

## General

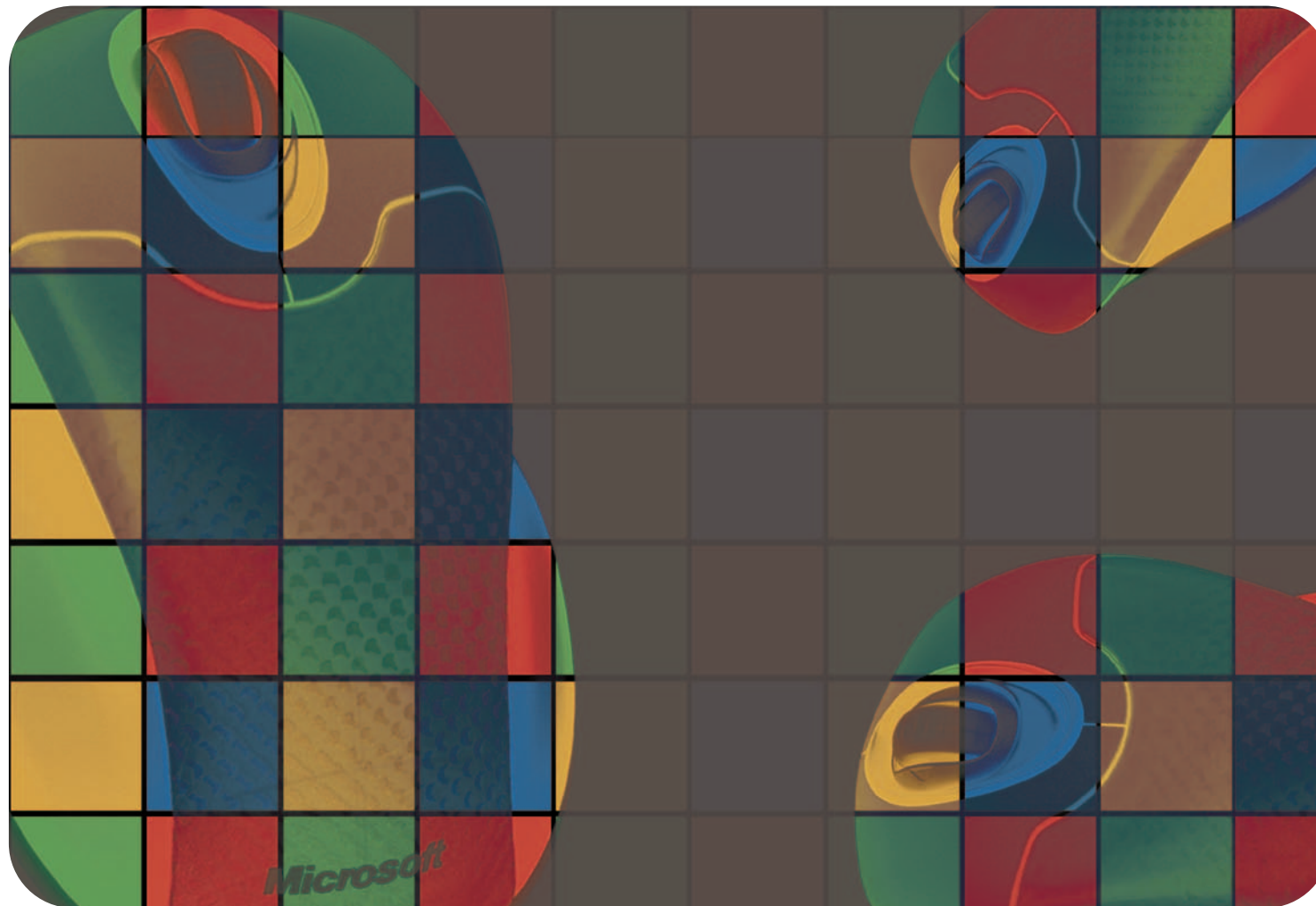
**Q** My PC is running Windows 98 SE. It has a Microsoft optical mouse which works fine for around 45 minutes and then becomes erratic and jerky. If I reboot all is well for another three-quarters of an hour. A friend suggested that I remove my McAfee virus scanner and after that the mouse was fine. How can I reload McAfee without upsetting it again? *A Hearnshaw*

I guess that you had the System Scan option enabled. This feature scans all system files in the background. Unfortunately, older computers aren't powerful enough to handle this task without affecting things that run in the foreground.

Reinstall McAfee VirusScan but disable the System Scan option. It isn't essential anyway because a virus shouldn't be able to get past the product's other defences. But to be on the safe side, run a manual virus scan every now and again or leave the computer switched on and use the scheduler to do one automatically.

**Q** My hard drive is becoming full and I'd like to replace it with a larger one but I'd prefer to avoid a complete reinstall. Can I just copy everything from my hard drive to the new one? If so, will the new drive come with the software to do this? I'm currently running Windows 98. *Billy Thomson*

If you buy a Maxtor hard drive it should come with a suitable utility called MaxBlast. Alternatively you could download it from Maxtor's website ([www.maxtor.com/en/support/downloads/maxblast3.htm](http://www.maxtor.com/en/support/downloads/maxblast3.htm)). You could also use Norton Ghost, PowerQuest DriveCopy or Acronis MigrateEasy.



Several people claim to have successfully migrated data simply by dragging the contents of the old drive to the new one using Windows Explorer. However, you must format the new drive as a system disk first because Explorer won't transfer the contents of the boot sector.

And you must ensure that Explorer's folder options are set in such a way that no files are hidden, otherwise vital files won't get copied across.

**Q** After loading Windows Me on to a new base unit and having trouble installing some other software I checked the Help and Support section. Under Components, Problem Devices I found several entries. The devices are all shown as 'ACPI IRQ Holder for PCI IRQ Steering' and there are six entries with error code 22 followed by 10 with error code 9. What should I do? *Chris Taylor*

The entries with error code 22 can appear when you change the hardware or move boards around in the computer, or even because you have an empty PCI slot. According to Microsoft, the appearance of these entries is 'by design' - in other words, they are nothing to worry about.

The error code 9 entries are a different matter. According to another Microsoft article (Q217392) this code means the Bios isn't compliant with

→ A bug in the ATI driver setup program can cause unknown devices to appear



the ACPI (advanced configuration and power interface) specification and a Bios update is required. This is surprising if the base unit is new - Windows Me has been around a long time and you'd expect new hardware to work with it. It might be worth looking in the Bios setup menus to see if there are any options relating to power management that might be causing the problem.

**Q** I have a problem when installing updated display drivers for my ATI Radeon All-in-Wonder graphics card. Although the drivers install correctly, a further six 'unknown devices' also appear. Removing them only causes them to be detected again at the next bootup. What are they? *Paul Nuttall*

This problem appears to be caused by a bug in the ATI driver installation routine, which has the effect that

Windows cannot find all the driver components. I can't tell if this is true in your case, but the missing components are usually codecs - software encoders/decoders that are only used when playing or capturing certain formats of video. Therefore you might not have noticed their omission.

The solution is to remove the unknown devices from Device Manager (shown above) and select Refresh. When Windows asks for the location of the drivers, point it at the folder created by the setup (it might be called 98-Me-Radeon). The missing drivers will then be installed.

**Q** While installing a program I received a message that Windows couldn't write to the E drive. I was surprised because I wasn't using the drive at the time. When I rebooted, Windows XP said that the drive had to be checked. It then reported that

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all folders were unrecoverable and would be converted to files. All my photos and some programs that were on that drive became one big file.

Using Restorer 2000 I managed to recover the folders, but they are nearly all empty even though Restorer says that there were 500 files on the drive. I'm not bothered about the programs because I can easily reinstall them, but my photos weren't backed up. How can I get them back without it costing a fortune in data-recovery fees? *Barry Clay*

I'm sorry Barry, but it's almost certain that your photos are lost. You might have had a better chance of recovering them if you'd let Restorer look at the drive before Windows converted them to files. Every write to a corrupted drive reduces the possibility of successful recovery. It causes changes to the disk that destroy evidence of how it was before the problem occurred. But the chances of recovery would depend on how badly the file system was corrupted and it must have been pretty badly damaged for Windows to act the way it did.

There's a limit to what automated recovery tools can do because getting data back is as much of an art as it is a science. Some tools work better than others though, so it's worth trying File Rescue Plus (www.file-rescue.com) or Magic

Recovery from www.software-recovery.com. For some useful data-recovery info and extra utilities, visit www.runtime.org.

Since you've already run ScanDisk and converted the contents of your disk to CHK files, it might be worth trying Eric Phelps' utilities UnCHK or FileCHK which are available on this issue's cover disc. However these programs - and commercial counterpart CHK from MJM Data Recovery that's also included on the CD - seem designed for the more common case where each file is converted to a single CHK file.

The fact that your photos and some other programs are all in one big file suggests that the directory information was corrupt. This means that the chances of recovering the contents are pretty remote.

Manual data recovery is expensive and there's no guarantee of success, although most data recovery companies work on a no-fix, no-fee basis. You should have backed up and your sad tale is an excellent reminder for everyone else.

# Windows

I was interested in *Total reinstall, total safety* (January 04, page 180). Unfortunately my computer came with Windows XP preinstalled and no CD. The operating system is located

↓ The Microsoft Knowledge Base provides instructions and links to programs that will create a set of Windows XP boot disks

Microsoft

United States

Home | Search | FAQs | Downloads | Newsgroups | Customer Service

Microsoft Knowledge Base Article - 310994

Obtaining Windows XP Setup Boot Disks

[View products that this article applies to.](#)

This article was previously published under Q310994

**SUMMARY**

Windows XP Setup boot disks are available only by download from Microsoft. The Setup boot disks are available so that you can run Setup on computers that do not support a bootable CD-ROM.

If your computer does support booting from a CD-ROM, or if network-based installation is available, Microsoft recommends that you use those installations methods instead.

Future products will no longer support installation via the setup boot disks. Installation of future Microsoft Operating Systems will require the ability to boot from the CD or PXE boot from Network. Setup boot disks that are provided for Windows XP are provided and supported on an as is basis.

**MORE INFORMATION**

There are six Windows XP Setup boot floppy disks. These disks contain the files and drivers that are required to access the CD-ROM drive and begin the Setup process.

Support Centers

Windows XP

Other Support Options

Contact Microsoft

Phone Numbers, Support Options and Pricing, Online Help, and more.

Customer Service

For non-technical assistance with product purchases, subscriptions, online services, events, training courses, corporate sales, piracy issues, and more.

Newsgroups

Pose a question to other users. Discussion groups and Forums about specific Microsoft products, technologies, and service

Page Options

somewhere on the hard disk as CAB files. How can I follow the directions in the article which states: 'Boot up your computer with the Windows CD-ROM inserted'? *Audrey Cameron*

You could contact your computer manufacturer. It should be able to supply you with a bootable CD for a small price. However, this CD may not be an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) copy of Windows XP. It might simply restore your PC's hard disk to the state it was in when you bought the computer. The choice of what to provide is entirely up to the manufacturer.

Alternatively you could consult article 310994 (see below) in the Microsoft Knowledgebase (http://support.microsoft.com). Here you will find links to programs that will create a set of Windows XP boot disks. It's a facility that's mainly intended for use by people who have systems that won't boot from CD. Be warned: you'll need up to six floppy disks for this.

It should also be possible to reinstall Windows XP from DOS if your hard disk is formatted as FAT (file allocation table) and not NTFS. For this you'll need to create a DOS boot disk, which is only a single floppy. If you don't have one, or a computer running Windows 95, 98 or Me that you can use to make one, you can download a utility to create a DOS boot disk via the link on the cover disc or www.bootdisk.com.

There isn't much point in going to this trouble if you have no Windows XP files to install once you've booted. But as you point out they are on your hard disk somewhere. The files are normally kept in a folder called i386, which is located in the root of your C drive. This may be hidden, in which case you'll need to click on Tools, Folder Options and select the View tab. Under 'Hidden files and folders', check 'Show hidden files and folders'.

If you don't have a Windows CD it would be a very good idea to burn a CD containing a copy of this i386 folder in case the original gets lost.

Inside the i386 folder are, among other things, two Windows XP Setup programs: winnt.exe and winnt32.exe.

Boot Menu				
Flags	Number	Type	Name	
-----D	FD0	0	NONE	Floppy
-----D	HD0	0	NONE	IBM 20.5G
-----D	HD1	0	NONE	Quantum 6.4G
-----D	CD0	0	NONE	8X DVD-ROM
-----D	CD1	0	NONE	RICOH MP7040
----aA----	HD0	1	FAT32x	Windows 98
----a-----	HD1	1	FAT32	Windows 98 S
--k-----	HD1	2	Linux	TurboLinux 6

To run Windows XP Setup from DOS, change to the i386 folder - for example, type the command CD c:\i386) and then type Winnt. To run it from a Windows XP command prompt use Winnt32 instead.

For a guide to what you'll see when installing Windows XP, see Paul Thurrott's SuperSite for Windows at www.winsupersite.com/showcase/windowsxp\_sg\_clean.asp.

↑ Using Smart Boot Manager you can boot from practically anything

mistakenly switch off the computer while it is in standby too. The following steps should get it back working again.

Start the Registry Editor and expand Hkey\_Local\_Machine\System\CurrentControlSet\Services\VXD. Select the Vpowerd folder and see if values named Flags and SuspendFlag are present. If Flags is present and has a value greater than or equal to 200, change the value to the current value minus 200. Set the value of SuspendFlag to zero if it has some other value then restart the PC.

If this doesn't solve the problem you'll have to uninstall and reinstall Advanced Power Management Support. Open Control Panel, System, select Device Manager and expand the System Devices branch. If it is present, Select Advanced Power Management Support and click Remove. Reboot the computer then start the Add New Hardware Wizard in Control Panel. If the wizard installs support for APM, you should find that the Standby mode is now restored.

When I open the My Pictures folder I receive a message telling me that a script error has occurred at line 282, char 17 of URL File://c:\WindowsWeb\ImgView.htm. The last time I cured it by reinstalling Windows Me but I'd rather not have to do that again. *Robert Potter*

This problem is quite common if you use Tweak UI (from www.microsoft.com/windowsme/guide/tweakui.exe). Near the bottom of the Desktop tab is an option to set the first icon on the desktop. If it is set to My Computer this script error may occur. Change the setting to My Documents and the problem should be solved.

My computer runs Windows 98 SE. It can no longer enter standby via the keyboard and this mode has also disappeared from the Shut Down Windows option. *B Carr*

Windows disables standby if it detects that problems have occurred when trying to resume from this mode. This can happen if you

My PC had Windows Me preinstalled with only a recovery CD. I have installed a new drive as Master with Windows 2000 Professional and connected the existing drive as Slave. How do I set up a dualboot system? *Brain Darlington*

Windows 2000, NT and XP all have built-in multiboot capability which uses a hidden system file in the C drive root directory called boot.ini. Adding the ability to choose to boot Windows Me should simply be a matter of adding a line to this file.

First, check the file's properties to ensure that it isn't read-only. Then open it in Notepad and add a line at the end of the [operating systems] section that reads d:\"Microsoft Windows Millennium" (assuming that Windows Me is on the D partition).

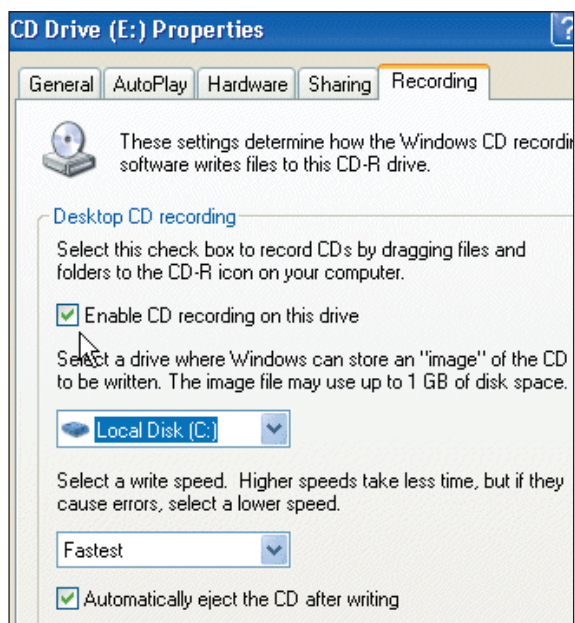
If you have trouble with this, or you'd like to try a boot manager with a bit more sophistication, try Smart Boot Manager - on the cover disc or from http://btmgr.sourceforge.net. It's very powerful and supports the ability to boot from various different types of media.

## FAQs Directory

Ever had a problem with your PC and felt 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.

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**Q** My PC has two partitions: Windows 98 SE is on the C partition while Windows XP is installed on D and is used as the default operating system. I now wish to remove Windows 98 but don't want to reinstall XP. If I simply delete it and use the C partition for storage will I still be able to boot Windows XP on the D partition? *Peter Wadeson*

Yes you will, as long as you don't reformat the C partition or delete the boot.ini file which tells the Windows XP boot loader what operating system to load and where it is.

Locate the hidden system boot.ini file in the C root folder, make sure it isn't read-only and then edit it in Notepad. You should be able to delete the entry for Windows 98 that appears below the operating systems section. This will eliminate the boot menu so your computer will boot directly into Windows XP. Be careful when editing this file though - if you mess it up your computer might not be able to boot at all.

**Q** I'm using Windows XP. When I opened My Pictures, there used to be an option to copy to CD. This has disappeared. How can I get it back? *Peter Malcolm*

↑ The 'Enable CD recording' option must be checked or XP's built-in CD burning features won't be available

→ If it goes missing, the System Restore menu shortcut is easily recreated

It all depends what caused this option to disappear in the first place. This feature is part of the built-in CD-recording capability of Windows XP.

You might have installed a third-party CD-burning utility such as Nero Burning ROM that is not compatible with this capability, or you (or the software) may have disabled the built-in feature to avoid a conflict. The latest versions of these utilities should be fully compatible with Windows XP, but older ones may not.

To check the current situation, open My Computer, right-click the entry for your CD recorder to bring up its properties and select the Recording tab. The 'Enable CD recording on this drive' checkbox should be ticked. When it isn't, the only way to burn a CD is by using third-party software.

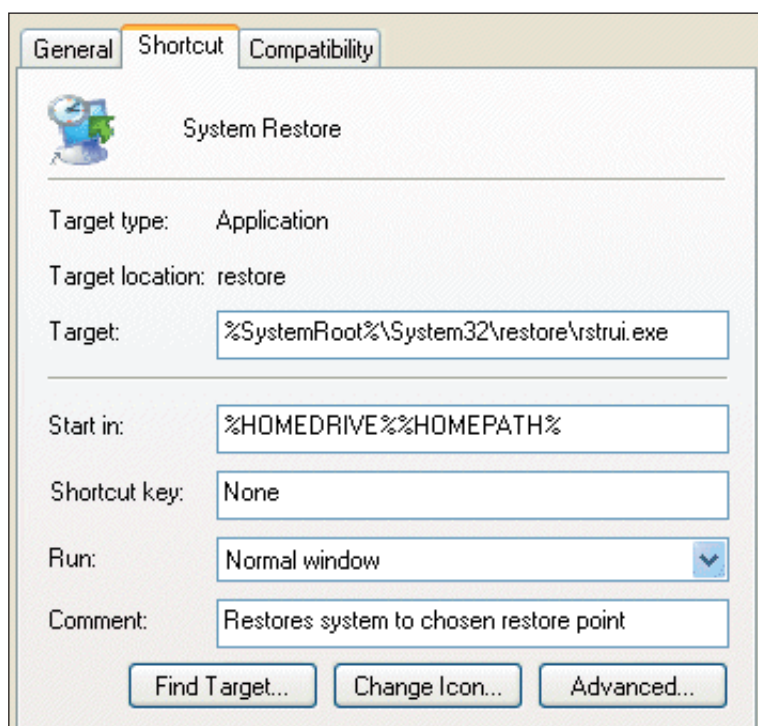
**Q** For months I've been using a shortcut on my desktop to create system restore points (as described in May 03, page 125). I've just had need to use one of my restore points and find that System Restore has vanished from my Accessories folder. How can I restore System Restore? *Glyn Foster*

The Personalized Menus option may have been enabled. This hides the menu items you haven't used recently. If the feature is active you should see a chevron on the menu that when clicked opens the hidden items. To disable this feature click on Start, Settings, Taskbar and Start Menu. On the General tab clear the Use Personalized Menus checkbox.

Of course, it's possible that the shortcut in the Accessories, System Tools folder really has disappeared. To recreate it, start Windows Explorer and navigate to Windows\System32\Restore. Using the righthand mouse button, drag the application 'rstrui' to the Start button. Keep the mouse button held down and then drag to All Programs, Accessories and System Tools.

Now release the mouse button and select Create shortcut here. Right-click the new link, select the Shortcut tab and type "%HOMEDRIVE%%HOMEPATH%" into the 'Start in' field. Click ok then right-click the shortcut again and rename it System Restore.

**Q** I'm using Windows 98. My modem burned out and since then I've been unable to start Windows. I receive the message:





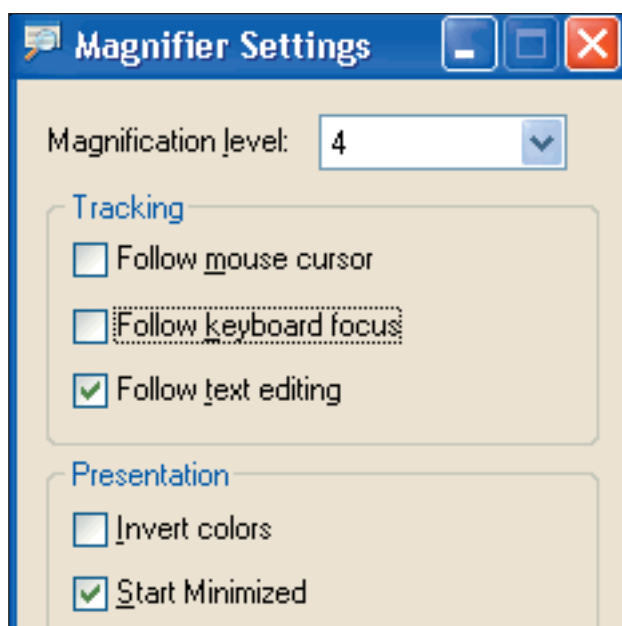
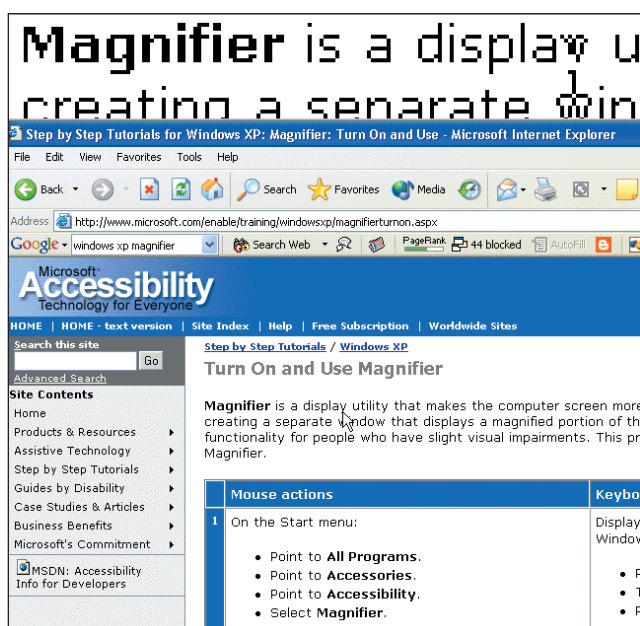
## Magnifying Windows

tip

If your eyesight isn't all that it once was, it's easy to miss an error when you are proofreading a document. And websites and emails written using too-small text are a headache to read. Rather than strain your eyes, let Windows enlarge the text for you.

The built-in Magnifier tool will blow up a line or two of text and show it in a panel at the top of the screen (see below). The Magnifier pane automatically tracks the position of the mouse or the text that you're editing, although your mileage may vary - it doesn't seem to work with Word 2000.

To start the Magnifier, click on All Programs, Accessories, Accessibility, Magnifier. The Magnifier Settings box will appear. Use this to change the magnification and tracking if you wish. To change the size of the Magnifier pane, point at the border with the desktop until the cursor changes to a double-headed arrow then click and drag. To close the window, choose Exit on the Settings dialog. To make the magnifier easier to use, right-click on its shortcut in the Accessibility menu and select Properties. Click in the Shortcut key field and press Ctrl, Alt, M. You can open the Magnifier whenever you want using this combination.



**'Vmm32.vxd is required to start Windows. If this is not in your path, you may need to reinstall Windows'. It then gives me a C drive prompt. What should I do? Martin Welland**

Like the message says: reinstall Windows. With luck, reinstalling it over the top of what's already there should solve the problem. I assume your 'burned out' modem hasn't done any damage to the computer itself. Although it's an odd coincidence, it's unlikely that a fault in an external device could cause damage to the PC or Windows.

**spellchecker to work in Outlook Express 6.0. I copied this file to the Outlook Express folder but the feature still doesn't seem to work. D Hewawasam**

Space was a bit tight in the 100 issue because I had to cram 100 questions in. I therefore omitted to mention that the file should be copied to the folder Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\Proof. You might also need to restart Windows to force it to notice that the file is present.

Several readers have written to say that spellchecking still doesn't work even after this file is installed in the correct folder. The missing csapi3t1.dll file is the most common reason for failure, which is why I mentioned it. I've listed some other things to try.

- Locate files ctapi3t2.dll and chapi3t1.dll in the Proof folder on your Microsoft Office CD and copy them to the Shared\Proof folder.

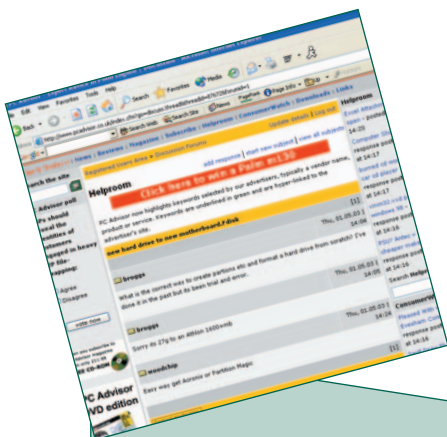
- If you are using Microsoft Office 97 and the language is English, locate the files mssp232.dll and mssp2\_en.lex in the Proof folder and copy them to the Shared\Proof folder. If you are using a different version of Office or Works, locate the Proof folder on the CD and copy all the files with names beginning 'mssp' to the Shared\Proof folder.

- Ensure that 'Always check spelling' is enabled in Tools, Options, Spelling.
- In Control Panel, Regional Options, verify that the correct language - for example, English (United Kingdom) - is selected.
- Using the Registry Editor, expand Hkey\_Local\_Machine\Software\Microsoft\Shared Tools and check that the value SharedFilesDir contains c:\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\ or whatever is the parent of your Proof folder. The backslash at the end of this path is important. The file oeproof.reg will set this correctly but only use it if

## Internet



**In your 100 issue on page 200 you advise that a file - csapi3t1.dll - is needed to enable the Microsoft Office**



## Search PC Advisor's free online Helproom

The *PC Advisor* online Helproom contains an indispensable database of answers to common questions, regarding all aspects of PC software. This ranges from general Windows issues to problems with specific applications and covers all types of PC hardware and software 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 half a million postings, you'll almost certainly find the answer you need in this archive of queries – just enter a few keywords.

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 with anything from system crashes to virus alerts.

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

your Proof folder is located in C:\Program Files.

- Try uninstalling and then reinstalling Microsoft Works or Office.

Spellchecking will only work if you have a copy of Microsoft Office or Works. If you have neither of these but would like to check emails, you could use a standalone spellchecker. A good one is AutoSpell for Outlook Express – go to [www.spellchecker.com/personal](http://www.spellchecker.com/personal) or see the cover disc. It costs \$29 (approx £16.90) to register. Spell Checker for OE from [www.geocities.com/vampirefo](http://www.geocities.com/vampirefo) is another recommendation that's on the cover disc.



**When I send or receive an email containing more than one JPG image the words**

**'Outlook Express Slide-Show' appear below the text. When I click on it I receive a message giving details about a script error. How can I stop this from happening?** *Arthur Porter*

If you're using Outlook Express 5.0 or later (which you should be) then the only way to disable this feature is by using the Registry Editor.

Expand Hkey\_Current\_User\Identities\{ID-number}\Software\Microsoft\Outlook Express\5.0.

In the righthand pane you should see a value named Automatically Inline Images. Double-click it and change the value to 1 (this will display the pictures in the body of the message) or 0 (this will suppress the display of image attachments altogether). If you have multiple ID-number entries then you'll need to check this setting in all of them.



**More than 90 percent of my emails are spam, most advertising porn sites or improvements to a part of my anatomy. I have tried various anti-spam programs with limited success. Surely it wouldn't be too hard to write a program that scans for certain words? This would immediately eliminate the majority of my spam.** *David Gee*

It isn't as easy as that, David. The biggest problem is the widespread use of HTML-format mail thanks to Microsoft. There are numerous ways to encode and obfuscate words in HTML so that they will not be detected using simple text searches.

Beyond that, many of the spams you see may consist solely of an HTML frame with a link to a page on an external site. All the objectionable text is on the web page, so there is nothing in the body of the message for the spam filters to work on.

The most effective spam filters are those that use blacklist servers – more correctly known as DNS (domain name system) blocking lists. These are servers that maintain lists of mail servers which have been the origin of spam, updated in real-time from worldwide reports.

There are also servers that maintain lists of open relays – mail servers that could be used to relay spam. If your anti-spam software uses these filters it will catch about 90 percent of your spam. It will occasionally catch mail that you want, though, so to avoid the possibility of letters from your friends getting dumped in the spam bucket it's important to maintain a whitelist of all your email contacts.

You don't say which spam-filtering programs you tried, but I'm surprised that you have found none that was effective. I find SpamPal, which uses blacklist servers, very useful. Get it from [www.spampal.org](http://www.spampal.org) or follow the link on the cover disc. To banish most of your spam simply create your whitelist and pick the Aggressive option. SpamPal doesn't delete anything, it just tags each unwanted message. You need to create a simple rule that marks the spam as read and dumps it in a Spam folder.

There are a couple of nice add-ins for SpamPal that help to improve its effectiveness. They are also on the cover disc. RegExFilter lets you do some extra filtering based on content, which will help catch the spams that the blacklist servers don't yet know about.

GoodWords automatically whitelists messages containing words that show they aren't spam – terms related to your hobbies, perhaps,

or the names of your company's products - to reduce the chances of these messages ending up in the spam bucket.

**Q** My NTL broadband connection stopped working. I eventually discovered that I could get the service back if I ran the installation disc. I can then reboot as many times as I want without affecting it, but when I turn the PC off overnight it stops working again. The lights on the USB cable modem suggest that it is still working properly. *David Parsons-Hann*

I haven't come across a similar problem before, David. It's impossible to tell whether it is a network or USB problem, although it's more likely to be the latter. What I can do is suggest an alternative solution.

Apparently, NTL cable modems have a network port that can be used instead of the USB cable. Just get a cable and connect it to the network card in the PC, which it probably already has if it's a reasonably modern one. If you use the network connection then you don't need to install any NTL software. People who could never get the USB connection working have used this method successfully, so it's worth trying.

## Security

**Q** I use Norton AntiVirus that's updated every two weeks. When I run a scan it reports that the computer is clear of viruses. However a couple of times when I close down I receive the message: 'Norton AntiVirus has detected the W32.Blaster.Worm Virus in: File Name: C:\System Volume Information\\_restore\{4BD6B6B5-1565-4752-A454-ACDBF6E40B6B}\RP101\A0043271.exe. Access to the file was denied'. I have the MS Blaster patch and when I ran it, it said my machine was clean. Is it? *R Elder*

You don't state whether you originally had the virus and then tried to remove it. If you have never had it, this situation might only be a false alarm.

If you did have the W32.Blaster.Worm virus you may have failed to note that before running the virus remover you are supposed to disable System Restore.

If you don't do that Windows helpfully creates a restore point with a copy of the virus in it so that you can, if you wish, restore it!

The hidden folder C:\System Volume Information is where the restore point files are kept, so this seems to be the most likely explanation for what has happened to your machine.

The solution is to clear out your restore points. Choose Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Restore. Click the System Restore Settings hyperlink then, when the System Properties dialog box appears, select 'Turn off System Restore'.

Restart the computer and repeat the procedure to turn System Restore back on again.

**Q** I'm a student working on a project about virus protection and security. Where can I download a sample of a virus so that I can test antivirus products? *Shivem Patel*

↓ You must disable System Restore before removing a virus from Windows Me or XP

If you want to test what happens when antivirus software detects a virus you don't need a real bug. All you need is something to make the software behave as if it has found one. Such a file has been developed by Eicar (the European Institute for Computer Antivirus Research) and you can download it from [www.eicar.org/anti\\_virus\\_test\\_file.htm](http://www.eicar.org/anti_virus_test_file.htm).

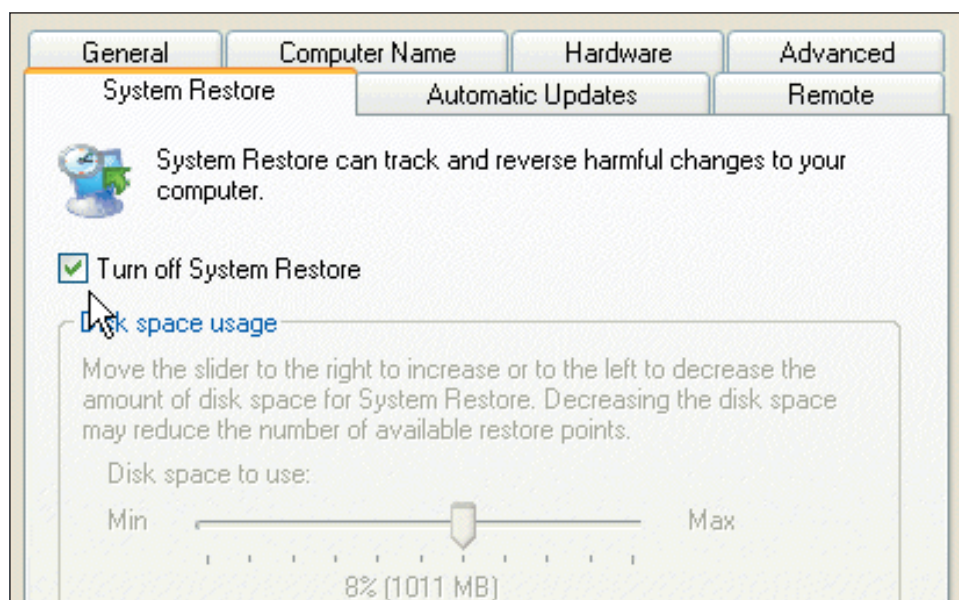
All virus detectors will recognise it and treat it in the same way that they would treat a real virus, but it won't spread to other computers or do any harm to your PC if you manage to run it.

If you want to test how effective different products are at detecting viruses then this is beyond the scope of a student project. There are more than 100,000 different viruses out there and you would need a large number of examples to perform a valid comparative test.

Such virus collections are nowhere to be found except in antivirus company test laboratories. Even computer magazines such as *PC Advisor* can't obtain them.

The only publication that does have access to a valid virus test set is the antivirus industry journal *Virus Bulletin*.

If you want to see how the different antivirus products perform then take a look at the results of the latest *Virus Bulletin* tests at [www.virusbtn.com/vb100/archives/products.xml?table](http://www.virusbtn.com/vb100/archives/products.xml?table).





**Q** I have had several viruses recently that were detected by the free version of AVG. I am now trying to install an 80GB hard drive in place of the original 20GB one. Using Fdisk to partition the drive, I get as far as setting a primary DOS partition and pressing Escape. The following message then appears at the centre of my screen: 'Bootsector write!! Virus: continue (Y/N)'. What should I do about it? *David Hamilton*

Don't panic: there is no virus. What's happened is that an option in the Bios to detect writes to the disk boot sector has been enabled. A common way for MS-DOS viruses to install themselves so that they were activated at bootup was to modify the disk boot sector. This Bios option therefore provides useful protection from viruses.

However, boot sector writes also occur when you partition a drive or install an operating system on it. As that is what you were doing when this message appeared, there is nothing to worry about.

Go into the Bios Setup screen, find this option - exactly where it is depends on the Bios - and disable it. After you've finished installing Windows on your new hard disk, you can enable this option again. Because MS-DOS viruses aren't much of a threat these days however, it's hardly worth bothering.

↓ Outlook Express should share the same connection settings as Internet Explorer

**Q** I'm having a problem with Outlook Express 6.0. When I try to send and receive, most of the time it won't dial up. I created a new dialup icon but it made no difference. If I start Internet Explorer it connects every time but Outlook disconnects without sending and receiving. Can you sort this out? *Paul Guest*

Microsoft made it possible for different Outlook Express accounts to use different dialups. However, in doing this it created the potential for error and confusion for the 99 percent of people who will never need such a facility. Let's run through a few steps to try and sort things out.

First, delete any duplicate dialup entries you have made because they will only add to the confusion. Then open Control Panel, Internet Options, select the Connections tab and if your dialup entry isn't shown as Default, click Set Default. Now start Outlook Express, click Tools, Options and select the Connection tab. Ensure that, under Internet Connection Settings, Outlook Express shares the same settings as Internet Explorer.

Click on Tools, Accounts and select the Mail tab. Choose your mail account from the list, click Properties then select the Connection tab. If the 'Always connect using this account' checkbox is checked, clear it then click ok.

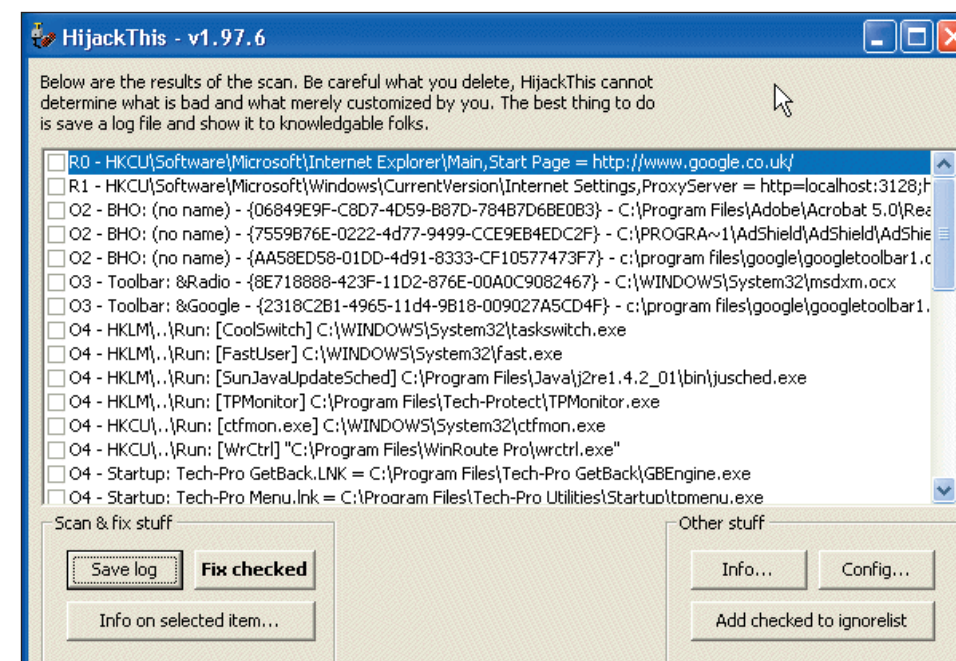
**Q** An entry for C:\Windows\System\pnlobbyd.exe has recently appeared in my Startup folder. The program itself doesn't exist and I have no idea what it is or where it has gone to. Would it be wise to delete the Startup folder entry or should I try to restore the file? *Peter Shadwick*

I have no idea what this program is either, Peter. It might be the randomly generated name used by a recent worm virus that has been detected and removed by your antivirus software. The entry in the Startup folder is just a shortcut to the missing file, so deleting it will do no harm at all and will eliminate the Windows error message saying that it can't find the file.

**Q** I recently upgraded from Windows Me to XP and installed Norton AntiVirus and Firewall. My problem is with the firewall. Although I chose the option to enable it at system startup - which is recommended - whenever I restart the PC it has reverted to the manual setting. It works fine when I re-enable it but it's a nuisance to have to do so. Can you help? *Michael McElligott*

I'm guessing that you have installed the Norton Firewall you used under Windows Me and it's not the latest version. An older version of the facility may not be compatible with Windows XP and may think that it is running on a network server. In that case it will not allow itself to be enabled automatically at startup in case it blocks important system services.

**Q** When I select Search in Internet Explorer I am directed to <http://search.xrenoder.com> which is definitely not the Microsoft search page. I tried to reset the default search but I couldn't see where to do it. I also ran Spybot Search



& Destroy from your cover disc but I can't get rid of it. Can you help? *Terry Snow*

Spybot should fix this browser hijacker, Terry. But you should remember that new spyware, hijackers and diallers are appearing all the time so you need to update Spybot every couple of weeks, just like you would an antivirus program.

If an updated Spybot doesn't solve the problem, try using HijackThis, which is on this month's cover disc, instead. This is an expert's tool that lists all the things that could be messing with your system and fixes those that you select.

Be careful because it lists things that you don't want and things that you need as well. If you're not sure you could easily end up removing something that you shouldn't. If you can't identify the hijacker yourself the best thing would be to do what the program's author suggests: save the log file and show it to knowledgeable folks, such as those in *PC Advisor's* Helpline forum ([www.pcadvisor.co.uk/helpline](http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk/helpline)).

The option to reset Internet Explorer 6.0 to use the default home and search pages isn't in the most obvious place. Choose Tools, Internet Options, select the Programs tab and click on Reset Web Settings.

## Applications

**Q** While surfing the internet I found some images that I wanted to keep, so I right-clicked on them and used the Save Picture As option. Later I couldn't find the images until I discovered that they had been saved as bitmaps - the icon was a sheet of paper with some colour on it.

Double-clicking produced a response saying that Windows couldn't find the program needed to open the file. Windows Paint couldn't open them either. How can I open these files? *Roger Hawkins*

It looks as if you've managed to save the files with a name but no file type (extension). This common error is more obvious if you have deselected Windows' default setting to hide extensions for known file types.

Change this setting by clicking Tools, Folder Options, selecting the Advanced tab and looking under Advanced settings. To remedy the error, select one of the image files, press F2 to rename it and add '.jpg' to the end of the filename. You should then be able to open the files.

## Pass it on tip

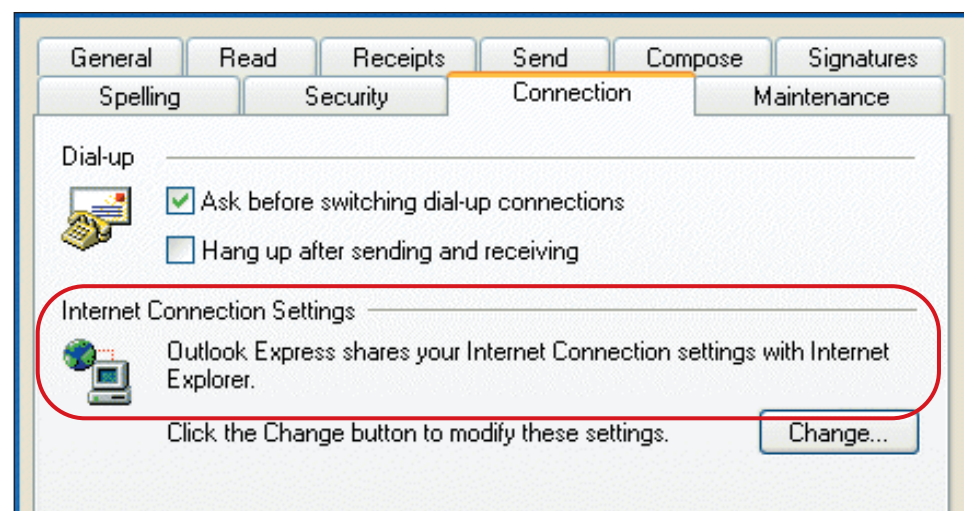
Do you have any great workarounds or shortcuts you'd like to share? Send your tips and tricks to Helpline, *PC Advisor*, Fifth floor, 85 Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TQ. Alternatively, email [pcadvisor\\_letters@idg.com](mailto:pcadvisor_letters@idg.com). To help us sort your messages, please use the words 'Pass it on' in the subject heading.

### Bar those diallers

After reading the tales of woe from people who downloaded rogue diallers that called premium-rate numbers, Brian Lewis wrote to pass on this tip for BT subscribers. Go to [www.bt.com](http://www.bt.com) armed with your BT account number and sign up for Call Barring. You can choose to bar any or all premium rate numbers, mobile numbers and international numbers. It costs £1.50 a month which, as Brian says, is a lot better than a surprise phone bill running into hundreds of pounds.

### Ghost in the machine

IT support engineer Brian Gorrell spotted the problem of random text strings appearing (*PC Advisor* issue 99, page 138) and wrote in with a solution from his own experience. The problem was caused by some speech-recognition software that was turned on, but not configured for use. The software was picking up stray noises and turning them into speech. Disabling the software enabled the problem to be solved without calling for an exorcist!





## Contact us

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

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 are charged at £1.50 per minute.

**Q** I'm currently using Microsoft Office 2000. When I try to start Word a window appears with the message: 'You cannot close Microsoft Word because a dialog is active. Switch to Microsoft Word and close the dialog'. Any ideas? *Alex Baird*

In Word click on Tools, Options, select the File Locations tab and note the path of the file type Startup. Close Word and then navigate to this Startup folder using Windows Explorer.

If there are any files in this folder, drag them to the desktop one at a time. Start Word each time you remove a file in order to find which one is causing the error. When you have found the culprit, drag back the files that made no difference to the problem.

**Q** I use Studio DV under Windows Me. When capturing video to AVI the program froze. I managed to recover the AVI files and reloaded them into Studio but now I

can't save any changes or start again. If I try to delete them I receive the message 'Cannot delete. Access denied. The source file may be in use'. Can you help? *Michael Jones*

If you're trying to delete AVI files using Windows Explorer then this could be the reason for the problem. Explorer tries to read the files to get information about them but because they are big this takes some time.

While it is reading them you can't delete the files. One solution would be to go and have a cup of tea and then try again. By that time, Explorer should have finished trying to read the file and you should be able to delete it.

I'd advise pressing and holding down the Shift key when you hit Delete. Otherwise Windows will try and move the file to the Recycle Bin, which it will first have to empty to create enough space. This will take even longer.

There are a couple of Registry tweaks that will limit Explorer's tendency to try to read AVI files. First, expand Hkey\_Clases\_Root then expand .avi. Select the

PersistentHandler folder and rename it to XPersistentHandler.

Next expand Hkey\_Clases\_Root\SystemFileAssociations\avi\shellex, select PropertyHandler and rename it to XPropertyHandler (this last one may only be present under Windows XP). By renaming the folders instead of deleting them, it's easy to restore the default behaviour if that is what you want to do.

If you still have trouble deleting these files try booting into Safe Mode. Alternatively, boot from a recovery disk and do it from the command prompt.

Lack of disk space can result in errors when you try to delete a very large file and it could also be the reason for Studio DV crashing in the first place. AVI files eat disk space like there's no tomorrow, so keep an eye on this when capturing video.

**Q** I enjoy playing Sid Meier's Colonization but it's an old game and regularly crashes

with the message 'Run-Time Error R6003 - Integer Divide by 0'. Can you help? *Bill Shaw*

'Divide by zero' errors when old software - not only games - is run on new computers are almost always caused by the fact that the new PC is too fast. What usually happens is that the program checks the system timer each time it has performed some tasks and subtracts the previous value from the old one to determine how much time has elapsed.

On modern systems the resolution of the timer isn't fine enough and it may not have changed since the last check. The result of the subtraction is therefore zero, which can cause an error when this figure is used in a calculation.

The easiest solution is to slow down the computer. You could do this from the Bios by choosing a lower clock speed and disabling the cache, but this isn't very convenient and it might not get your PC to go slow enough.

A better idea would be to use Mo'Slo that is on this issue's cover disc or can be downloaded from [www.hpaa.com/moslo](http://www.hpaa.com/moslo). There's a free evaluation version of this utility but it may not slow newer systems down enough, in which case you'll need the Deluxe version which costs \$20 (£12).

Another possibility is to try DosBox which is also on the cover CD or can be found at <http://dosbox.sourceforge.net>. It's an x86 processor emulator including DOS that is being developed to enable games and other DOS programs to run under other platforms. Windows XP users may find this useful, because it is being developed with more of an emphasis on game compatibility than the MS-DOS emulation that comes with XP.

But it's an evolving product - the release number at the time of writing is 0.60. Colonization is listed as being supported, but don't blame the developers (or me) if other favourite games don't work. ☒

## Identify file types

It's far too easy to save a downloaded file to your hard disk as a document with no file type. If you do, Windows will dumbly tell you that it doesn't know how to open the file and you may not be able to help it either. Well, now you can. When you find a mysterious untyped file, here's how to determine what it is.

Open the file using Notepad. The chances are that it will look like total gibberish but the first few characters should tell you what type of file it is. This will allow you to rename it with its proper extension and Windows can open it using the correct application.

Here's a short list that will help you identify some common file types:

BMP starts with the letters BM

GIF begins with GIF

JPG starts with a   - a few characters later you should see Jpeg or Jfif

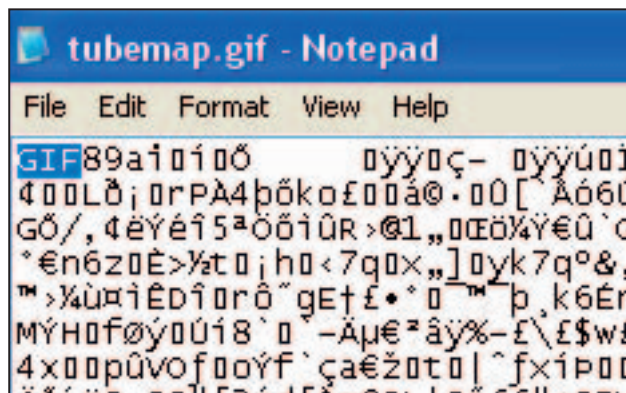
PDF starts with %PDF

RTF starts with (\rtf

ZIP starts with PK

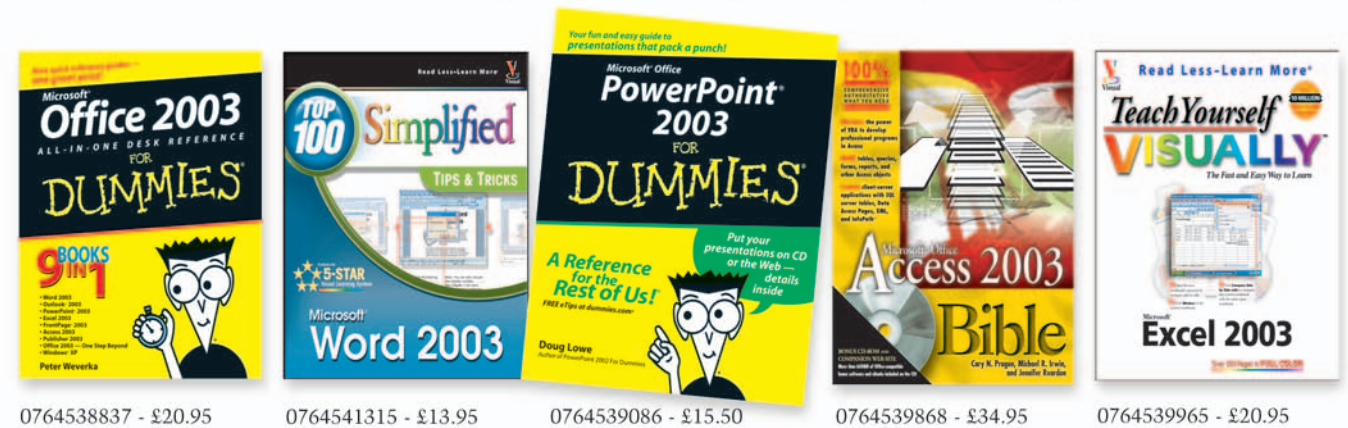
Microsoft Office documents aren't so easy to identify. Click on Edit, Find and search for the word Microsoft. If present, it will be followed by the name of the Office application that created it.

Some other operating systems use this knowledge to work out what type a file is. Doesn't it make you wonder why Windows, given the years it's been around and the billions that have been spent upon its development, still acts so stupid?



tip

# For All Your Office Needs...



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