

Do you need HELP?


What does a yellow exclamation mark next to a hardware device in Windows, or a '>' mark in DOS reveal? Want to switch between Windows 3.1 and 95 on the same system...? These and other queries answered



Huge Swap File

The configuration of my PC is Cyrix PR233, 32 MB EDO RAM with a 2.1 GB hard disk. Upon installing Windows 3.1, the computer created a swap file of 110 MB. Why does it create such a large swap file?


K Raja Shekar Reddy
Bangalore

 The swap file is the hard disk space that Windows uses for Virtual Memory. The size of this file is variable, unless you have set it to a particular size. If the former is true, the size should be much smaller the next time you restart the machine. You can limit the file size from the Virtual Memory settings.

Display Distress

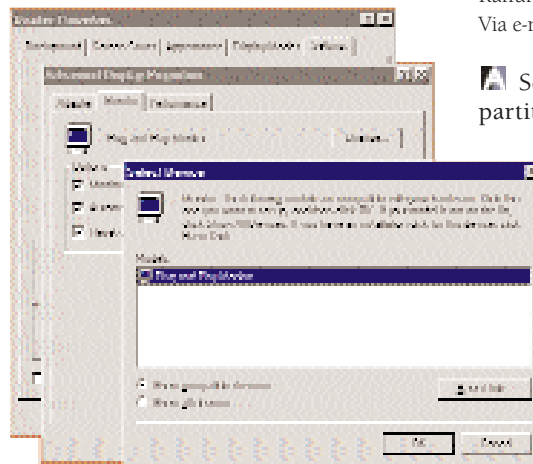
If I set the display resolution to higher than 640 x 480, the display starts scrolling horizontally. If I turn the monitor 'off' and switch it 'on' again, the display is restored to normal. The problem also occurs sometimes when I switch between DOS and Windows modes. Changing the refresh rate does not help either. The monitor is Super VGA, The display adapter is Cirrus Logic 5430/40 with 1 MB VRAM.

Mohit Jain
Lucknow

 The monitor, its settings or the display card—any one of these could be causing the problem, so you will have to check all three of them. First, use a good diagnostic utility like Nuts & Bolts or BCM Diagnostics to check the integrity of the

hardware components.

Next, open Display Properties and change the monitor settings from Super VGA to Plug & Play or Standard VGA.



Try changing your monitor settings or display card in case of a faulty display

Reboot the machine and see if the display has improved in any way.


If that does not help, try changing your display card. This will show you if the problem lies with the display adapter or the monitor. If you find a fault with the display adapter, you can either increase the RAM on it, or change the card entirely. The latter will be a better option.

If that fails, try replacing the monitor (with your friend's, maybe) and check if the problem remains. Should you find a fault with either the display card or the monitor, get it replaced by your dealer.

UNIX Installation

The SCO-Openserver 5.0.2e Unix Software does not install on a 4.3 GB hard disk, it stops at the time of partition creation. Why?


Rahul Rathee
Via e-mail

 Some systems cannot function on partitions over 2.1 GB. For example, even DOS will not create partitions over 2.1 GB in a FAT-16 file system. You should create partitions of not more than 2.1 GB on the hard disk and then install SCO-Openserver. This will prevent errors. Also, check the CMOS settings. UNIX may give errors if the hard disk is set up in the LBA mode. Change it to the Normal mode before installing UNIX.

Save Screen Or Disk Space?

I have a problem with installing screensavers. Some screensavers have a .SCR extension, while others have .ICO, .MID, .AVI, and other files along with them. Is it necessary to install all of them? Where should I copy the files?

T Semmal
Chennai

 Most screensavers have a .SCR extension, while some of them are associated with .EXEs (executables)—like the Titanic screensaver. If a screensaver also plays sound, it may have a .MID or a .WAV file

along with it. You should copy the screen-saver file and all associated files to the Windows or the Windows > System directory.

Bad Macros

I have an Intel Celeron-333 MHz computer with 32 MB SDRAM and Windows 95. When I checked my hard disk with Super VB (Virus Buster), one of my directories was found to be affected with an incurable macro virus. I was then prompted to delete the file. When I tried deleting the file, error messages flashed "Access is denied" and "Make sure that the disk is not write-protected and has enough space".

I have enough disk space (2 GB of free disk space). How do I solve the problem?

Saravanan Rajaraman

Via e-mail

Macro viruses are normally found in Word documents and Excel sheets, and not directories. Try deleting a file manually through Windows. If you still get an error, try the same through DOS—not the Command Prompt from Windows, but a pure DOS environment. This should work. If it does not, move important and uninfected files from the directory, then shut down into DOS mode and remove the directory using deltree. If you cannot delete this from the hard disk, run Scandisk under DOS first, then Windows, as your hard disk's file system or directory structure may have got corrupted.

The Old and The New

Can I have both Windows 3.11 and Windows 95 or 98 on my system in a way that when the machine boots, it asks me which operating system to boot into?

Palash Mathur

Mumbai

There are two ways you can do this. One is to partition the disk and install Windows 95/98 on a separate partition. The second and easier option is to install Windows 95/98 in a separate folder (for example: \Win95). It will ask you which operating system to boot into every time you start the machine. In case it does not, press [F8] when it says 'Starting Windows 95' to get a boot menu. From here, boot into MSDOS and then start Windows 3.11. Alternately, you can download TweakUI from the Microsoft Web site and set an option to forcibly

show the boot menu every time you start the system.

Smart Device Manager

Is it true that a yellow exclamation mark next to a device in the Windows Device Manager indicates a device conflict, which can be solved by manually allotting it a different IRQ?

R B Agarwal

Mumbai

The yellow exclamation mark shows that a device has not been properly installed under Windows. This could be due to various reasons, one of which is



Device Manager displays Windows conflicts

conflicting IRQs. Other reasons could be improper drivers, incorrect installation of drivers, malfunctioning of the device, or a problem with the connections.

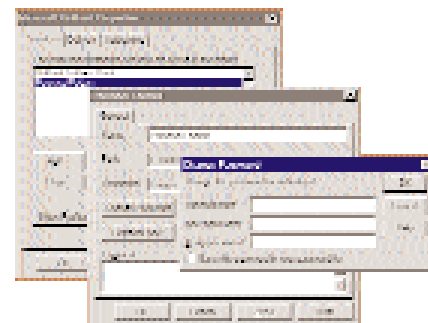
Group Account

The Internet connection in my office has more than 10 people receiving mail from different e-mail addresses on the same computer. Although the mail is sorted by using the Inbox assistant in respective folders, anyone can read anyone else's mail. Can this be avoided by providing a password to the folders?

Manoj Athavale

Via e-mail

You can use Microsoft Outlook (bundled with Microsoft Office) as your e-mail client to sort e-mail. You can set up different profiles for each person. Also, since Microsoft Outlook uses Windows Messaging, you have the benefit of assigning



Password-protect multiple e-mail and assign them to personal folders

a password to each personal folder. This password can be assigned when setting up your account or even later. Most other e-mail clients do not allow you to set a password on your folder.

Primary or Slave?

I want to configure my hard disk as Primary Master and the CD-ROM drive as the Secondary Master. How do I do this?

Mayur Kamat

Mumbai

The hard disk and the CD-ROM drive have jumpers which are used to set a drive as a Master or a Slave. Labels on the drive should indicate what setting configures the drive in what way. After adjusting the jumpers accordingly (setting both drives to Master), attach the hard disk to IDE Controller 1 on the motherboard and the CD-ROM drive to IDE Controller 2. This way you can configure the hard disk as the Primary Master and the CD-ROM drive as the Secondary Master.

Fax Facts

My computer (with an Intex Data/Fax/Voice modem) cannot send an outstation fax. Instead I get a reply that this facility 'is not available on your phone'. How do I rectify the problem?

Vikas Goel

New Delhi

To send faxes outside the local call range using Microsoft Fax (or any other fax software), your phone line must support such a service. That is, you must have STD or ISD subscriptions (whatever applicable) with your phone service provider. Once you have the service, you can use the fax software as you would normally (dialling the entire code for outstation calls).

Music—The Layer 3 Way

I use WinAmp 1.9 to play music on my computer. The configuration is 486 DX4 100 MHz with 32 MB RAM, 2.1 GB hard disk and Yamaha OPL3-SAX Soundcard. WAV files play perfectly, but while playing MP3 files, the sound is not constant and breaks often. Please advise.

Sacheendra Rao
Bangalore

The configuration of your machine is too low to play MP3 files smoothly. You will require at least a Pentium 100 machine for this. WAV files play well on your machine because they are not compressed. However, MP3 files are compressed and encoded using MPEG Layer 3 encoders.



Change WinAmp settings for smoother playback

Hence, the music file has to be decompressed and decoded as it is playing. This demands a lot from the processor.

The most you can do is turn 'off' all the features of WinAmp that render high quality music. Go to Options > Preferences and under the Programs tab, set the Priority Class, Output Priority and the Decode Priority to the least values. Under the Display tab, turn 'off' Auto-Scroll Song Name (this, too, requires CPU usage). Likewise, turn 'off' Visualisation.

Set the Output tab to the lowest values. Next, ensure that the Buffering tab is enabled. Play around with these settings, starting with the maximum buffer settings, until you get an optimum output.

Xing Windows NT

Under Windows 98, my Video CDs play perfectly. However, when I use the Windows NT Workstation 4.0 ActiveMovie Player, the resolution is bad, it is shown in 'Frames'. Even Xing Player did not help.

Arjun Tandon
Via e-mail

Probably the weakest part of Windows NT is its display. Windows NT is primarily built to be a Network Operating System. Maximum resources are used for user validations, file and print management and the other services that it may be configured for. Thus, you are bound to get

a bad display when viewing VCDs. However, you can enhance the quality by changing the amount of resources available to foreground applications. Right-click My Computer and select Properties. Also, increasing the pagefile size from here should help.

What's That Password?

I had purchased an assembled PC (Celeron 266 with Award BIOS) a few months ago. The problem is I do not know the BIOS password. The dealer who sold me the PC says that he did not set any password for it. How can I know the password for the BIOS Setup? What precautions should be taken when doing this?

Mohd Nasir
Azamgarh

Your BIOS should have the factory settings. Try out a few of the standard Award passwords. These are normally like AWARD_WG, AWARD_WS etc. (Check the manual and also see CHIP May 1998). The BIOS passwords are case sensitive. If these do not help, you can open up the computer and remove the BIOS battery. Replace it after some time so that the BIOS password is erased from the memory.

The DOS Dose

The DOS prompt terminates in a '>' sign. What is the purpose of the sign? When I used

Backing Up

How can I backup and restore data in Windows using Microsoft Backup? Is a better software available?

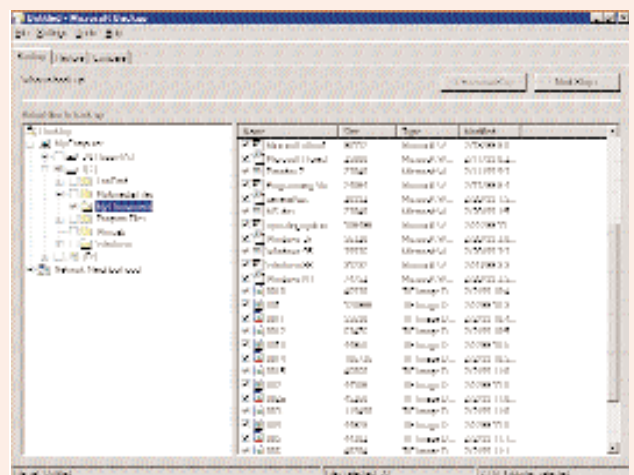
Vaishali Patil
Via e-mail

To backup data using Microsoft backup, simply start the backup utility and select the folders you wish to backup from the left pane, or the files from the right panel. Next, specify where you want to backup the files and folders and give a name to the backup file. A password is optional.

To restore the data, click on the Restore tab. Then locate the backup file and restore it. You get an option to restore it to the original location or to a new folder. The backup files have an extension of .QIC, but these cannot be opened

by double clicking on the icon.

A simpler alternative is to use WinZip or a similar compression utility. This essentially functions like a backup utility. It will compress the files and retain the directory structure and restore it in the same fashion. It is faster than Microsoft Backup and the files are easier to manage. You also have the advantage of opening files without having to decompress the entire archive for a quick look. Updating changed files is also easier.

PROBLEM OF THE MONTH

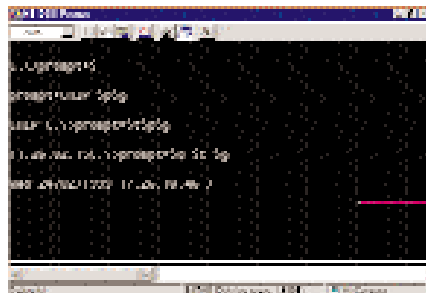
Data backup using Microsoft Backup is easy, but WinZip is easier

the prompt= command, the prompt changed, but it still worked perfectly well.

While working in Microsoft Excel, when I type 8.5% in a cell, it is automatically changed to 9% and all calculations are made on this new figure. How does one avoid this? Also, how do I replace the '\$' (for currency) sign with 'Rs'?

Jasbir Singh Gill
Chandigarh

A The DOS prompt is exactly what the name suggests, a 'prompt'. It is merely a guide to the user and indicates the insertion point where the user can start typing. In fact, it can be replaced with almost anything suitable to the user using the Prompt= command. For example, Prompt=\$p\$g will generate the regular prompt, Prompt=\$p\$d\$t\$g will also show the current system date and time. \$p is for the current directory, \$t is for the current system time, \$d for the current



Use Prompt= to change the DOS prompt

system date and \$g for the '>' sign. It will even accept ASCII text (Prompt=\$p CHIP \$g) You can even enter prompt=\$ and have no visible prompt at all!

To enter decimal percentages in Microsoft Excel, select the cells and click Format > Cells. Here, choose Percentage and select the number of decimal places you would like to see.

To change the currency indicator, you will have to change the Regional Settings of your computer. For this, go to Control Panel > Regional Settings. Under the Currency tab, change the currency symbol.

A Adding another Hard Disk

Can I add a new hard disk (2.3 GB) as a slave to my existing one (1.2 GB) by simply changing the jumper settings? Will my power supply take the load? Can I keep Windows 95 as the existing OS and install Windows 98 separately on the new hard disk? Which

drive will be bootable in that case?

Do I have to assign the CD-ROM drive a new letter? After adding a hard disk, can I install an operating system even if there is none existing on it? Can I format the hard disks without installing Windows? If the operating system is on one hard disk, can I install applications on a separate hard disk?

Dr Hirendra Shah
Ahmedabad

A Yes, you can add a new hard disk by simply changing the jumper settings as specified on the label of the hard disk. The power supply will definitely be able to take the load, which is not much. If you are planning to format both the disks, set the new one as a Primary and the old one as the slave, as the new one should have a faster access time. You can install operating systems on a fresh hard disk by booting from a floppy or CD-ROM. If your operating system setup is on a CD-ROM drive, you will need CD-ROM support, so make sure the floppy has the drivers. You can also format the hard disks from the same bootable floppy. You can install Windows 95 and Windows 98 on separate hard disks. Also, you can install your applications on the other hard disk.

A Po(r)t Pourri

I have one Pentium II 233 MHz with two USB ports, one serial port and a parallel port. I am unable to use the USB ports, as I do not have any such devices. I have a plotter and a digitiser, both of which require serial ports. These are difficult to use as I have to keep switching them to COM1. Is there any way to work around this problem? Can I somehow interface the USB ports on to COM ports?

K K Sharma
Mumbai

A No, you cannot interface USB ports on to COM ports. You can, however, add COM ports to your system. Your machine should be able to take up to four serial ports on which you can attach your devices. Also, before you buy such devices the next time, find out if they are available with other interfaces, like USB and parallel port. Most new devices have a variety of interfaces to choose from.

A No Video

I have an interactive multimedia CD-ROM which runs well on Windows 3.11, but not

with Windows 95 or 98. Although the installation is smooth (there are no error messages) when I run the program, it displays the message "CVID Video drivers not found - please run setup again." I have installed it several times without success. Please help.

Manoj Gaur
Baroda

A Check the manuals or the online documentation for hardware and software requirements. Most interactive multimedia CD-ROMs require QuickTime drivers to run. If your CD requires QuickTime, it might be provided on the CD-ROM itself. Also, make sure you have Video For Windows installed. This can be done from Control Panel > Add/Remove Programs > Windows Setup > Multimedia. If you still cannot solve the problem, contact the software publisher for support.

A Extra Hard Drive?

I had allowed my friend to access my computer and he made changes to my hard disk drive. I had a 2.1 GB hard disk as drive 'C' and CD-ROM drive as 'D'. Now it is showing as two drives as 'C' and 'D', and CD-ROM drive as 'E'. If any program is installed on 'C', it automatically gets installed on both C and D drives and I face the same problem with uninstall. The used disk space on both the drives is about 500 MB and free space about 1500 MB, although I have only one 2.1 GB HD. I want the original configuration back, without affecting any of the installed programmes. Please advise.

Ashit Sanghvi
Via e-mail

A Your friend may have used a simple DOS command, loading it at startup through the autoexec.bat file. Edit this file in Notepad—look for a command like 'SUBST D: C:' and remove it. This command basically substitutes any drive or directory to a new drive letter. Also under the Disk Drives tree in the Device Manager, check how many hard disks are displayed. **E**

Do you need help?

Send in your queries, problems to Do you need help? CHIP, Third floor, 210 Taj Building, D.N. Road, Mumbai 400 001.