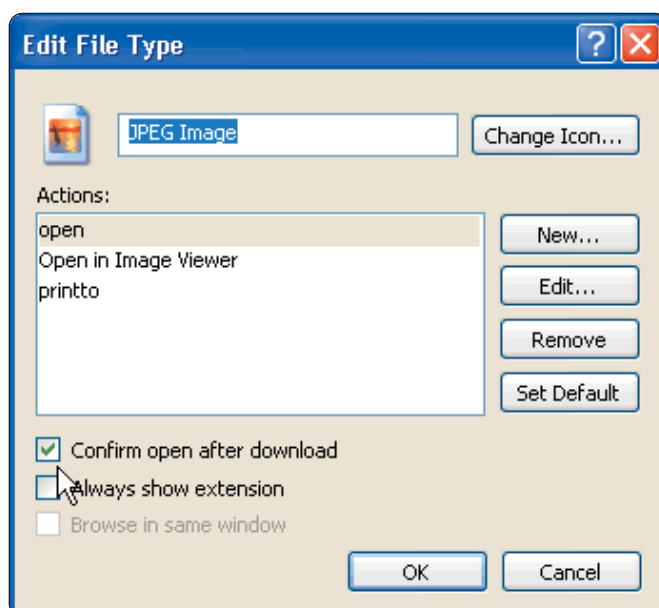
If you use a good, up-to-date viruschecker that provides on-access virus scanning you can simply disable this option and let your viruschecker take care of deciding whether an attachment is really dangerous or not. However, if you like the belt-and-braces approach you can keep the option enabled and simply configure it so that only attachments that really are potentially dangerous are blocked.

To do this, open Folder Options from Control Panel or Windows Explorer and select the File Types tab. Scroll down the list to locate the file type that Outlook

→ You can also configure Outlook Express so it allows you to open certain file types, such as Jpeg images

My PC has Windows 98 SE installed on it and I use Internet Explorer 6.0 with Service Pack 1. It all works fine except that whenever I click on a link on a web page, more often than not I receive the following error message: 'Problems with this web page might prevent it from being displayed properly or functioning properly'.

If I click on 'More Information' I receive the message 'Error. The callee (server) is not available and disappeared, all connections are invalid. The call did not execute'. The page that the link leads to does not open.



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If our online database can't solve your problem, try posting a question in the Helproom forum, where more than 200 queries are answered every day. The forum is manned by our team of Helproom angels, who are ready and willing



to lend a hand on anything, from system crashes to virus alerts. Don't let the gremlins get you down – check out our Helproom instead.



www.pcadvisor.co.uk/helproom

I tried reverting to Internet Explorer 5.5 but still had the same problem. I was advised to check my security settings but they are set at the default (medium) level.

A This error appears when an attempt to open a link using some JavaScript code fails – something which can occur if your PC's security settings prevent the code from loading. Security updates such as those in the Service Pack can also cause script errors that may not have happened before. The JavaScript code, for example, may use some feature that is now considered to be potentially dangerous.

However, due to the circumstances you explain, we suspect that the problem does not lie with Internet Explorer. The most likely explanation is that some other

software installed on your machine is interfering with your surfing. The culprit is probably a pop-up window stopper. If you don't run such an application be aware that certain antivirus and internet security utilities have features that can stop pop-up windows from appearing or prevent script code from running.

Firewall utilities monitor everything that goes in and out of your internet connection and should therefore be high on the list of possible troublemakers when you start experiencing unusual or frequent errors.

The only way to get to the bottom of this problem involves a lengthy process: uninstall or disable anything that might be doing this, as shown below. If the errors stop appearing, you can then reinstall or re-enable them one by one until the culprit reveals itself.



← Uninstall or temporarily disable possible problem programs, such as virus scanners, in order to locate the source of a conflict



I have acquired a two-year-old PC running Windows 98. It has a Sportster modem which has never been used and my problem is that I cannot connect to my ISP, Virgin Net.

I created a dialup connection via the Sportster modem to my company server and this worked with no problems first time. When I try to connect using the account I made for Virgin, however, the usual modem warbling occurs but after several seconds the call ends and I get an error message stating that the host computer is not answering.

In frustration, I installed a Tiscali CD that was free with an issue of PC Advisor and this worked okay. I then ordered a Virgin setup CD. During installation the modem is required to dial up to Virgin Net in order to complete registration and, as expected, I encountered the exact same problem. Have you any idea what could be causing this?



The problem has to be an incompatibility between your Sportster modem and Virgin Net's dialup servers. A lot has happened in the development of modem communication protocols in the two or more years since your modem was manufactured. And if it had never been used it won't have been updated, either.

We suggest that you visit US Robotics' website (<http://modemupdate.usr.com>), get the latest update for your modem and then try again.

I am running Windows 98 SE with Internet Explorer 6.0, updated using a *PC Advisor* cover disc. Recently I have been unable to hang up the phoneline when I have finished surfing the net.

I used to be offered the choice of staying online or disconnecting when I closed the application. This prompt no longer appears and clicking File, Work Offline does not disconnect the line either. In desperation I have had to shut down Windows. Surely there must be a simpler way to log off than a complete system restart. Can you help me with this problem?

A The option File, Work Offline isn't intended to disconnect you from the web as such. It tells Internet Explorer not to look on the internet for any files that it thinks it needs, so that you can work offline.

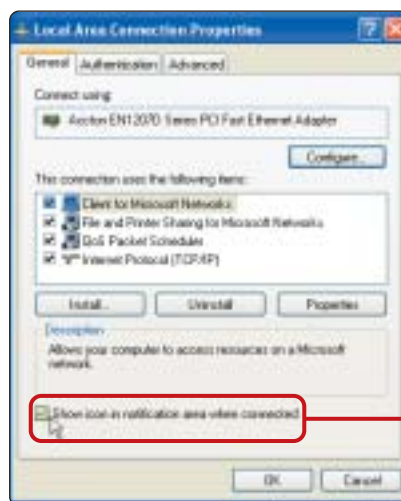
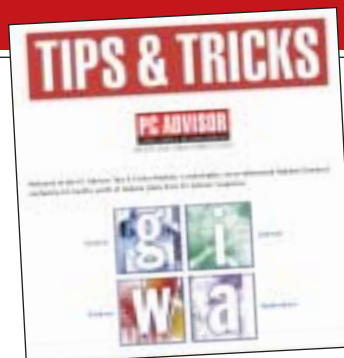
As an increasing number of programs make use of the web it's not practical to rely on Windows to close the connection, as the internet may appear to be still in use even though you know you have finished with it. The best way to control the connection is to do it yourself.

What you appear to be missing is the small icon of two computers with flashing screens that appears in the System Tray when you're online.

To disconnect from the internet just right-click this icon and select Disconnect.

Helpline FAQs Directory

Ever have a problem with your PC and feel sure you once read about the solution in a past issue of Helpline? The FAQ Directory can help you. Comprising 18 months worth of questions and answers from Helpline, the Directory is a searchable database of almost 400 questions and answers. It covers common Windows dilemmas, plus bugs and glitches in software, hardware errors and web troubleshooting. Whatever your problem, our Directory can almost certainly provide you with the solution. The FAQ Directory is available with *Tips & Tricks*, on sale now at all good newsagents.



← Check this box in the Connection Properties dialog box...

↓ ...to make Windows display this System Tray icon to show when you are connected to the internet



↓ Applications

I would like to put a frequently used program on my hard disk so that I don't need to insert the CD every time I run it? How can I do this?

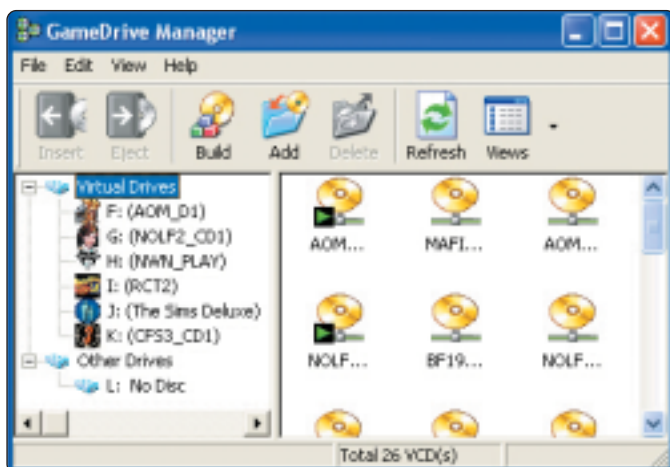
A With today's computers having more disk space than most people are likely to use, there's a lot to be said for installing CD-ROM-based software to the hard disk. Unfortunately, there's no generic method for doing this.

Some programs let you copy the contents of the CD to a folder on the hard disk and run them from there. Others have an option during Setup that allows you to install all the files needed to the hard disk. But many programs don't provide any such option and won't run if the CD is not present. Copying the files to the hard disk won't work because the software configuration contains links to the original copies on CD and it isn't easy to find

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these and change them. Some programs may even check for special hidden files on the CD as a copy-protection measure.

If a program insists on being run from CD then the only solution is to use a software utility that can make a disc folder look like a real CD-ROM drive. Examples include VirtualDrive (shown above, and on this month's cover disc) and GameDrive from FarStone at www.farstone.com, Virtual CD at www.virtualcd-online.com/default_e.htm and Paragon's CD-ROM Emulator at www.cdrom-emulator.com (see links on the cover disc for these last three programs).



A friend has sent me an email containing an attachment with

a PPS suffix. How can I read it?

My friend cannot help; he says he can view it on his computer.



Your friend probably has Microsoft Office installed on his computer, as the file is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation or slideshow. Fortunately, you don't need to buy Office just in order to view this slideshow. You can download a free 2.8MB viewer from Microsoft by visiting www.microsoft.com/office/000/viewers.asp. Once there, click on the link for PowerPoint and select the PowerPoint Viewer 97. Once it's installed you'll be able to fully appreciate the file your friend has sent.

← If a program insists on being run from the CD, use a program such as GameDrive to make a disc folder look like a real CD drive to your PC



My PC has a DVD drive but I was unable to run a DVD movie that was given to me recently. Windows Media Player won't play it. Do I need a DVD software player and, if so, what do you recommend?



You do need a DVD player application. For some reason Microsoft Media Player stops short of supporting DVD media. Helpline isn't here to give product recommendations -- for that you need to look at the Reviews pages. We can make some suggestions, though, especially if you're looking for something free.

Microsoft included a DVD player in Windows 98, but its functionality is pretty basic and unless your PC's graphics card has a hardware-based decoder it won't be much use. The Microsoft DVD player will allegedly work with software decoders, but the usual way to acquire those is by installing a DVD player application.

If you happen to have a suitably equipped system, though, Microsoft's free DVD player is worth a try. To install it, click on Start, Run, type SFC and press Enter. Then use the 'Extract one file from the installation CD' option to extract the following files: `dvdplay.exe`, `dvdrgn.exe` (to `c:\Windows\System`), `dvdplay.chm` (to `c:\Windows\Help`). Finally drag a shortcut

Pass it on: tips from readers

tip

Do you have any great workarounds or shortcuts you would like to share? Send your tips and tricks to Helpline, *PC Advisor*, Fifth Floor, 85 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TQ, or email pcadvisor_letters@idg.com. To help us sort your messages, please use the words 'Pass it on' in the subject heading.

Sleepy screen

Reader Richard Sadek wrote to pass on the solution to a problem in which a computer being woken from Standby mode came up in 640x480 resolution instead of 1,024x768, which it had been using before. He discovered that the monitor powered off in Standby mode. This meant that Windows couldn't determine its capabilities on reawakening, causing it to default to standard VGA mode. By the time the monitor was powered back on, it was too late.

Although this is clearly a Windows problem that ought to be solved by an update, either by making Windows wait until the monitor had powered on or by using the display mode that

was in use before going to standby, Richard solved the problem by switching the monitor off while in standby and switching it back on before restarting Windows. This ensures that the monitor is ready to respond when Windows interrogates it to find out what capabilities it has.

Shot in the foot

Eric Smith applied the changes described in our tip *Shoot the Windows Messenger* (Helpline, February 03, page 174) to prevent Windows Messenger from starting. He then found that Internet Explorer and Outlook Express took a long time to start. This was irritating so he reset the 'Do not allow Windows Messenger to run' option and renamed the EXE file in `c:\Program Files\Messenger` to a file type of BAK. This stops Messenger from running, but Internet Explorer and Outlook Express now start in a flash.

Thanks for the tip, Eric. If other readers out there are experiencing this problem, we're sure they'll find your advice very useful.



←↕ Free software DVD players such as VideoLAN (left) and Maximus DVD (below) abound on the web so you aren't stuck with Windows Media Player



from dvdplay.exe to your desktop so you can conveniently run the program.

If you run Windows Me then the file dvdplay.exe may already be installed. You'll still need to create your own shortcut to it (described above) as it doesn't appear on any menu. We've also seen reports that it works under Windows XP if you copy the files there. If you have a Windows 98 CD you can open the cabinet archives driver11.cab and driver17.cab in the \Win98 folder and then drag and drop the files to the locations suggested.

The Microsoft DVD player is fairly useless if you don't have any decoders, but that doesn't necessarily mean you'll have to stump up hard-earned cash to play DVDs on your computer. There are some free players available. One is called Maximus DVD, shown above, right (download from www.maximusdvd.com or access from this month's cover disc).

We're not sure what the catch is – apart from the initial problem of finding the download link.

If you're worried about adware and spyware then you may be happier running open-source software, which is written by enthusiasts dedicated to the idea that software should be free.

If so, try the VideoLAN Client, shown above, left, from www.videolan.org (or click the link on this month's cover disc). It's a lot smaller to download than the commercial packages – one reason being that it lacks a fancy interface – but it works just fine. Home network owners may also be interested to learn that you can

install the VideoLAN Server on a computer with a DVD drive and then watch movies via the network on non-DVD-equipped PCs.

If after all this you are still left feeling that you can't do without a commercial DVD player, you can take a look at www.hoyty.com/dvd where you'll find a comparison of some of the best-known DVD players. For serious DVD fans, <http://dvd.da.ru> is also worth a look.

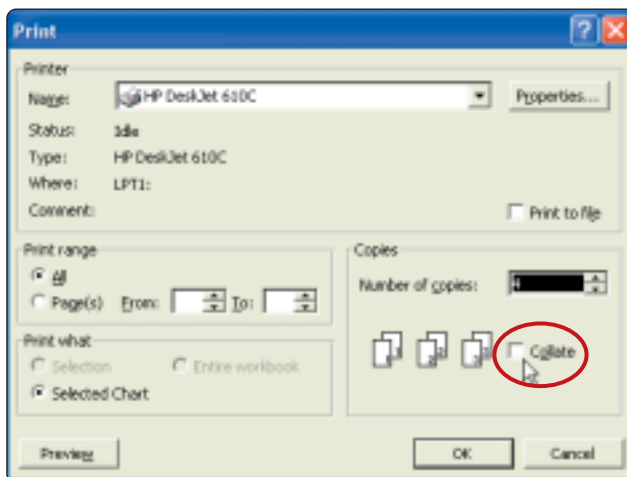
I am using Microsoft Office XP Standard and my printer is an Epson Stylus Photo 890. When I wish to print multiple copies of a document from Word I simply select the number of copies and walk away: the job is completed in my absence. With Excel the printer requires me to click a button between

each copy, which means I have to stay by the computer. It appears that Excel creates a separate print job for each single copy. Can you help resolve this annoying problem?

A This seems to have been a problem with Excel since time immemorial. The reason that Excel prints each copy as a separate job is that the program's Print dialog box selects the Collate option by default and this option requires Excel itself to control the printing.

If you just ensure you uncheck the Collate option before printing your document (shown below) you should find that all your copies print as one job requiring no intervention between each copy. ■

→ Uncheck the Collate option in Excel's Print dialog to print multiple copies of a worksheet as one job



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