

How to... Fix HP printer “filter failed” error in (Ubuntu) Linux

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***Update, 2015-02-06:** As of a recent upgrade to Xubuntu 14.10, jumping straight to the third solution still fixes the issue.*

My printer suffered a paper jam. After releasing the paper, I found that the printer was unwilling to print anything. The specific error was “filter failed”.

Diagnosing

The first step is to open CUPS. In your browser’s urlbar, type “localhost:631”. If at any point, CUPS asks for your password, enter it as you would in the terminal. To confirm this error, click on the *Jobs* tab (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Confirming the “filter failed” error in CUPS.

As you can see under State, I’m getting the “filter failed” error.

Solution 1: re-install printer

Now click on the *Printers* tab, and then click on your printer (Figure 2).

HP_LaserJet_Professional_M1132_MFP (Idle, Accepting Jobs, Not Shared)

Maintenance Administration

Description: Automatically setup by HPLIP

Location:

Driver: HP LaserJet Professional m1132 MFP, hpcups 3.13.9, requires proprietary plugin (color, 2-sided printing)

Connection: hp://usb/HP_LaserJet_Professional_M1132_MFP?serial=000000000QH75PKNPR1a

Defaults: job-sheets=none, none media=na_letter_8.5x11in sides=one-sided

Jobs

Search in HP_LaserJet_Professional_M1132_MFP: [] [Search] [Clear]

Show Completed Jobs Show All Jobs

Showing 1 of 1 active job.

ID	Name	User	Size	Pages	State	Control
HP_LaserJet_Professional_M1132_MFP-84	Unknown	Withheld	295k	Unknown	stopped "Filter failed"	[Reprint Job] [Cancel Job] [Move Job]

Figure 2: HP_LaserJet_Professional_M1132_MFP page in CUPS.

Under the *Administration* menu, you will see an option to delete the printer (Figure 3).

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HP_LaserJet_Professional_M1132_MFP-84	Unknown	Withheld	295k	Unknown	stopped "Filter failed"	[Reprint Job] [Cancel Job] [Move Job]

Figure 3: Deleting the printer using the administration menu in the CUPS *Printers* page.

When asked to confirm, click *Delete Printer*. In the *Administration* tab, add the printer (Figure 4).

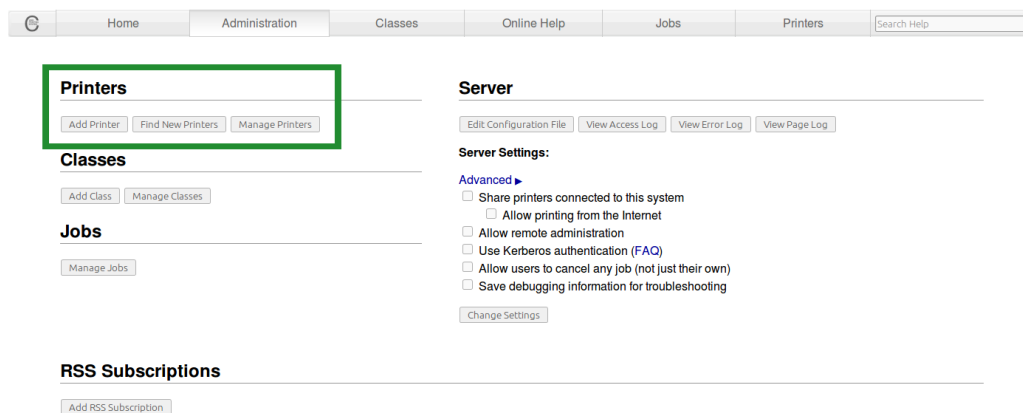


Figure 4: Adding the printer on the *Administration* page.

Once that is complete, try printing your document. (You can also print a test page in the *Maintenance* menu of your printer's page (Figure 5).)

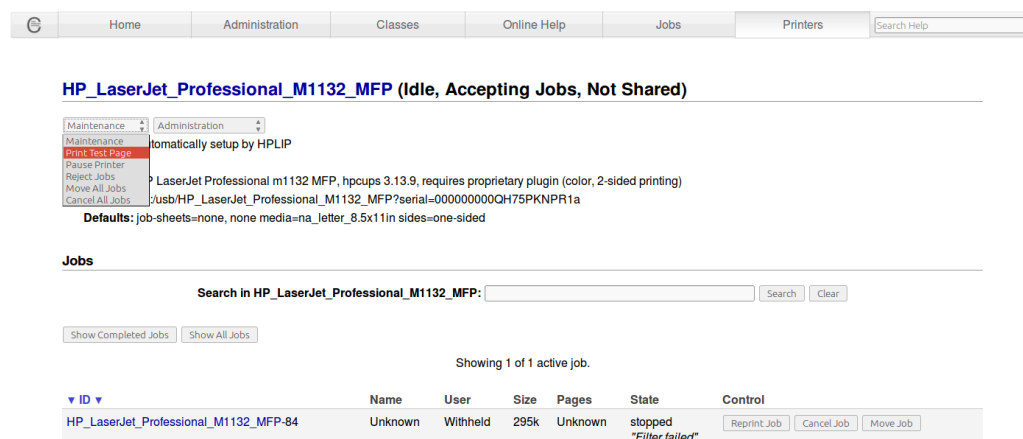


Figure 5: Printing a test page using the *Maintenance* menu.

Alternate solution if this fails: rename your printer with a slightly different name.

Solution 2: re-install CUPS

Some found that this error was caused by a problem with CUPS, either after an update or failed installation.

Although you can do this in the terminal, we're going to use a GUI method. Open Synaptic, and in the *Quick filter* text field, type "cups" (Figure 6).

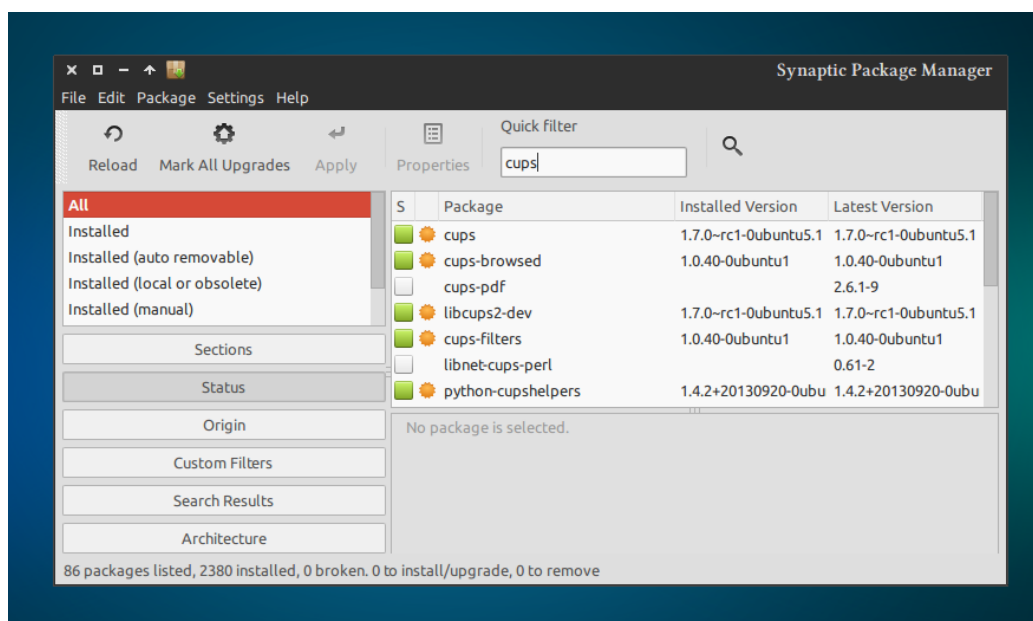


Figure 6: Finding CUPS in Synaptic.

Click on the *Installed* tab, so it will be easier to select all (Figure 7). Although you don't have to re-install everything, this is what I (or we) will be doing.

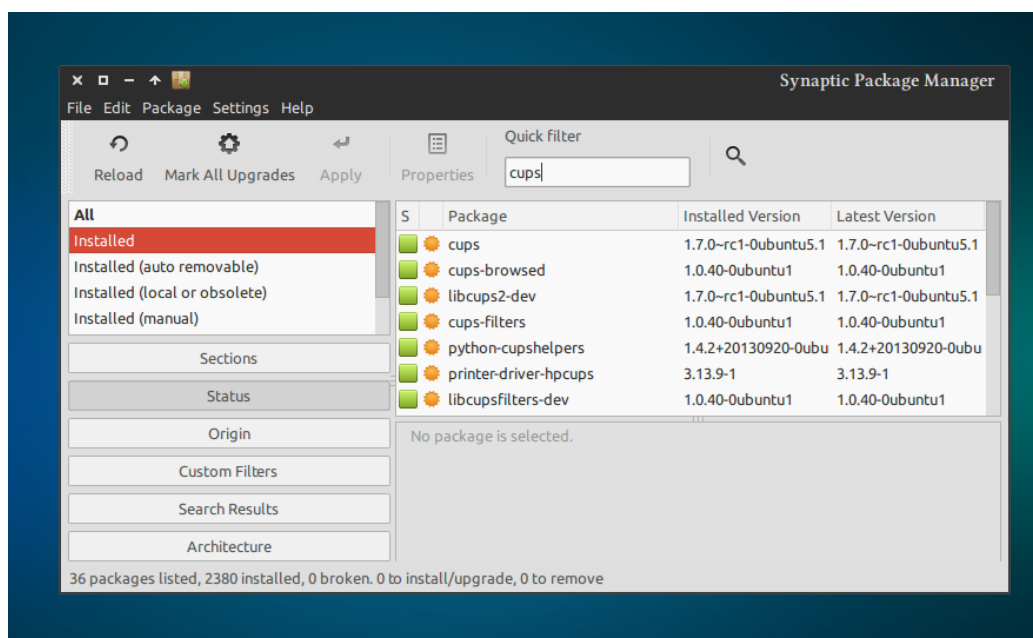


Figure 7: Viewing all CUPS-related installations.

Select all the packages (CTRL + A). Now mark the packages for re-installation

(Figure 8). You can do this either by right-clicking and clicking *Mark for Reinstallation* or opening the *Package* menu and clicking *Mark for Reinstallation* there.

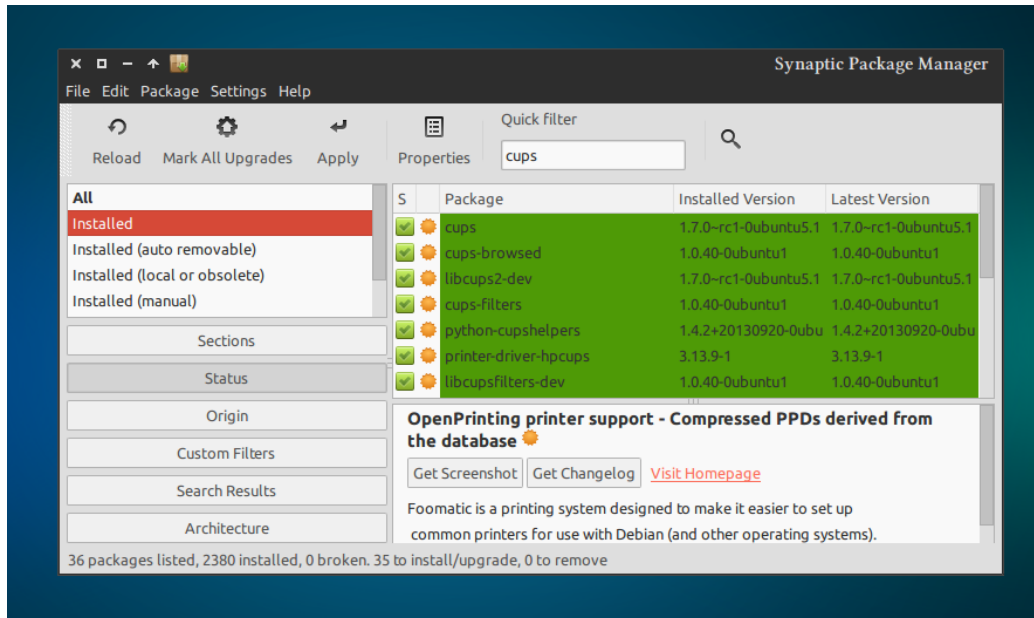


Figure 8: Marking CUPS for re-installation.

Now click *Apply* and let Synaptic re-install CUPS. After re-installation, print your document.

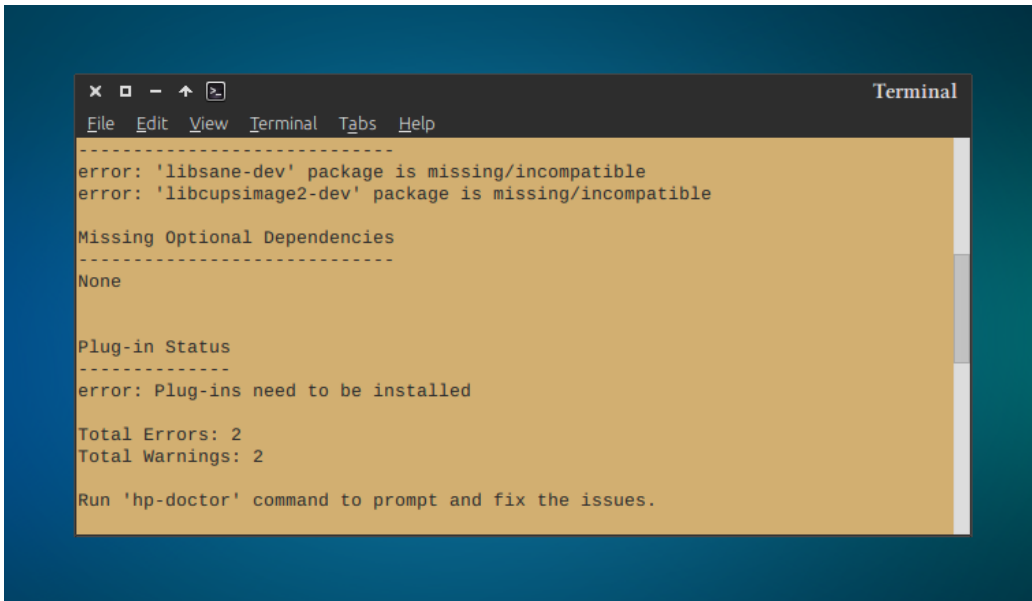
Solution 3: Fix HPLIP

If you perused the list of packages you marked for re-installation, you may have noticed one called *hplip*. Formally known as HP Linux Imaging and Printing, HPLIP integrates HP printers with Linux. It is provided by HP¹.

Generally, HPLIP will come pre-installed with your distribution; you can confirm that by typing “*hplip*” in *Quick filter* again. If it’s installed, Synaptic will show it as such.

Let’s close Synaptic now and open the terminal. In the terminal, type “*hp-check -t*”. This will check whether HPLIP is working correctly. Figure 9 shows what I found.

¹<http://hplipopensource.com/hplip-web/index.html>



```

x  □  -  ↑  [x]
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
-----
error: 'libsane-dev' package is missing/incompatible
error: 'libcupsimage2-dev' package is missing/incompatible

Missing Optional Dependencies
-----
None

Plug-in Status
-----
error: Plug-ins need to be installed

Total Errors: 2
Total Warnings: 2

Run 'hp-doctor' command to prompt and fix the issues.
```

Figure 9: The results of the “hp-check -t” command.

I was missing two required packages. If you have the same problem, type “hp-doctor” as suggested. You will get a number of prompts throughout, the first of which may be a distribution error:

```
error: This distro (i.e ubuntu 13.10) is either deprecated or not yet
supported.
The diagnosis is limited on unsupported platforms. Do you want to
continue?(y=yes, n=no*):
```

Type “y” and continue. If you get after it checks for updates:

```
Newer version of HPLIP-3.13.11 is available.
Press 'y' to continue to upgrade HPLIP-3.13.11 (y=yes*, n=no):
```

Type “y” and continue. You may be told to install HPLIP manually, but it will continue anyway, and check for dependencies.

Under *General Dependencies*, hp-doctor found this (Figure 10):

```
pyqt4 Python-Qt4 REQUIRED 4.0
4.10.3 OK -
cups-devel CUPS-SDK REQUIRED -
1.7 OK -
error: sane-devel SANE-SDK REQUIRED -
MISSING 'sane-devel needs to be installed'
libusb USB-Lib REQUIRED -
1.0 OK -
sane Scan-Lib REQUIRED -
- OK -
error: cups-image CUPS-Image-Lib REQUIRED -
1.7 MISSING 'cups-image needs to be installed'
libnetsnmp-devel SNMP-Networking-SDK REQUIRED 5.0.9
5.7.2 OK -
python-xml Python-XML-Lib REQUIRED -
2.1.0 OK -
python-notify Desktop-notifications OPTIONAL -
- OK -
```

Figure 10: Running “hp-doctor” highlights the errors shown by *hp-check -t*. It then attempts to fix them.

The next prompt will be:

Do you want to update repository and Install missing/incompatible packages. (a=install all*, c=custom_install, s=skip):

Type “a” and continue. Because my problem was a plug-in version mismatch, I next got this:

Found Plugin version mismatch. Press 'y' to re-install the plugin(y=yes*, n=no):

Type “y” and continue. When you’re asked whether to download, specify a path, or quit, choose the download option by typing “d”.

HP will then ask you to accept the license terms:

Do you accept the license terms for the plug-in (y=yes*, n=no, q=quit)
?

Type “y” if you accept. hp-doctor will then complete without further prompts. Now try to print your document.

Other solutions

In my case, running `hp-check -t` was the solution to fix the “filter failed” error. However, that may not be the case with you.

One solution that was a temporary fix was to change my PDF viewer. So, switching from the default Evince to KDE’s Okular² appeared to solve the problem. (By my own admission, I’m no Linux expert, so don’t ask me how.)

There are some useful resources that may help:

- (Arch Linux) Solution is to clean the pacman cache; or install foo2zjs from the AUR while making sure not to have HPLIP installed: <https://bbs.archlinux.org/viewtopic.php?id=148850>.
- Further advice on using hp-check, et al.: <http://unix.stackexchange.com/questions/77139/filter-failed-from-hplip>.
- If you aren’t a member of the lpadmin group, add yourself manually: <http://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?t=2145030>.
- Simply try switching off the printer and trying again later (I admit I failed to type that out without laughing, but it’s often an adequate solution): <http://askubuntu.com/questions/304152/after-update-my-printer-will-not-work>

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Read online at: <http://thenumberzero.blogspot.com/2014/02/how-to-fix-hp-printer-filter-failed.html>

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OS: Xubuntu 13.10; **printer:** HP LaserJet M1132 MFP; **theme:** Numix

²<http://okular.kde.org/>