

# My Troubleshooting Checklist for Common IT Issues

Portfolio • 2026 • Estimated read time: 3 minutes

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Version	1.0
Last updated	February 6, 2026

## Purpose

When a user is blocked, speed matters, but consistency matters more. This checklist helps me troubleshoot common issues in a repeatable way, communicate clearly, and leave clean ticket notes that make handoffs easy.

## What I optimize for

- Restore service quickly without skipping fundamentals
- Isolate the root cause by testing one variable at a time
- Document clearly so the next technician can continue without starting over

## 1) Login and Access Issues

*Examples: password reset, account lockout, MFA problems, permission denied, application access*

### Triage questions

- Which system or app are you logging into
- What is the exact error message
- Does it fail on one device or multiple devices

### Checklist

- [ ] Confirm identity and verify the correct username format
- [ ] Check account status: enabled, not locked, password not expired
- [ ] If MFA is involved, confirm the method and confirm time sync on the device
- [ ] Try a clean sign in: private browser window for web apps, sign out then sign in again
- [ ] Clear cached credentials when symptoms point to stored passwords
- [ ] Validate access: group membership, license assignment, and role permissions
- [ ] If remote access is required, confirm VPN status and policy requirements

### Escalate when

- Lockouts repeat after a reset
- Signs of account compromise
- Multiple users report the same login failure

## 2) WiFi and Connectivity Issues

*Examples: no internet, can reach public sites but not internal resources, VPN drops, slow connection*

### Triage questions

- WiFi only or also Ethernet
- One location or everywhere
- Can the user access public sites, internal sites, or neither

### Checklist

- [ ] Confirm basics: WiFi enabled, airplane mode off, correct network selected
- [ ] Forget the network and reconnect, confirm credentials, check captive portal
- [ ] Restart the device, then disable and re enable the network adapter
- [ ] Verify IP settings: IP address, gateway, DNS, and signal strength
- [ ] Test on an alternate network to isolate device vs network
- [ ] If VPN is used, test with VPN on and off to confirm routing behavior
- [ ] Check driver and recent updates if the issue started suddenly

### Escalate when

- Multiple users affected in the same area
- Access point outage, ISP outage, or network authentication failure

## 3) Printing Issues

*Examples: printer offline, stuck queue, cannot add printer, poor print quality*

### Triage questions

- Printer name and location, or home model
- Is the issue offline, cannot find printer, or prints incorrectly

### Checklist

- [ ] Confirm power, cables, network connection, and correct default printer
- [ ] Test print from a different app and print a test page
- [ ] Clear the print queue and restart the Print Spooler if needed
- [ ] Re add printer and confirm the correct driver and correct port
- [ ] For network printers, confirm the user is on the correct network or VPN
- [ ] For quality issues, check paper type, tray, toner, jams, and settings

### Escalate when

- Hardware failure suspected
- Print server issues
- Multiple users cannot print to the same device

## 4) Slow Device and Performance Issues

Examples: slow boot, freezing, application lag, storage full, high CPU usage

### Triage questions

- When did it start and what changed
- Is it slow at login, opening apps, browsing, or everything

### Checklist

- [ ] Check system resources: CPU, memory, disk, and network utilization
- [ ] Review startup items and background processes
- [ ] Verify available storage and run cleanup if space is low
- [ ] Confirm updates and pending restarts, then reboot and retest
- [ ] Run a security scan if symptoms are unusual
- [ ] Check hardware health indicators when available: disk health, overheating, battery health
- [ ] If managed device, consider endpoint tools or policy changes as a cause

### Escalate when

- Disk errors or signs of failing hardware
- Repeated crashes or blue screens
- Malware is confirmed or strongly suspected

## What I always document in the ticket

### User and impact

- User name, department, device name or asset tag, location
- Business impact and urgency, what the user cannot do

### Problem details

- Exact error message and where it appears
- When it started and what changed recently
- Scope: one user, one team, or multiple users

### Troubleshooting actions

- Steps taken in order and the result of each step
- Tests used to isolate the cause, such as alternate device or alternate network

### Resolution and verification

- Fix applied, settings changed, access updated, or replacement completed
- User confirmation that the issue is resolved
- Any prevention tips shared with the user

*Closing note: My goal is not just to fix the issue. It is to restore confidence. Clear communication, steady troubleshooting, and clean documentation help support feel reliable, even when the problem is frustrating.*