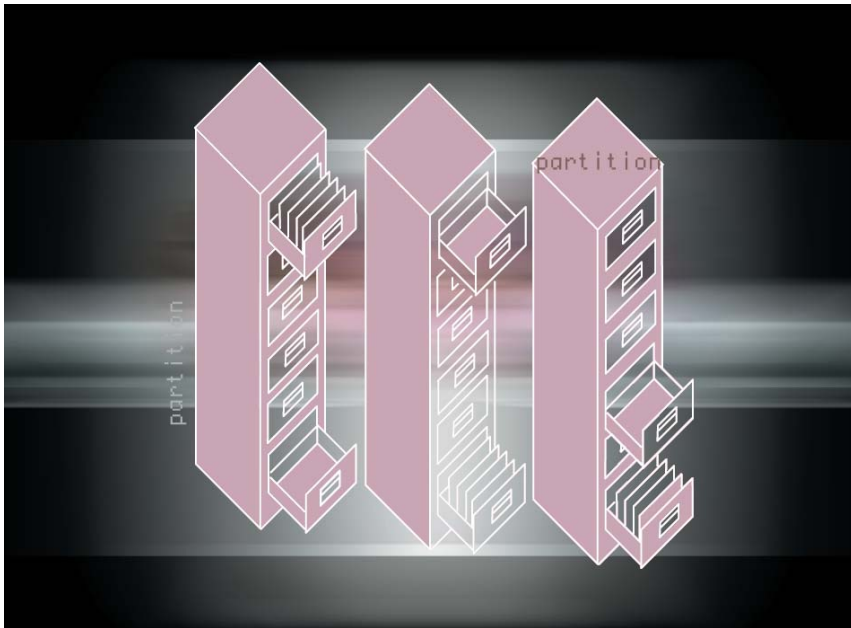




- 162 General
- 164 Windows
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- 168 Pass it on
- 169 Virus alert
- 170 Applications



↓ General

Q I recently purchased a 20GB hard drive to replace my old 8GB disk. While partitioning and formatting the new drive I did something that caused the original disk to lose its partitions. I now can't access it at all.

I set up the old drive as the master and the new 20GB disk as the slave: they were both correctly recognised by the Bios. I then booted using a Windows Me startup disc, selected large disk support and checked the partition information. This reported what I expected, except that the volume label was garbage.

I disconnected the original drive, made the 20GB hard disk the Master, created two partitions and formatted them using the Windows Me CD-ROM. I then made the smaller drive the Slave. Upon restart, the partitions on the new drive were displayed as C and E, but the smaller D drive had a rubbish volume label. Nor could I see that drive's second partition. ScanDisk reported: 'Data error while reading FAT entry for cluster 767600' and 'Errors prevent ScanDisk from fixing this drive'. How can I regain access to the data on my old drive?

A We think the problem has arisen because you enabled large disk support. There aren't any specific warnings about this, but we don't think you can mix drives that have been formatted with large disk support and those that have been formatted without it in the same PC, or at least on the same IDE data cable.

Large disk support causes the clusters on the drive to be accessed using a different algorithm. If you change the way the disk is accessed without repartitioning and reformatting it, every read access will return the wrong data – hence the rubbish volume labels and errors you were seeing. Another possibility is that the smaller drive had some software such as Ontrack Disk Manager in the boot sector, which provides large disk support on systems that don't have it in the Bios. This software won't be loaded if the drive is moved to the slave position, because the system is no longer booting from it. The Disk Manager large disk support probably isn't compatible with Microsoft's version.

Try reinstalling the old drive as a master on its own, just as it was before. If you can then access the data, copy off everything you need to a suitable backup device. After that, repartition and reformat the drive if you still want to use it as a

Slave. If you can't access the data, the partition table, FAT and root directory may have been destroyed. In this case, you'll need to get a data recovery specialist to retrieve your data.

Q I have just purchased a Seagate 60GB hard drive to replace my 6GB disk. The jumpers were already set to single drive master, but the PC refuses to boot up. It gets as far as 'Detecting IDE primary master' and then locks up. Is this a Bios setting problem? The Bios is an Award Modular V4 51PG, and the motherboard is a Ti5VG+ model.

A This is quite an old Bios, so we suspect that it doesn't support drives as large as 60GB. Visit your PC or motherboard maker's website and see if there is a Bios upgrade that you can download and install. If this doesn't work, we don't think there's anything you can do.

Q Why are recordable MiniDisc drives not available for backups and data transfer?

A Sony, which invented the format, did make computer MiniDisc drives at one time – we're told that in Japan you can still find Vaio laptops fitted with them. Most likely, the market just didn't take to the idea. A MiniDisc would only have comparable capacity to an Iomega Zip drive, which has already cornered the market for 100MB data storage devices. Given the increasing popularity of these music players, it's also a pity that CD-writers can't burn MiniDiscs.

Q I am thinking about buying a scanner that connects to a USB port. My computer, an AMD K6-2 550MHz with Soyo SS7 ETEQ motherboard, has two USB ports on the back, so it appears that all is well. However, if I look at the Add/Remove Hardware Wizard it says the USB ports are unsupported.

I am concerned that when I plug the scanner in, the computer will be unable to detect it. Is this due to the lack of a device driver for the ports? How I can rectify this problem?

A We're fairly sure that your PC has a USB chipset made by Via, either types VT83C572 or VT82C586. You should be able to determine this by referring to the motherboard's manual, or by inspecting the motherboard itself. Due to the flawed design of these chipsets, which can lead to system instability or data loss, Microsoft decided not to support them under Windows 2000. Windows XP won't support them either, so bear this in mind if you're thinking of upgrading.

Soyo SS7 motherboards are known to suffer from erratic USB operation under Windows 98 and Me as well. The best you can do, then, is make sure you have the latest USB drivers. If you need USB, you'll have to replace the system unit, or at least the motherboard inside it.

Q I am trying to upgrade my Compaq system from Windows 3.11 to Windows 95. Everything works fine apart from the CD drive – the upgrade has installed four CD-ROMs and will only read audio discs. The drive is a two-speed Panasonic CR-562 with a sound card interface.

→ If audio comes out of only one speaker, check the balance sliders in the Master Out mixer panel

A This was a known problem with Panasonic's CR-562 drive. The company was supposed to have released new drivers that cured it, so scour the internet and see if you can find them.

Q I am using PartitionMagic 6.0 and want to use the relevant wizard to convert the C drive to a FAT32 partition. When I get to the stage of carrying out this operation, an alarming message appears, which says that the changes require going into DOS mode. Will the computer carry out these changes and restart Windows automatically, or will I have to make some changes when the computer reboots in DOS mode?

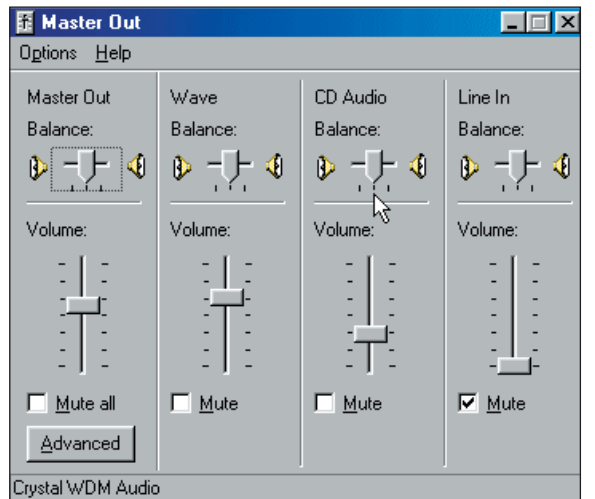
A Don't worry. PartitionMagic will do the conversion all by itself. It has to do the conversion in DOS mode, because trying to convert the C drive to FAT32 while Windows is running is akin to trying to pull a rug from under your feet.

Q When I use my computer, audio comes through both my speakers. However, when I play music CDs sound only comes out of the lefthand speaker. Can this fault be rectified?

A There are a couple of likely causes. The balance control for CD audio may have been moved to the left. To check this, bring up the Master Out mixer panel (as shown in the screenshot above) by right-clicking the speaker icon in the System Tray, selecting Adjust Audio Properties, then clicking the button in the Playback panel. It isn't very likely that this is the cause, though, unless you've been fiddling with the settings.

Audio is fed into the sound system using a special cable that runs between the CD drive and the sound card. This cable may have become loose and is only making contact on one channel. You'll need to take the cover off the PC to check this. If the connection is firm, you may have a faulty cable, CD drive or sound card.

Q I had to abort copying a file to a CD-RW disc recently (using Adaptec's DirectCD 3.0). I'd transferred several important files to the disc before the copy interruption occurred, and now they're gone. Is there any way to retrieve my data?



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0906 906 0272

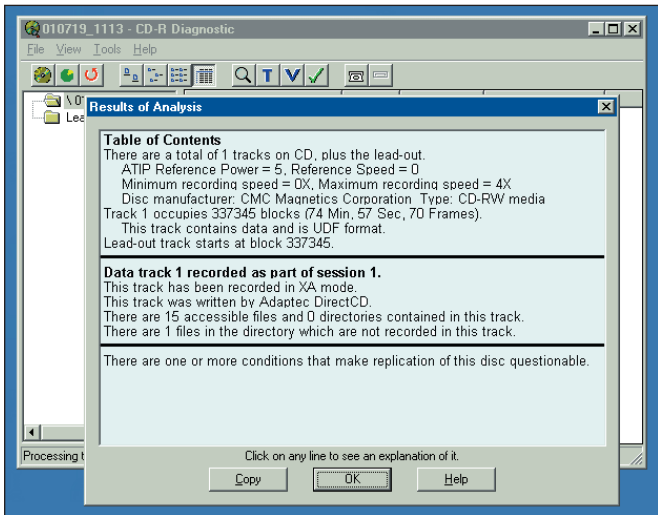
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A The data is probably still somewhere on your disc – the trick is finding it. First, three points of caution: don't write additional data to the problem disc until you've successfully retrieved the files. Also, CD-RWs are too unstable for long-term storage of important files, so use CD-R discs for that purpose. Finally, never keep only one copy of an important file, no matter what media it's stored on.

Now let's get to work restoring those files. DirectCD's ScanDisc utility (not to be confused with Windows' own ScanDisk) diagnoses and fixes bad CD-R and CD-RW discs. In DirectCD 3.0, you launch ScanDisc by selecting Start, Programs, Adaptec DirectCD, ScanDisc (your path may vary). This version of ScanDisc does not closely examine the entire disc, however, so don't expect miracles.

The ScanDisc version that comes with DirectCD 5.0 does a much better job, but to acquire it you must buy and install Easy CD Creator 5.0, which contains DirectCD 5.0. You can purchase Easy CD Creator from most software retailers – Jungle.com lists it at around £40. To launch ScanDisc in DirectCD 5.0, double-click the DirectCD icon in your System Tray and select CD Utilities.

If you're happy with your current version of DirectCD and just need a better version of ScanDisc, consider CD-ROM Productions' CD-R Diagnostic utility (see the screenshot above). Instead of trying to restore a damaged disc for reuse (as ScanDisc does), CD-R Diagnostic copies the files to another location. Visit www.cdrom-prod.com for details of how to purchase this utility and to obtain a demo version, or see this month's cover disc.

← CD-ROM Productions' CD-R Diagnostic utility pulls off whatever files it can read from a damaged disc

If the software approach doesn't work, you can send your disc to a data recovery service – for example, Vogon International

(www.vogon-data-recovery.com). These companies will inspect the disc and tell you whether a restoration is possible before estimating the cost of that operation. Once you've retrieved the required data, throw the damaged disc away. Don't entrust more files to suspect media. Besides, CD-RW discs tend to wear out over time as data is written and rewritten to them.

Q You've written before about printing a list of the files in a folder (see Print folder directories, May 2001 Helpline), but your solution assumed the user has a local printer hooked up to LPT1. How do you print folder directories if you're using a network printer?

A There is a way to print a folder's contents that will work with your default Windows printer, whether it's local or networked. First, create a batch file by launching Notepad (select Start, Programs, Accessories, Notepad) and enter three lines:

```
@echo off
dir %1 /p /o:gn > "%temp%\dir.txt"
notepad /p "%temp%\dir.txt"
```

Then save the file as c:\windows\sendto\printdir.bat and exit Notepad. From now on, whenever you want to print a folder's contents, all you have to do is right-click the folder and select Send To, printdir.

↓ Windows

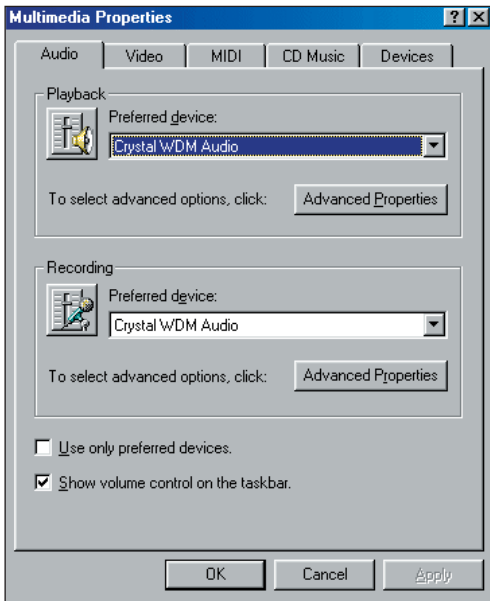
Q My PC currently has Windows 98 on a 3GB hard drive. I am thinking of buying a new 40GB hard drive and installing Windows XP Professional on it. As I am buying the upgrade version I need to prove that I have Windows 98. The problem is that I have an OEM copy of Windows 98 on Packard Bell master CDs and Windows Setup refuses to accept them. I also need to get the necessary drivers from the master CDs once I am in Windows XP, and a special

Packard Bell utility called Smart Restore (which doesn't work under operating systems other than the one it was shipped with) is used to do this. How can I resolve these issues?

A The upgrade version of Windows XP's setup should accept any manufacturer's OEM Windows 98 CD as proof that you are entitled to upgrade. You can tell if your CD is the correct one, because it will have a folder named \Win98 on it that will be full of CAB files. Setup won't accept a Restore CD, however, so perhaps that is the problem.

As far as drivers are concerned, forget the ones on your Windows 98 disc. If your hardware isn't supported by Windows XP out of the box, and you can't find proper Windows XP drivers for it on the internet, you aren't going to be able to use that hardware under Windows XP. The file <ftp://ftp.microsoft.com/services/whql/hcl/win9phclx86.txt> lists all the hardware that has been tested for compatibility with Windows XP.

If your computer only has a 3GB hard disk, we would question whether it's modern enough to be worth upgrading. A 400MHz Pentium II PC with 128MB of RAM should be regarded as the minimum specification that will run XP. If your computer was working fine with its existing version of Windows, we'd advise you to stick with it.



↑ If the Audio control panel is disabled, it's because your sound card isn't working

Avoid spam

TIP

If your email inbox is constantly bombarded with spam – for example, unwanted advertisements for viagra and get-rich-quick schemes – there's little you can do to keep these irritating emails from cluttering up your inbox. However, if your email is currently spam-free, there are things you can do to keep it that way.

1. If a website asks for your email address, think twice. Only give it out if you want to receive mail from the site, and it belongs to a reputable company that has a satisfactory privacy statement.
2. Don't put your email address on any web page, either as plain text or a clickable link. If you have a home page and want people to be able to email you from it, use a web mail form – most ISPs provide one.
3. If you're well known in your profession or some spare-time activity, use a search engine to see if other people have put your email address on their website. If they have, email the site owner and ask them to remove the address or replace it with a link to a web mail form.
4. If you post to newsgroups or mailing lists, use a false address formed by inserting 'nospam' or 'delete' into your real one.

In the past, whenever Microsoft has released a new version of Windows, the Helpline mailbox has received many cries of anguish from readers who have upgraded and found things don't work to their satisfaction.

For a taster of what may be in store for you if you try to upgrade, check out the Packard Bell Windows forum at www.packardbell.co.uk/support/node263.asp?topic=3.

Q In Windows 98 SE, Control Panel, Multimedia Properties, everything on the Audio tab is greyed out. Why?

A We'll guess that you're not hearing any sound either. This occurs when the sound card drivers are missing or not working (see the screenshot below, left). Check Device Manager in System Properties for any conflicts. If there are any, use the Hardware Conflict Troubleshooter to try and resolve them. You may also need to remove and reinstall or update your sound card drivers.

Q I will soon be upgrading Windows 98 to XP Professional. I have heard that using system maintenance utilities and virus scanners older than the operating system can damage it. Is this true? I own Norton AntiVirus 2001 and Norton Utilities 2001. Will these be safe to use under Windows XP, or will I have to buy 2002 versions?

A You will need to buy new versions of these utility packages that claim to be compatible with Windows XP. System utilities, virus scanners and other system software (such as drivers for hardware) interface with the operating system very closely. They are therefore very sensitive to the version they are running under.

Q I recently formatted my PC's hard drive intending to reinstall Windows 98, but I forgot to create a startup disk first. How can I reinstall Windows 98?

A You can make a startup disk using any other computer that runs Windows 98. It doesn't even need to be a Windows 98 startup disk – any old DOS boot disk with CD-ROM drivers on it will do. Your copy of Windows 98 should have come with a bootable floppy that is intended to be used to start the setup process on a PC with a virgin hard drive, so you may already have one. It is possible, however, that your PC manufacturer didn't supply you with it.

Search PC Advisor's online Helpline

The Helpline section of PC Advisor contains an indispensable set of answers to common questions, regarding all aspects of PC software. This ranges from general Windows issues to using specific applications and covers all types of PC hardware, including system components and peripherals.

Alternatively, you can ask for help from one of the visitors in our online forums. Sign up as a registered user (which is free) and then browse to one of the Discussion Forums. In the Helproom your first stop should be the searchable database of frequently-asked and previously-answered queries. With over 100,000 postings, you'll almost certainly find the answer you need in this archive of queries, simply by entering a couple of keywords.

If our online database can't solve your problem, try posting a question in our support forum, where more than 100 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/registered

In many cases, the Setup programs of these utilities won't even let you install them under the new operating system. Even if you can get around this problem – for example, by upgrading an existing system with the software already installed – don't assume that you won't experience trouble.

Microsoft has a catalogue of Windows XP-compatible software at www.microsoft.com/windows/catalog/catalogshell/shell_0.asp?subid=22.

Q My six-year-old PC has been thoroughly used and abused, with dozens of programs installed and removed and viruses received and disinfected. I am considering formatting the hard drive and reinstalling the software (all licensed and registered in my name) to cure my problems, including regular error messages. As the installation of some programs involves a registration process (either over the web or by entering a supplied code), am I going to experience any trouble registering the software for a second time?

A If you still have copies of the registration codes, you shouldn't have any trouble reinstalling the software and re-entering the code. However, some software authors issue a code generated from another code produced by the program. When this happens, the first code is usually generated from information unique to your PC, such as the hard disk serial number. With those applications, you will probably need a new code if you decide to upgrade your system before reinstalling everything.

Registration processes that depend on contacting the supplier can prove problematic because, in six years, some suppliers may have gone out of business. Others may no longer have the facility for

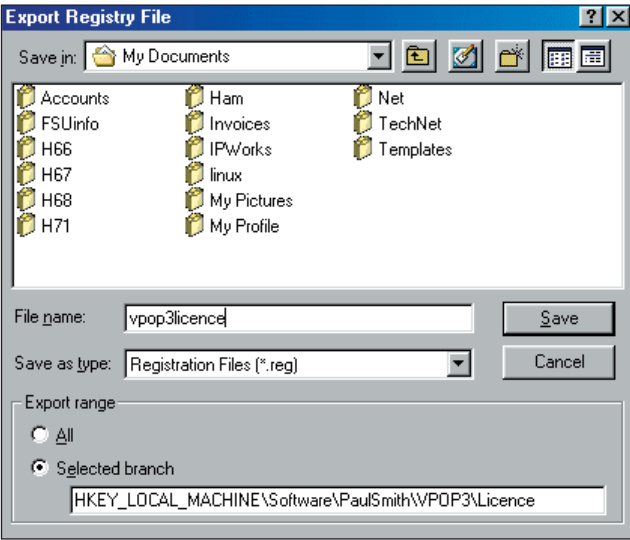
→ Exporting registration codes from the Registry may enable them to be transferred to a new system without the need for re-registration

issuing codes for versions of their programs that are now obsolete. We can only suggest that you contact the suppliers of these programs beforehand to find out whether this is the case.

Some registration processes may result in the creation of a key file in the application's folder, or by storing the information in an INI file. Backing up these files and restoring them to the freshly installed system may avoid the need to repeat the registration process. Other programs may store registration data in the Registry.

Using RegEdit, inspect the values stored in Hkey_Current_User\Software\ (supplier) and Hkey_Local_Machine\Software\ (supplier) to see if that is where the registration data is stored. If it is, select the folder containing the data and use File, Export Registry File to save it to a REG file (see the screenshot above). You can then import this data to the new Registry by double-clicking on the file.

Q My PC, which runs Windows 98 SE, has developed an aversion to FreeCell. More often than not, it hangs with the hourglass cursor showing after dealing out no more than four of the 52 cards it should play. Can you help?



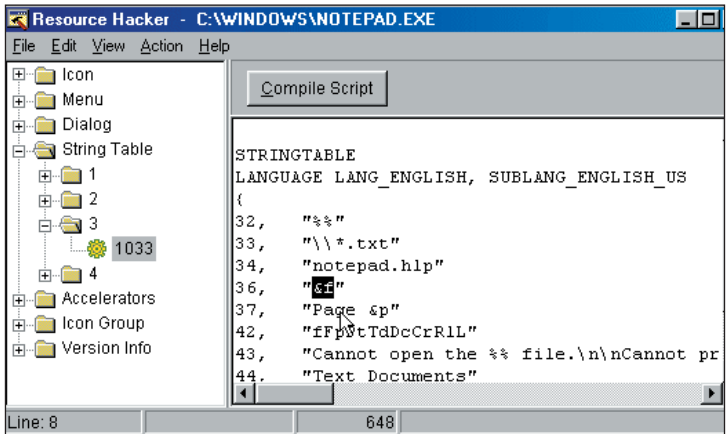
A Do you have Microsoft Office XP installed on your system? There's a known problem that can prevent both FreeCell and Solitaire from starting if the program ctfmon.exe is running. It appears that FreeCell has been programmed in such a way that it needs a lot of stack space (the computer equivalent of scraps of paper stuck to the fridge door with magnets) and ctfmon.exe doesn't leave enough of it. The problem with FreeCell has been fixed in Windows Me.

The program ctfmon.exe provides support for alternative input devices and language dictionaries in Office XP. Uninstalling it is a fairly complex process (Microsoft doesn't recommend summarily terminating it using Ctrl, Alt, Del).

Start by running Office XP Setup in Maintenance mode (from Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs), selecting Add or Remove Features and clicking Next. When the 'Choose installation options for all Office applications and tools' dialog box appears, locate 'Alternative User Input features and Translation Dictionaries' and deselect them. Open Control Panel, double-click Text Services and, under Installed Services, remove all services except the default UK keyboard. Click ok to close the Control Panel. Finally, click Start, Run and execute the first command, followed by the second:

```
regsvr32.exe /u msimtf.dll  
regsvr32.exe /u msctf.dll
```

Other programs running on your PC might also give the same symptoms.



So, if you don't have Office XP and this advice is no use to you, we can only suggest that you try closing or uninstalling other programs that may be running in the background in an attempt to discover which of them is preventing FreeCell from running.

Q Before printing in Notepad I like to disable the header and footer, but I have to do this before every print. Is there a way of disabling the header and footer for good, so it never gets printed?

A Yes there is, but the method is far from straightforward. Notepad has been programmed so that it always loads the default strings "&f" (the filename) and "Page &p" (the page number) into the print template. You must edit notepad.exe and make these strings blank, but you can't use any old editor – you need a resource editor. Only programmers usually have such tools, however a free version is available. It's called Resource Hacker, and you can get it from <http://rpi.net.au/~ajohnson/resourcehacker/> or on this month's cover disc. This is a ZIP file, so just unzip it to a suitable folder.

Next, make a backup copy of the file notepad.exe in the Windows folder. You'll need this in case you mess up the original while editing it. Open notepad.exe using Resource Hacker. Expand the String Table folder, then expand sub-folder three. Click on the item 1033. Note: these steps might be different for versions of Notepad other than that supplied with Windows 98 SE, which we used for this demonstration.

In the righthand pane you should see a list of strings that include "&f" and "Page &p" (as shown in the screenshot above).

The listing is actually just a text file, and can be edited as such. Replace both these two strings with "". Then click the Compile Script button at the top of the pane. Finally, click File, Save. When you run your modified notepad.exe and open the Print Settings dialog box, you should find that the header and footer strings are both set to blank.

↓ Internet

Q I have set up a small home network. It appears to work fine apart from ICS (internet connection sharing). I can connect to the internet from a remote computer, but when I finish and close Internet Explorer or Outlook Express the dialup connection remains open. No message appears asking if I want to disconnect, nor is

there a System Tray icon that I can use to close the connection. I have to run upstairs and disconnect using the host machine, which defeats the object. What have I done wrong?

A There is no facility in ICS to allow remote users to hang up the connection. The connection will hang up after it has been idle for a certain period, as we explained in January's *Helpline*. Indeed, it would be very annoying for a user to have someone else hang up the internet connection while they were in the middle of a session.

However, we have found a solution to your problem. Twiga's RDU (remote disconnection utility) consists of a server, which runs on the ICS host, and a utility that is run on each client. The utility allows you to close down the ICS connection from a client. Before the connection is closed, a prompt is displayed on the other users' PCs, asking if they want the connection to remain open.

You can download Twiga RDU from www.twiga.fsbusiness.co.uk/index.htm and, best of all, it's free. You'll also find it on this month's cover disc.

Q I recently received an email telling me that a message I had apparently sent was undeliverable. The email gave a list of addresses with various errors like '550 invalid recipient' and appended to it was the text of the message concerned. I never sent this message, nor do I know any of the

Take a break

TIP

Regular exercise breaks can stave off RSI (repetitive strain injury), a sore back and other computer-related ailments. But how do you remember to take these breaks? If you have Norton AntiVirus, you can use its scheduling program to set an exercise reminder. Launch the program, select Scheduling and click Add Event. Choose 'Schedule a message to be displayed' in the resulting wizard. Call your message something like 'Do your exercises' and set it to run hourly.

Pass it on: tips from readers



Do you have any great workarounds or shortcuts you'd 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.

View DVDs in colour

Andrew Dickman had a similar problem to the reader in January's *Helpline* (page 188), who could only watch DVDs in monochrome when the display was on the TV screen. The solution that worked for his AJP notebook was to reduce the colour settings to 16bit using Control Panel, Display, Settings.

Dubbing LPs to CD

We often get asked how to dub LPs on to CD. Jim Hackett passed on the URL to an excellent page written by a keen audiophile, which contains everything you need to know on the subject. It's at <http://homepages.nildram.co.uk/~abcomp/lp-cdr.htm>.

Updates and patches



If you've been having trouble with your PC, peripherals, hardware or software, it may be down to bugs (mistakes in the programming), errors or viruses. Despair not, though, we'll tell you where to download fixes and solutions.

Microsoft Office causes more trouble

If you're using Office XP, you know all about the activation process. Lots of people are annoyed at having to activate XP in the first place. As if that weren't enough, there's also a problem with the Activation Wizard. Here's how the process works: the wizard retrieves an authorisation code so it can activate the product. You can do this online or by calling Microsoft.

If you choose to activate over the web, you type in your Office XP product ID. The wizard then connects to Microsoft's server to validate the number, at which point you should get the following message: 'Please wait while the wizard initializes...' Unfortunately, the Activation Wizard can freeze and leave you hanging. The problem? The wizard needs certain script files to do its job. If those files are missing or damaged, the wizard stalls. To get the wizard back on track, update the script files. Go to www.microsoft.com/msdownload/vbscript/scripting.asp and make sure you select the right version based on your machine's OS.



No can do: Word and Excel

A separate snag has arisen recently with the Office 2000 family. Some people have problems getting Word and Excel 2000 to run. If your PC returns 'out of memory' error messages when you attempt to open Word or Excel, you may have a corrupted

Office application file. The diagnosis: one or more files needed by Word or Excel are damaged and cannot run.

The files in question are mso9intl.dll, msohelp.exe and msooffice.exe. Microsoft recommends that you rename all three files and then run Office Setup to reinstall Office 2000 and replace the corrupted file (or files) with clean copies. Visit <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;q305498> for the set of instructions.

Many problems with Netscape 6.1

Are you running into error messages while installing Netscape 6.1? At the time of writing, Netscape offers fixes for this common problem and for three others. Visit

http://help.netscape.com/netscape6/common_problems.html to see the solutions. Netscape also posted a very long list of additional 'known problems' with Netscape 6.1. Head to <http://home.netscape.com/eng/mozilla/ns61/relnotes/61.html> for the complete list.

addresses it was apparently sent to. I've also received some emails from people asking me, quite rudely in some cases, to remove them from my mailing list. What's going on?

A ISPs are starting to use filters in order to block unsolicited commercial email (known as spam). These filters can block all messages from addresses known to be the source of spam, but they may also block mail from randomly generated, non-existent addresses. To get around this, some senders of junk mail have started using a real email address as the sender address, and this is what appears to have happened in your unfortunate case.

One nasty result of this is that you will receive all the automatic responses generated when the message could not be delivered to any of the non-existent or moribund addresses it was sent to. You will also receive replies from irate

recipients who think that you are the lowlife who sent the unwanted email.

That's the explanation but, unfortunately, we don't know of a solution. If your email address has got on to a spammer's list (which it has if you already receive spam) then there's a chance that it could be picked as the sender address for some spam. Admittedly, the odds are pretty small.

We recommend forwarding the email to your ISP's 'abuse' address with a note of explanation. If you use Outlook Express, save the message as a file, and then send it as an attachment to the note of explanation. This will ensure all the message headers are preserved, which will assist your ISP to track down the real sender and hopefully get their account shut down. For spam avoidance tips see *Avoid spam* on page 165.

Q I am running Windows XP, on which I have installed Office 97. Everything works fine apart from the

spellchecker, which does not work with Outlook Express 6.0. When I run the spellchecker I receive this message: 'an error occurred while the spelling was being checked'. I tried the fixes recommended on TechNet for Windows 98, but they didn't work. Medion, the manufacturer of my system, says that I have to upgrade to Office XP. Is the company right? I can't believe that I am the only one with this problem.

A You are not the only one with this problem. It has affected a number of people running Office 97 on Windows XP. It also affects people running Office 97 and Internet Explorer/Outlook Express version 6.0 on other Windows platforms.

The problem is a missing file, csapi3t1.dll, which needs to be present in the Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\Proof folder. You can extract it from the file mailnews.cab on an Internet Explorer distribution set, win98_27.cab on

the Windows 98 CD or Win_10.cab on the Me CD. If you don't have any of these cabinet files in your possession, you will also find copies of csapi3t1.dll on this month's cover disc or at Dr Device's website at www.drd.dyndns.org/.

Q How do you change the folder that Windows Explorer defaults to when you open it from the Start menu?

A Right-click the Windows Explorer icon and select Properties. Click the Shortcut tab. The target field should contain something like 'c:\windows\explorer.exe'. Add /n, /e, "path" to that, where path is your desired default folder. For instance, to have Explorer open to My Documents, you'd use the full command c:\windows\explorer.exe /n, /e, "c:\My Documents". Click ok to close the dialog box.

Q I tried to open an email attachment in PDF format and got a dialog box saying there was no program associated with it and to make one using My Computer, View, Folder Options. The procedure wasn't entirely clear to me, and although I thought I knew what to do I now get a 'Program not found' message. The program in question is Acrobat Reader. Where am I going wrong?

A It's hard to say without looking at your computer, but it sounds as if Acrobat Reader isn't installed on it at all. If it was, it would automatically be associated with PDF files and you wouldn't have experienced this problem in the first place. You will find a copy on this month's cover disc or it can be downloaded from www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html. This should solve the problem once and for all.

Q I have a Quickcam Express attached to my Dell computer. This has been working perfectly, and I have been sending video emails without any problem until last week. Then, when I tried to send a message to a friend, it was returned by Outlook Express with the explanation: 'This message has been rejected because it has an executable attachment vmalvid.exe. This is a virus prevention measure. If you meant to

← This version of mfc42.dll causes problems with the Microsoft Jet database engine

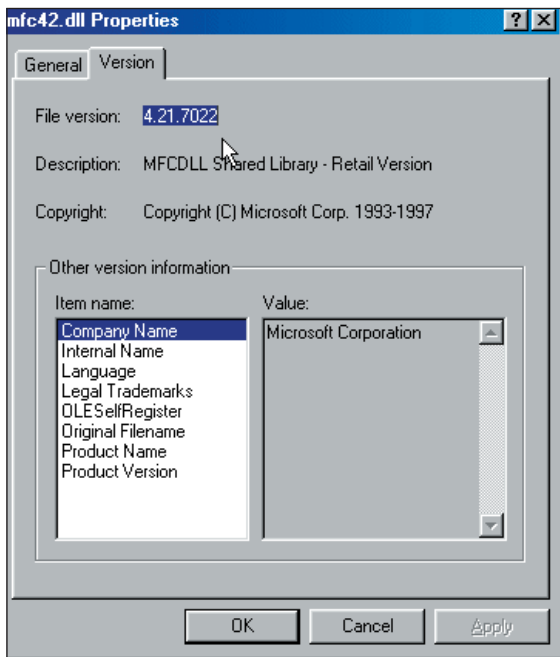
send this file please package it up as a zip and resend it'.

Quickcam doesn't seem to have any method by which I can change the format of the message it sends, and the default file is always vmalvid.exe. How I can send video emails in a format which will not be rejected, or how I can repackage the video as a ZIP file?

A We're not familiar with the Quickcam Express software, but we deduce from your description of the process that you can send an email from it directly, without resorting to the use of Outlook Express. Unfortunately, because Freeserve has put a block on any email containing an EXE file attachment, you will not be able to do this any more. You will have to save the EXE file to disk, make it into a ZIP file, then send it as an attachment to a message created in Outlook Express.

There are so many utilities for creating ZIP files that how you perform the packaging is entirely up to you. Undoubtedly the most widely used tool is WinZip, which is on this month's cover disc or it can be downloaded from www.winzip.com. If you run Windows Me then support for ZIP files is built into the operating system. However, if you don't have Windows Me you may not wish to acquire some zip software just for this purpose. Bear in mind that your friend will also need a similar utility, to unzip the file.

We suspect that simply renaming the EXE part of the filename to something else will enable you to sneak the video past Freeserve's virus detector. Your friend will then have to rename it back to EXE before running it. For an experiment, try renaming EXE to COM. If Freeserve doesn't spot this then your friend should be able to run the video as vmalvid.com without renaming it back to EXE.



↓ Applications

Q When I run AA AutoRoute, a message box appears saying: 'Unable to initialize DAO/Jet db engine'. I contacted Carrera about this, as I have a new machine. They told me to contact the software company, as it was a fault with the application. The software company says it must be a fault with the PC. Can you help?

A It's a software problem but, without specific knowledge of how AA AutoRoute was programmed, we can't be sure of the solution. The likelihood is that this application was developed using Microsoft Visual C++, and the problem is caused by an incompatible version of the file mfc42.dll.

As shown in the screenshot above, the usual culprit has the version number 4.21.7022, which erroneously tries to use version 3.5 of the Microsoft Jet database engine, regardless of the version that is actually installed on the system. To find out if this is indeed the problem, use the Find tool on the Start menu to search your hard disk for files named mfc42.dll. For each one that appears, right-click it, select Properties then click on the Version tab. This will tell you the version number.

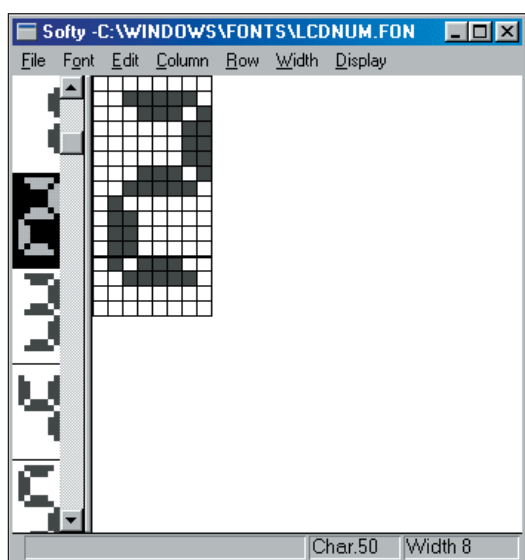
If an application doesn't have its own copy of mfc42.dll, it will usually use the one in the Windows System folder, which should be the latest version. Sometimes, though, a badly written setup program will replace this copy with an older version. It's a good idea to run SFC (System File Checker) to see whether your copy of this file is older than it's supposed to be.

You can make an application use any particular version of a DLL by placing a copy of the DLL in the application's own folder. If updating the copy in the Windows System folder doesn't solve the problem, try copying different versions of the DLL to the AutoRoute program folder.

Q My PC has Word 97 and Outlook 98 installed on it. When addressing envelopes in Word using Tools, Envelopes and Labels, I find that the address appears in the delivery address window without the title – for example, Mr or Mrs – of the addressee. The title is, however, present in the appropriate field in the Outlook 98 contacts database. How can I get Word to include someone's title in the envelope address?

A Unfortunately, you can't. The field you want in the Outlook database is named Pr_Display_Name_Prefix. Microsoft Knowledge Base article Q141874 states specifically that this field is unavailable for use in Microsoft Word.

Q I have been trying to create my own bitmap font without success, as I



← Softy lets you create your own bitmap fonts for Windows

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We aim to give you the best assistance we can. However, given the limitations of this type of advice, we can't guarantee that what we say will work, and we can't accept responsibility for any damage arising as a result of this advice. Always back up your system before you make any changes. If you send us software disks, make sure they are not original copies as we cannot return them.

We regret that we cannot answer technical queries over the phone, except via our Expert Advice Hotline, on 0906 906 0272; calls charged at £1.50 per minute.

don't have any font-creating utilities. How should I go about it?

A Get hold of a copy of Softy (as shown in the screenshot below). It runs on Windows 95 and later, and you can download it from the Softy Support Page at <http://users.iclway.co.uk/l.emmett/>. It is also featured on this month's cover disc.

Q I recently bought a cheap Delta DVD-ROM drive, installed it and loaded the device driver. When I tried to play a BBC DVD, I got this message: 'There is no Windows 2000 decoder installed on this system. A DVD decoder device or software is required to play movies. A DVD driver alone is not sufficient'. Where can I buy the necessary software, preferably online?

A That's the trouble with cheap drives: you get a bare drive, as supplied to PC manufacturers, without the bundled software needed to make use of it. As you have already found out, you need a DVD player application before you can watch DVD movies on your PC. There are several available – PowerDVD and WinDVD are both good choices. Have a look on the DVD Software Decoder site at www.hoyty.com/dvd/ to help you make up your mind.

Another useful resource for DVD fans, once you get past the welcome page and close the annoying pop-ups, is Oleg's site at <http://dvd.da.ru/>.

Q I have just got a new PC and can't load my copy of Word 2000 on to it. The CD has a small crack in it and cannot be read. The software is still on my old PC, so can I take the hard drive out of the old PC, put it into the new one and run it from that?

A No, this won't work. The software has to be properly installed using the Setup program, which can only be done from the CD. Perhaps Microsoft will replace the damaged CD for a nominal fee.

Q Is it possible to play movies which I have created on my PC using Windows Movie Maker on my Toshiba DVD player? Toshiba's literature says that this should be possible if 'the CD-R/RW discs are recorded by CD-DA method'.

A No. Windows Movie Player is a basic program intended only for creating movies that can be played back on your PC. Many of the latest CD-writing packages possess the capability of creating discs in VideoCD or SuperVCD format, which can be played on many of the newer DVD players. However, a discussion of the software and the specific steps you would use it to achieve this is beyond the scope of *Helpline*. ■



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