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## ↓ General

**Q** I have a Micrograf Tabby II, which is still in good condition. I installed it on my new PC running Windows 98 SE, where it worked briefly and then stopped. I checked the driver in Device Manager and there is a yellow exclamation mark. When clicking on Refresh or Reinstall, the message 'Unable to load, sysx.dll missing, contact supplier' appears. I can see no such file on the driver disk. Searching the web has produced no contact for Micrograf, Graftek (the makers) or a source for the driver.

**A** Micrograf Tabby II dates from the era of Windows 3.0. It's a sad but true fact that hardware which is still perfectly functional can be rendered obsolete by lack of the necessary support in new operating systems. Manufacturers disappear, which is what seems to have happened in the case of Micrograf/Graftek. However, even if the company in question is still in business, it is unlikely to want to produce updated drivers for obsolete hardware.

We could find no drivers for your device at [www.windrivers.com](http://www.windrivers.com) or [www.driverguide.com](http://www.driverguide.com). Searching the

internet news groups we could find pleas for modern Windows drivers for this device, but no answers. We could find no clue as to the origin of sysx.dll, either.

You were lucky to get your old Tabby working under Windows 98 at all. As you did, it might be worth seeing if you could repeat the trick by removing the driver and then reinstalling it using Add New Hardware. If you can't, it's time to look for an up-to-date replacement. Alternatively, you could try asking in our online forum ([www.pcadvisor.co.uk/registered](http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk/registered)). You may find a reader has a copy of sysx.dll they could send you to try out.

**Q** I recently had a PC made to my own specification, using a 1.4GHz AMD Athlon and an Asus A7V266 motherboard. Initially, the clock speed was set at 1,050MHz. This was confirmed by the Asus DMI Explorer, which showed the processor speed as 1,050MHz and a maximum speed of 1,200MHz. The external clock speed was 133MHz.

I returned the PC, and was told that the Bios setting needed adjustment. It is now working well with the processor showing a speed of 1,400MHz, but the maximum speed is still shown as 1,200MHz. Is this a case of overclocking, or is everything in order?

**A** Everything is in order and your processor is now running at the correct speed. Asus states that the maximum speed shown by DMI Explorer is simply a value reported by the Bios. It reflects the maximum speed available at the time your motherboard and Bios were made. A Bios upgrade would increase this value to 1,600MHz. However, from what we can deduce, the upgrade wouldn't produce any noticeable operational benefit.

**Q** When my PC goes to sleep or standby it locks up – the only way out is to switch off and reboot. The system runs Windows Me, and has an Asus 2B motherboard with a 550MHz Pentium II processor.

**A** This is a common question. The technology needed to put a system to sleep and then restart it where it left off is tricky to get right. Microsoft has updated the specification for power management compliance with each new version of Windows to make it more reliable. The result is that some older devices, which may have complied with the specification for the version of Windows when they were made, may not suspend or resume properly under a newer version.

The simplest solution, if suspend and resume cause lockups on your PC, is to disable it altogether. There's no guarantee that you can make it work but for the best chance ensure that your Bios is upgraded to the latest version, as well as the drivers for all your peripherals. You should be able to get these upgrades from the manufacturers' websites. It's also worth checking the support areas of each website, to see if there are known problems with power management and the device in question.

**Q** I recently finished building a new computer based on the Build your own PC series in PC Advisor. The system works well, however, when I run the Windows XP system information utility it tells me that my processor is a 750MHz AMD Athlon. My Bios says the same thing. The chip I purchased was supposed to be a 1,000MHz model. Have I been

sent the wrong processor, or have I not set up the processor correctly?

**A** We often get asked questions like this, so we'll try to answer it generically. Modern processors contain identification details that allow them to be accurately identified by software. Many modern motherboards, such as the Gigabyte GA-7DX motherboard used in the PC Advisor, Build your own PC series last year, take advantage of this information so that there is nothing to set up: the Bios configures itself automatically to the default settings of the processor installed.

It's possible that you were sent the wrong chip. However, it's also possible that you have an older version of the motherboard with a Bios that doesn't recognise the speed of your CPU. That might have the effect of your processor being detected as a slower model. To check this, you should visit the motherboard's web page at [www.gigabyte.com/products/7dx.htm](http://www.gigabyte.com/products/7dx.htm) where you will be able to download a Bios upgrade.

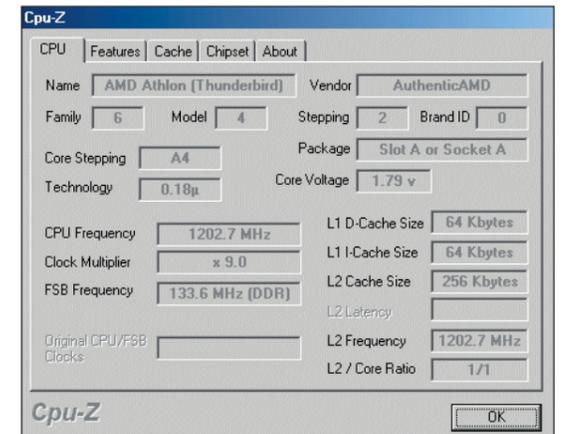
The Bios is the only reliable indicator of the processor installed on a PC. Windows and other commercial system information

→ Cpu-Z is an excellent utility for identifying details of your processor – and the best part is that it's free

utilities can only identify hardware that existed at the time the software was written. The best place to look for other reliable CPU identification tools is the internet, where utilities can be updated and made available within days of a new processor coming out.

Intel produces a frequency identification tool for Pentium processors, which you can get at <http://support.intel.com/support/processors/tools/frequencyid/>. An excellent, free and frequently updated third-party utility is Cpu-Z (shown in the screenshot above), which can be found at [www.cpuid.com/cpuz.htm](http://www.cpuid.com/cpuz.htm) and is also on this month's cover disc.

**Q** In Helpline, November 2001, page 184, you addressed a problem about having a CD-RW and DVD drive on



the same IDE bus. You explained that this could cause a 'buffer underrun' error and suggested that connecting one of these two drives as Slave to the hard disk would solve the matter. As I am about to build a system with potentially the same problem, I would like to confirm if this advice is really wise.

I have seen it suggested that putting a CD drive on the same IDE bus as the hard disk would considerably impair the speed of the latter. A writer in another PC magazine suggested that the only satisfactory solution is to fit a second EIDE controller card. Is that right?

**A** In the question we answered in November's Helpline, the reader wanted an explanation for a message he received from Nero 5.0. This message advised that the source and destination drive for a direct CD copy operation should be on separate IDE busses for flawless operation, and we explained why. The difficulty with finding an ideal solution to this problem is that if you have three IDE devices and two IDE busses you are somewhere between a rock and a hard place.

There is only one reason for not connecting a CD writer and CD-ROM or DVD drive to the same IDE bus, and that is so that you can perform direct CD copy operations. There are a few legitimate reasons for copying a CD but, since the majority of CDs are copyright material, for most readers this is not a problem they frequently face. If you do need to make an occasional CD copy, you can do it without risk of buffer underruns by making an intermediate copy on the hard disk – an

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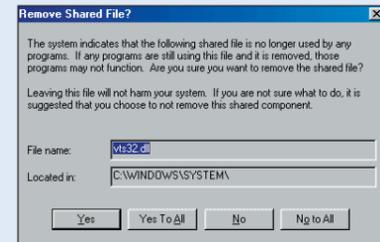
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## To delete, or not to delete

TIP

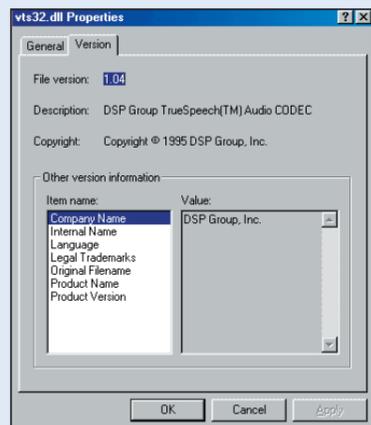
**W**hen uninstalling a program that you no longer use, you're often asked whether you should remove a shared file. (as shown in the screenshot right). The message may suggest that the file appears not to be used by any other programs, however the indication isn't reliable. Another program may not have registered with the system that it uses the shared file, so deleting the file could still cause a program to fail.

If there's any doubt whether it's safe to remove it, leave the file there. It won't harm performance; it will merely waste space. But if you're determined to save space, locate the file using Windows Explorer, right-click it, select Properties, then click the Version tab (see the screenshot below). The version information will give you an idea



of what the file does, which may help you decide whether any other programs installed on your PC may make use of it.

If you do decide to delete the file, don't let the uninstaller do it. Make a note of the filename, respond No to the 'Remove shared file?' question, and then delete the file manually. This will put it in the Recycle Bin. Don't empty the Recycle Bin until you've used your PC for a few days, and preferably not until you've given all your programs a workout. This will give you a chance to find out if any of the shared files are needed while you're still able to restore them.



option that every CD-writing application offers. This ensures that only one of the CD devices on the bus is in use at the same time.

If you intend to do a lot of CD copying and need to keep it direct for reasons of speed, either your CD writer or the source drive should be on separate IDE busses.

Alternatively, think about using SCSI, which is a much higher performance bus than IDE. Putting one CD drive on the hard drive's IDE bus will affect hard disk performance, although whether the effect is enough to worry about depends on how performance-obsessed you are. If you are going to worry about it, though, and don't want the extra complication and cost of using SCSI, a second EIDE card is indeed the only solution.

**Q** I live in an all-electric maisonette, and the surrounding property is also all-electric. If the power fluctuates

because of demand, can the following surge damage a PC, printer, scanner and so on? I have seen 'surge control' extensions on sale. Do I need one?

**A** Damaging power surges are almost unheard of in the UK. The main cause of damaging surges is lightning, when it strikes near overhead lines that bring power into the house. Storms are relatively infrequent in the UK and most power lines are underground, so this isn't worth worrying about for most people. If you live in a vulnerable area, you probably know about it already.

Spikes on the mains – which are caused when the fridge or central heating thermostat trips in or out – used to cause havoc with early home computers, but today's PCs seem immune to them. Surge arrestors will put a stop to these spikes if they are a problem, however they are more useful for things like satellite TV decoders

if you find that they reset themselves for no apparent reason.

PCs are no more vulnerable than other electrical equipment to physical damage caused by power fluctuations. What they don't like are power cuts, or 'brown-outs.' When the supply voltage drops below a certain point, the power supply shuts down, causing the system to stop or reboot itself. At best, this usually causes the loss of unsaved work. At worst, it can cause a scrambled hard disk that can only be rectified by a complete reinstallation of Windows and all your software.

The only protection from brown-outs and power cuts is an uninterruptible power supply and, at less than £100, they are not expensive. The first time the lights go dim, your UPS beeps and your PC carries on working so that you can save your work and shut down properly, you will consider it worth every penny. A UPS will protect against surges and spikes, too, so if you get one, you've covered every eventuality.

**Q** I live in Cyprus where we often experience intensive electrical storms. The lightning is fierce and I doubt the ability of a surge protector to resist a 'near miss'. To be on the safe side, I disconnect the power source as well as switching off my PC and disconnecting the modem. The trouble is, the PC will not boot up first time when I switch it back on. It can take as many as seven attempts, but once I get the PC running everything works perfectly. Does the motherboard need time to warm up when first connected to the power source, and would a good UPS (uninterruptible power supply) cope with the lightning?

**A** Surge protectors and UPSs contain similar components for protection against high voltage spikes. A good UPS can provide better protection against longer voltage surges by switching to the battery-backed supply. However, a cheaper UPS will only switch to backup when the voltage drops, so remember to check the specification if you decide to buy one.

A UPS won't protect your modem from surges received through the phone line, but in the UK you can buy surge suppressors that include protected phone jack sockets. We are not sure whether they can be used with the phone jacks in Cyprus.

## Search PC Advisor's online Helpline

**T**he 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 Helpline 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 Helpline 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 Helpline instead.

 [www.pcadvisor.co.uk/registered](http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk/registered)

The voltages and currents present during a lightning strike are immense. Mains outlets can be blown from the wall, and anything connected to them irreparably fried. Physical disconnection, then, remains the best solution.

Your motherboard shouldn't need time to warm up. The amount of power present when the PC is shut down, but not disconnected from the mains supply, should not be enough to make a difference to your PC's startup. (We're assuming that you do shut it down, and don't put it into standby.) There is clearly a fault there, but unfortunately it isn't one that can be diagnosed at this distance.

## Windows

**Q** I recently upgraded from Windows Me to XP, so imagine my frustration when I found I could no longer read my backup disks produced using MS Backup. Microsoft NT Backup cannot read the backup CDs produced under Me. Do you know of any solution?

**A** Unfortunately, there is no simple answer. You'll have to restore the files on a computer running Windows Me. It would obviously make the task easier if you could connect this PC to your XP system temporarily, using a network,

otherwise you'll have to find some other way to transfer them across.

For the benefit of other readers thinking of upgrading, NT Backup will read tapes produced by MS Backup, as long as they were not made using data compression. Backups made on disk as QIC files cannot be read by NTBackup. If you don't have a tape drive, either invest in some third-party backup software (clearly a good idea, given Microsoft's reputation in this area) or use a general-purpose Zip utility to make compressed archives of your data folders.

**Q** Is there a way of making people save their work on to a removable drive such as a floppy or Zip disk? Will this work if people log in using their own username?

**A** In theory, you could change the location of My Documents to point to a Zip drive or a floppy. You can do it using the Tweak UI tool, My Computer page (as shown in the screenshot right) and should be possible in any version of Windows. The path to My Documents is stored in the Registry

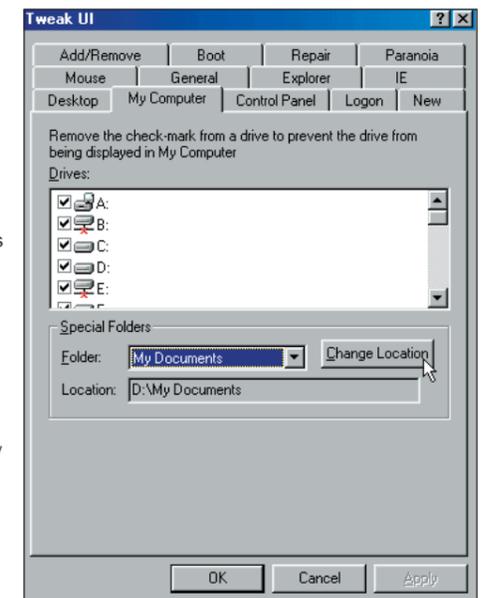
→ Using the Tweak UI tool in any version of Windows, you could put your My Documents folder on a Zip drive

under Hkey\_Current\_User\Software\Microsoft\Windows\Current Version\Explorer\Shell Folders, value name Personal. If you don't have Tweak UI, then you could make the change manually.

Whether this is a good idea is another matter. We suggest that you try it out and see what happens when there is no disk in the drive, or when the disk is full, and then decide whether your users would find this acceptable or not.

**Q** My Evesham PC runs Windows Me. When I run the System Information Tool a problem device is reported as: 'Device ACPI IRQ Holder for PCI IRQ Steering PNP Device ID ACPI\\*PNP0C0F\00000002 Error code 22'. However, Device Manager reports that all devices are functioning correctly. Since this message appeared, the system is slower and more prone to crashes. The Evesham helpline has told me that it is nothing to worry about but has no explanation for what it is. Can you help?

**A** This message occurs because you changed some hardware and the IRQ holder is no longer required. According to Microsoft, it will cause no harm, which is why no indication of it appears in Device Manager. If your computer really is slower and less stable, perhaps this has to do with the change you made to your system.



**Q** My PC runs Windows Me. After performing some upgrades to the processor and memory and adding a new CD-RW drive, as well as a new graphics card, I keep getting the blue screen of death that states: 'Windows protection error. You need to restart your computer. System halted'.

If I switch the machine off and then on again, everything is okay. I scanned the disk for errors and the system froze during the operation, so I don't know if ScanDisk fixed the problem. The Windows troubleshooter wasn't helpful, and neither was Dr Watson. Do you have any ideas on what it could be and how to fix it?

**A** When you install Windows, what is installed and how it is set up depends to a certain extent on the hardware found at the time. It sounds as if you have done a fairly major upgrade. That being the case, it would probably be best to reformat the hard disk and reinstall Windows from scratch.

If you don't want to do that, there are a couple of things you could try, with no guarantee of success. This blue screen can occur if you have old CeQuadrat packet writer drivers installed. If you have a file named c2udffs.vxd in your Windows\System\IOSubsys directory, use an emergency recovery disk to boot to a command prompt, delete this file, then restart Windows and install an updated driver from [www.cequadrat.de/english/support/list\\_servicepacks\\_e.html](http://www.cequadrat.de/english/support/list_servicepacks_e.html).

This error can also occur if there is a file win.com in the C drive root folder, which belongs to an earlier version of Windows. If you find one there, delete it.

**Q** My PC has 64MB of RAM and a Cyrix chip. I want to upgrade from Windows 95. I would like file/folder security, so that when the system is used by different people, confidential files can be protected. Should I upgrade to Windows Me, 2000 or XP?

**A** Windows Me doesn't have the security you want, Windows 2000 is now superseded and not ideal for home use, so you want XP. However, to run any of these, you'll need a PC with more memory and a faster processor than the one you've got.

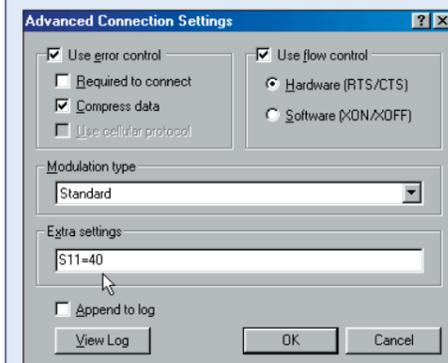
## Get online faster

TIP

**W**ould you like to get connected quicker whenever you use the internet? ISDN users get connected almost instantaneously. With an ordinary modem, however, the time needed to dial your ISP's number and get an answer takes several seconds. You can get online faster by reducing the time your modem takes to dial up.

The duration of each dial tone is stored in a register inside the modem. You can change this to make each tone shorter. Open Control Panel, double-click Modems, select your modem and click Properties. Select the Connection tab, then click the Advanced button. In the Extra settings field enter S11=50. This sets the duration of each tone to 50 milliseconds. Click ok to close the dialog boxes, and connect to the internet. By experimentation, you may be able to reduce the length of the tone even further – 40 milliseconds often works. Reduce it too far, though, and you won't get connected, and you might even dial a wrong number.

With some modems, you may need to insert the letters AT in front of the S11 string. If this doesn't work, click the View Log button on the Advanced Connection Settings box. You can see the conversation that takes place between your PC and modem each time you dial up. You should be able to spot the string you entered in Extra settings and see if the modem responded to it with okay or not.



← Change a stored value in your modem and get on the internet quicker

**Q** My PC has a 900MHz Pentium III processor and runs Windows Me. When I check the Windows Sound properties, whatever sound I select for 'Start up Windows' sounds perfect. However when the same sound actually plays on startup it is very distorted. I have tried various options and sound levels but the end result is always the same. Can you help?

**A** Your PC is initialising hardware and loading software at startup and unfortunately it is too busy to play a sound file properly. The problem is worse under Windows Me than in previous incarnations of Windows because more initialisation tasks take place after the desktop has appeared in an attempt to reduce the perceived startup time.

You could uninstall some of the programs that are loaded automatically at startup to reduce the load, but that would be self-defeating given that the programs do something useful while the startup sound doesn't. It's often necessary to

disable the audio to prevent blue screens at startup, so if your PC can't play the sound, it's not such a big deal.

**Q** I can't play audio CDs in my PC. When I try, I receive the message 'Unable to find the file play.exe'. It worked fine for a couple of years, though. Where did my file go?

**A** The usual application for playing audio CDs under Windows is CD Player, whose filename is cdplayer.exe. Newer versions of Windows, however, or those on which Media Player 7.0 or later has been installed, use this as the default player. Our guess is that you installed Real Jukebox, which uses a program named play.exe, and then removed it.

To reassociate audio CDs with CD Player, start Windows Explorer and select View, Folder Options. On the File Types tab select AudioCD from the list of registered file types, then click Edit. In the Actions list, the action Play should be in bold type, indicating that it is the default. If it isn't,

select it and then click Set Default. (You can also remove the action 'Play with Real Jukebox' if present.) Click Edit, then ensure that the 'Application used to perform action' box reads:

```
c:\Windows\cdplayer.exe /play
```

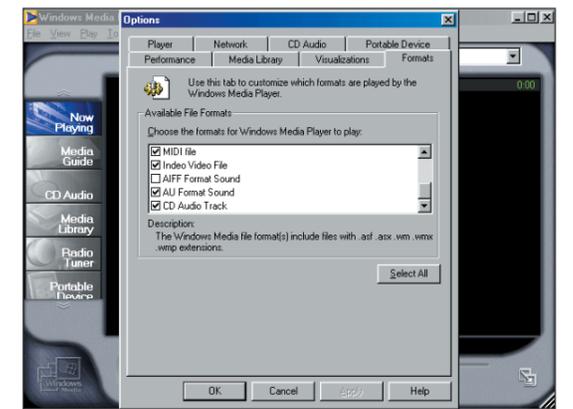
Close the dialog boxes to return to Windows Explorer. This procedure will only work if cdplayer.exe is installed on your computer. Uninstalling it (if present) and then reinstalling it will have the same effect. To do this, open Add/Remove Programs in Control Panel. Click the Windows Setup tab, select Multimedia, click Details and then locate the CD Player entry. Clearing the tick box beside this entry then clicking ok twice to return to Control Panel will uninstall CD Player. Repeat the procedure, this time checking the tick box, to reinstall it.

If Media Player 7.0 is installed on the system, you can reassociate audio CDs with that by clicking its Tools menu and selecting Options. Click on the Formats tab, scroll down the list of formats and tick the box beside CD Audio Track (see the screenshot above, right), then hit ok.

→ To select the multimedia types that are played by default using Windows Media Player, use the Formats tab of Media Player's Options dialog box

**Q** When I start my Windows 2000-based PC, a message appears saying: 'Windows cannot load your profile because it may be corrupted. Contact your Administrator'. This is followed by 'Windows cannot load your profile and is logging on with a temporary profile. Changes to the profile will not be saved'. I can use the PC, but I can only save work to floppy disk. Also, each time I am asked to open an account with my ISP, and if I start with the scanner powered up, I have to reinstall its drivers.

**A** Back up your files, log out of the temporary profile, log in as the administrator and delete your usual user profile. Then recreate it. Hopefully, this will cure the other problems, too. It's worth



noting that there's a number of problems associated with user profiles becoming corrupt, which are apparently resolved by installing Windows 2000 Service Pack 4.0.

**Q** During bootup I received the following message: 'Windows was unable to process the Registry. Not enough free conventional memory. You may need to run ScanReg/fix'. I did this and all was well until it reached 'Rebuilding System Registry'. It stopped at 20 percent and displayed another message saying: 'Not enough free

## Pass it on: tips from readers

TIP

**D**o 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](mailto:pcadvisor_letters@idg.com). To help us sort your messages, please use the words 'Pass it on' in the subject heading.

### Banana fingers

Steve Wilcox admits to suffering from the same problem as the reader in January's *Helpline* (page 191), who occasionally wipes everything he has written from the Outlook Express message window. When this happens he has always managed to recover everything by typing the Undo keystroke Ctrl, Z.

### What a blast

Rinus de Kruyff had similar problems to the reader in January's *Helpline*, page 182, when installing a Slave Maxtor hard drive. He solved it by using Maxtor's MaxBlast software. It's worth a try, Rinus, although the knocking noises our reader reported made us suspect a faulty drive.

Rinus also points out, for those not versed in the ways of DOS, that if you don't like seeing DOS commands scrolling up the screen at startup you can make them invisible by adding a line that says '@echo off' at the start of the autoexec.bat file.

### Norton installation glitch

Giles Davis had trouble installing Norton AntiVirus 2002 on Windows XP. The installation failed half way through with a fatal error message. A replacement CD didn't solve the problem, nor did reformatting the hard disk and reinstalling everything. Eventually, he found that the installation of PowerDVD had enabled DMA access for his DVD drive and CD writer. Disabling DMA for the CD writer solved the problem.

### Pop-up stopper stopped

Jo had the same problem as the reader on page 195 of January's *Helpline*, who found that underlined hyperlinks in emails no longer worked. She tried making Internet Explorer the default browser without success and then remembered that she had installed a pop-up window stopper utility. Uninstalling it solved the problem with hyperlinks.

### Recycle Bin renamed

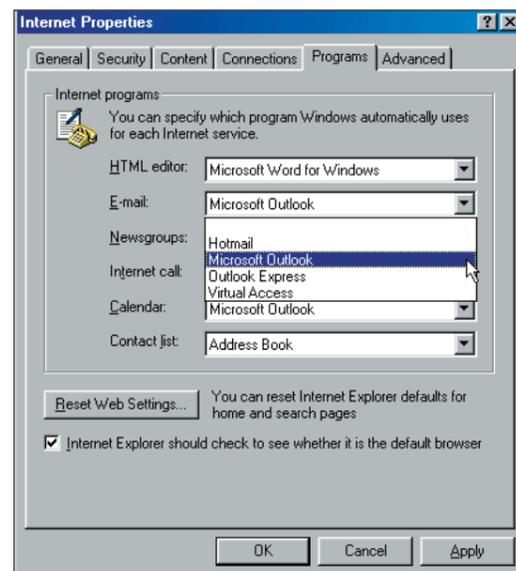
Another reader says that you can change the name of the Recycle Bin by editing the default text string found at this location in the Registry (under Windows 98 at least): Hkey\_Local\_Machine\Software\Classes\CLSID\{645FF040-5081-101B-9F08-00AA002F954E}.

conventional memory. You may need to remark (REM) some device drivers from your config.sys file. You may need to reload the emm386.exe driver to load your other device drivers into upper memory blocks using DeviceHigh= statements'. How can I carry out the above instructions? I don't understand what is meant by 'remark' drivers.

**A** Windows is asking you to do some technical stuff. 'Remark' means inserting REM at the start of a command line. This prevents the command from running by turning it into a remark, or comment. Fortunately, there are easier ways to overcome your problem. Rename the files autoexec.bat and config.sys to xautoexec.bat and xconfig.sys. This temporarily removes these files from the system. Restart the PC, so it starts without these files, then try running the ScanReg/fix command again.

If this fails, try booting to a command prompt. Under Windows 98, hold down the Ctrl key until the Windows 98 StartUp menu appears, then select Command Prompt Only. When the command prompt appears, type the command ScanReg/fix and hit Enter.

If your computer shows no adverse side effects from running without config.sys or autoexec.bat, leave the renamed files as they are. Otherwise you can change them back to their original names after you have completed the Registry maintenance task.



## Contact us

**P**lease address your *Helpline* questions to: *Helpline, PC Advisor, Fifth Floor, 85 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TQ.* Alternatively, you can email us at [pcadvisor\\_letters@idg.com](mailto:pcadvisor_letters@idg.com). To help us sort your messages, please use the word 'Helpline' in the subject header.

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.

**Q** My system originally had Windows 98 SE, which I upgraded to Windows Me rather than doing a clean install. If I now upgraded to Windows XP how stable would it be? Does the route through two upgrades give me the same features and stability, or am I asking for trouble?

**A** If you upgrade your existing Windows Me system to XP you should end up with the same features as if you did a clean install. In theory, stability should also be the same. However, we don't know of any IT professional who would recommend installing a major operating system upgrade over an existing version, rather than doing a clean install. There will be lots of files and Registry entries left over from the old version that, at the very least, will just waste space. And no one

can be sure that they won't compromise stability.

It is a marketing decision to make it possible to upgrade an existing Windows installation. Microsoft would like as many people as possible to upgrade, and it doesn't want to put people off by requiring them to reinstall all their applications and reconfigure them to their personal preferences. This will be necessary if you do a clean install but, technically, it's the best way to go.

← You can make any mail program you like the default for your computer via the Control Panel

## Internet

**Q** I have Outlook Express and Outlook 2000 installed on my computer. I can find the switch in Express to make that application the default, but I can't find the one to make Outlook 2000 my default mailing program.

**A** That's because the switch is in Control Panel. Open Control Panel, click Internet Options, then select the Programs tab. Next to Email you'll see a drop-down list. Select Microsoft Outlook from this list (as shown in the screenshot below) and click ok.

**Q** On three occasions I have received emails from someone addressed to somebody other than me. In every instant the sender and recipient addresses were the same. Each time I forwarded the message to the recipient and notified the sender. I also emailed my ISP but have had no reply. Both the intended recipient and I are at the same company domain, but our names aren't similar. Surely this shouldn't happen. Can you advise?

**A** It shouldn't happen, but there are plausible explanations of how it could. However, the person you should be contacting about this is the administrator of your company domain name. We noticed that although you say your address is at <company>.co.uk, you wrote to *Helpline* from an address at <company>.fsnet.co.uk. A possible explanation for the problem is that your company domain has

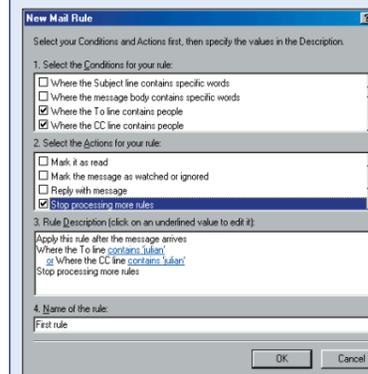
## Can the spam

TIP

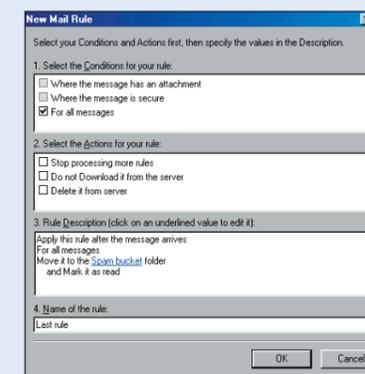
**M**ost solutions for getting rid of spam recommend that you set up filters to block addresses that spam comes from, or delete messages that contain suspect words like 'viagra' or '\$\$\$' in the subject line. If you follow these recommendations, though, spam still gets through – and you then waste even more time adding new filters to eliminate it. A better method becomes obvious when you realise that spam is never addressed specifically to you. Unlike messages from friends, your email address doesn't appear in the To or CC header fields of unwanted emails.

You may have friends who have discovered the BCC header field, which lets you send copies of messages to addresses that don't appear in the headers. Often, this is used to pass on chain letters, jokes and other material. You may be happy to treat these as spam. If you want to receive these messages, however, create another intermediate rule that says 'Where the From line contains [friend's email address], stop processing more rules'.

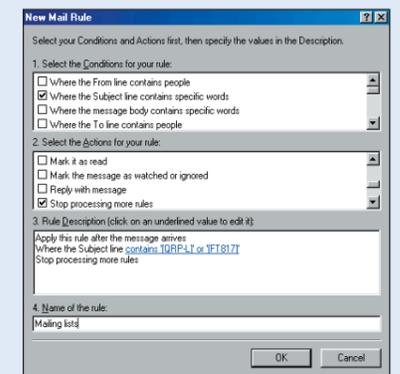
If you set up your mail rules like this, spam could cause you no more bother than a weekly check to empty your Spam folder.



**1** Your first rule should say 'Where the To line contains [name] or where the CC line contains [name], stop processing more rules'. This will leave all mail specifically addressed to you in your inbox



**2** The last rule should say 'For all messages, move it to the Spam folder and mark it as read'. This lets you ignore unwanted messages. You can check the folder from time to time to see what the filter has caught. This will avoid you deleting an important message, which got caught in the net



**3** Some wanted emails may end up in the Spam folder – for example, subscribed mailing lists may not have your address in the To or CC headers. Create an intermediate rule that stops filtering if the message is identified as coming from a mailing list. Do this by checking for the list name in the subject line

been registered with a cheap holding service that simply forwards mail for that domain to another address, in this case one at Freeserve.

With this type of setup you can usually arrange for mail for different users to be forwarded to different addresses. The person who set up this forwarding probably just made a mistake. Try sending test messages to the problem recipient, with and without the 'fsnet' in the address. If we're right, the one without the fsnet will come straight back to you.

Another possibility is that the sender made you a blind carbon copy recipient of the message. But as you have contacted them, we presume that they would have told you if this was the case.

**Q** When I connect to the internet via Freeserve there are delays of around 30 seconds, during which the

dialup monitor shows no activity. This occurs regardless of the time, day and night. I don't have this problem on my portable PC, an IBM ThinkPad also with a 56K modem. I have tried all sorts of things to diagnose the problem including switching off virus protection, shutting down applications and checking line speeds. The problem never used to happen. Can you help?

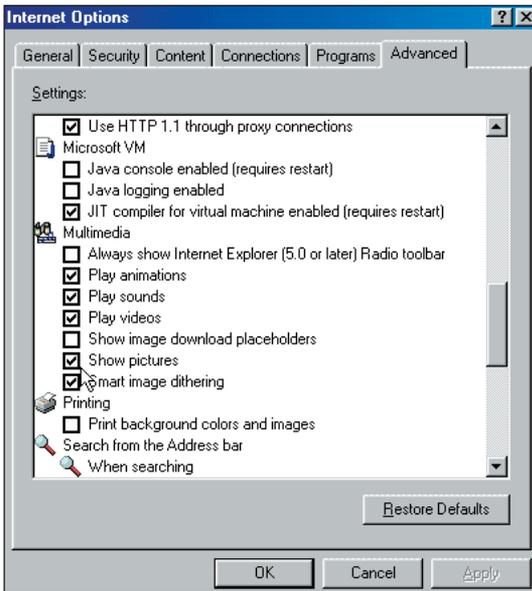
**A** You've tried most of the obvious things. The modem 'retraining' could cause the pauses – in other words, reoptimising communication between it and the other end. This will usually happen after a burst of noise or a call-waiting beep disturbs the connection. This explanation is less likely if your ThinkPad never has the same problem when connected to the same phonenumber, but it's still possible:

some modems are more tolerant of poor lines than others.

Another possibility is that Freeserve has upgraded its software and it's now less compatible with your modem. Your PC is probably around three years old, and if the modem is of the same vintage it's ripe for an upgrade. Make the USR Modem Upgrade Wizard (<http://modemupdate.usr.com/>) your next stop. You can connect to this site from the cover disc.

**Q** My PC cannot display pictures from the web. Each area where a picture should be simply shows the small box with the camera symbol. The problems seemed to start when I deleted my Temporary Internet Files. Can you help?

**A** Deleting files from your web browser cache shouldn't cause any problems, as your browser should simply



download any images it needs again. Check your Internet Explorer settings under Tools, Internet Options, Advanced tab (as shown in the screenshot above). In the Multimedia section there are a set of checkboxes where the types of multimedia content you wish to see can be selected. These boxes are provided so that users on slow internet connections can speed up browsing by deselecting the larger types of multimedia file. It's possible that some of these options have become deselected.

**Q** Whenever I view a web page in Internet Explorer 5.5 the text appears very large. I also use Dreamweaver, and when I preview a page in Explorer the text always appears large no matter how small I try to make it.

**A** On Internet Explorer's View menu there is a Text Size option. This is usually set to Medium (as shown in the screenshot right), so perhaps it has changed without you realising it. The only other possibility is that you have changed the Windows Display settings, Advanced Properties to use large fonts. Although Windows provides this option, it's best not to use it, as many programs support it badly, if at all, with the result that text on dialog boxes may be truncated.

**Q** My computer runs Windows 95 and Internet Explorer 5.5 and I am having a problem with a mouse pointer that freezes or reacts slowly. The problem

← Internet Explorer lets you choose the types of multimedia content to display in web pages

**only seems to happen when I am running Internet Explorer or Outlook Express, and only once I've made a dialup connection. It seems to have started since I installed the free version of ZoneAlarm, but that may be coincidence. I've reduced the graphics acceleration and experimented with different settings in Mouse Properties but that made no difference.**

**A** There's no obvious reason for this problem.

However, you say your computer is running Windows 95, so it's probably fairly old and underpowered by today's standards. Internet Explorer 5.5 is fairly resource hungry and ZoneAlarm could slow things down. You could also be using a software program called Winmodem, which uses processor power instead of dedicated hardware memory.

Given your suspicion, start by disabling ZoneAlarm. If your computer isn't networked, and if you check it for viruses regularly, ZoneAlarm isn't essential. Your virus scanner should warn you if there are any Trojan backdoors installed on your system.

If that doesn't work, try to find the cause by a process of elimination. Try closing the programs running in your System Tray one by one until your jerky pointer runs smoothly again.

**Q** I have decided to create procedure manuals for my company using HLP files as they take up little space and networks make them readily available. However, despite creating many websites, I have no idea how to make them. Can you help?

→ If text in web pages appears abnormally large or small, check the Text Size menu setting

**A** HLP files are an obsolete technology dating from Windows 3.0. The current Windows Help technology is HTML files, and you will find examples of these accompanying modern Windows applications. Your experience of creating web pages stands you in good stead – to make HTML Help files you simply create a set of HTML pages, linked using hyperlinks as you would a website. Microsoft provides a free Help compiler downloadable from <http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/default.asp?url=/library/en-us/htmlhelp/html/hwmicrosofthtmlhelpdownloads.asp>. This contains useful information and downloads, so it won't cost you anything to get started.

For bigger projects, consider one of the heavyweight Help authoring tools available from Grey Matter ([www.greymatter.com](http://www.greymatter.com)). These packages can also create HLP files – if you really want to, that is. Before you go down this route, however, consider that most companies with networks solve this problem by setting up a web server, accessible only from the local network, and creating manuals as simple web pages. The space saved by compiling the HTML doesn't matter when you aren't going to be distributing the documents using slow dialup connections. The benefit of the web server approach is there's just one copy that's easily and instantly updateable. ■

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