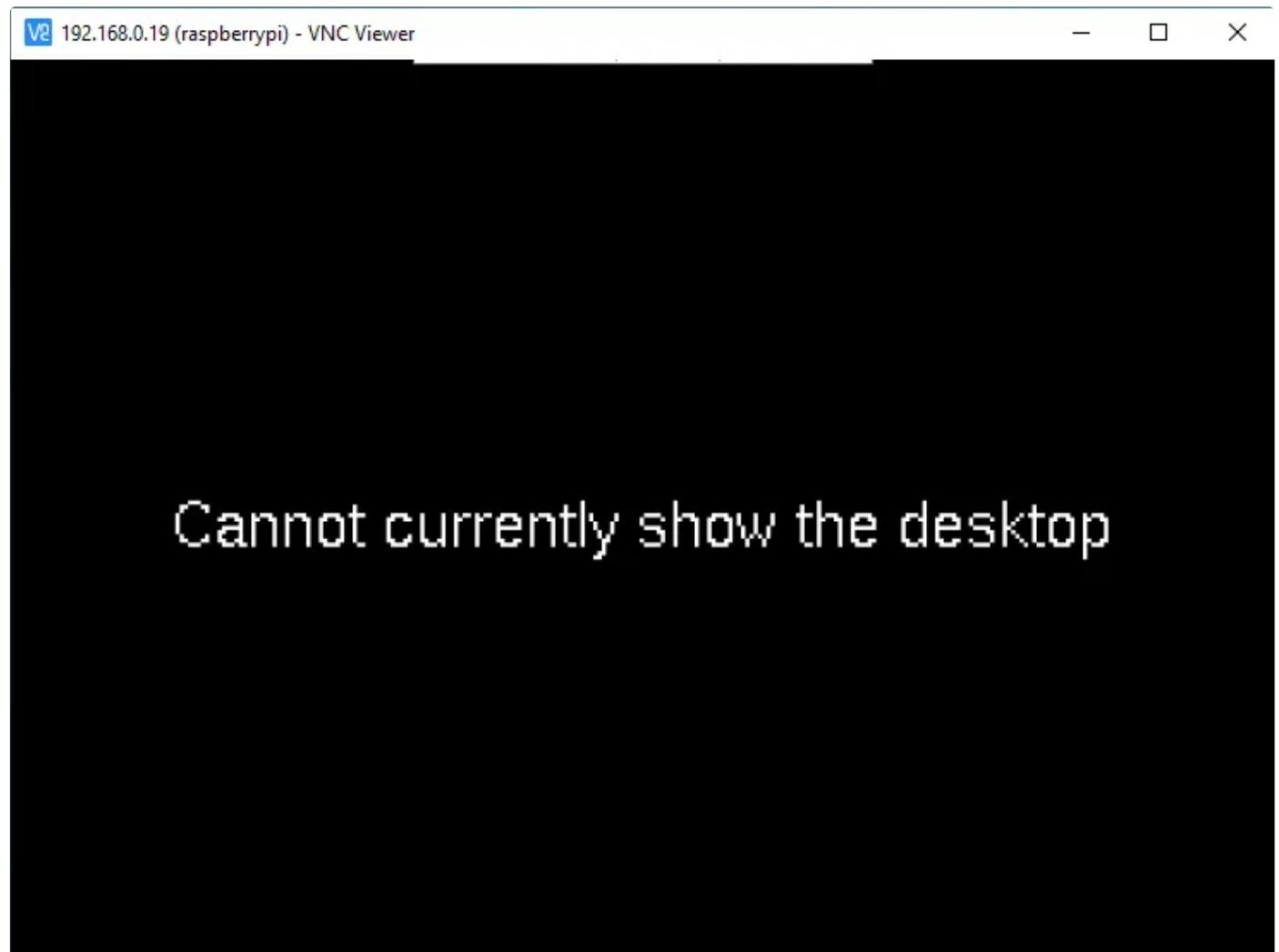


[Menu](#)

[Home](#) » [Tutorials](#) » [Raspberry Pi OS](#) » How to fix 'Cannot currently show the desktop' on Raspberry Pi

Posted on [19/11/2021](#) by [Frederic](#) — [4 Comments](#)

# How to fix 'Cannot currently show the desktop' on Raspberry Pi



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with an error message ‘Cannot currently show the desktop’ on your next connection attempt. In this short tutorial we’ll see how you can fix this issue easily.

For this tutorial, our Pi is running on Raspberry Pi OS. And we assume you already established a remote connection using the RealVNC software. Have a look at our tutorial '[Access your Raspberry Pi remotely from another computer](#)' if this isn’t the case or if you need additional information.

### 1. Reconnect temporarily a monitor to your Raspberry Pi

The black screen comes when you boot your remote Pi while it isn’t connected to a monitor and you left the default screen resolution. To solve this issue and be able to boot without a monitor connected to your remote Pi, we have to change the Pi’s screen resolution.

So, to be able to change the configurations, you temporarily need to have a monitor connected to your Pi and forget the remote connection for a short while.

Or, another option is to connect through a ssh connection. If you do it this way, the ssh interface has to be configured as ‘enabled’ on your Pi.

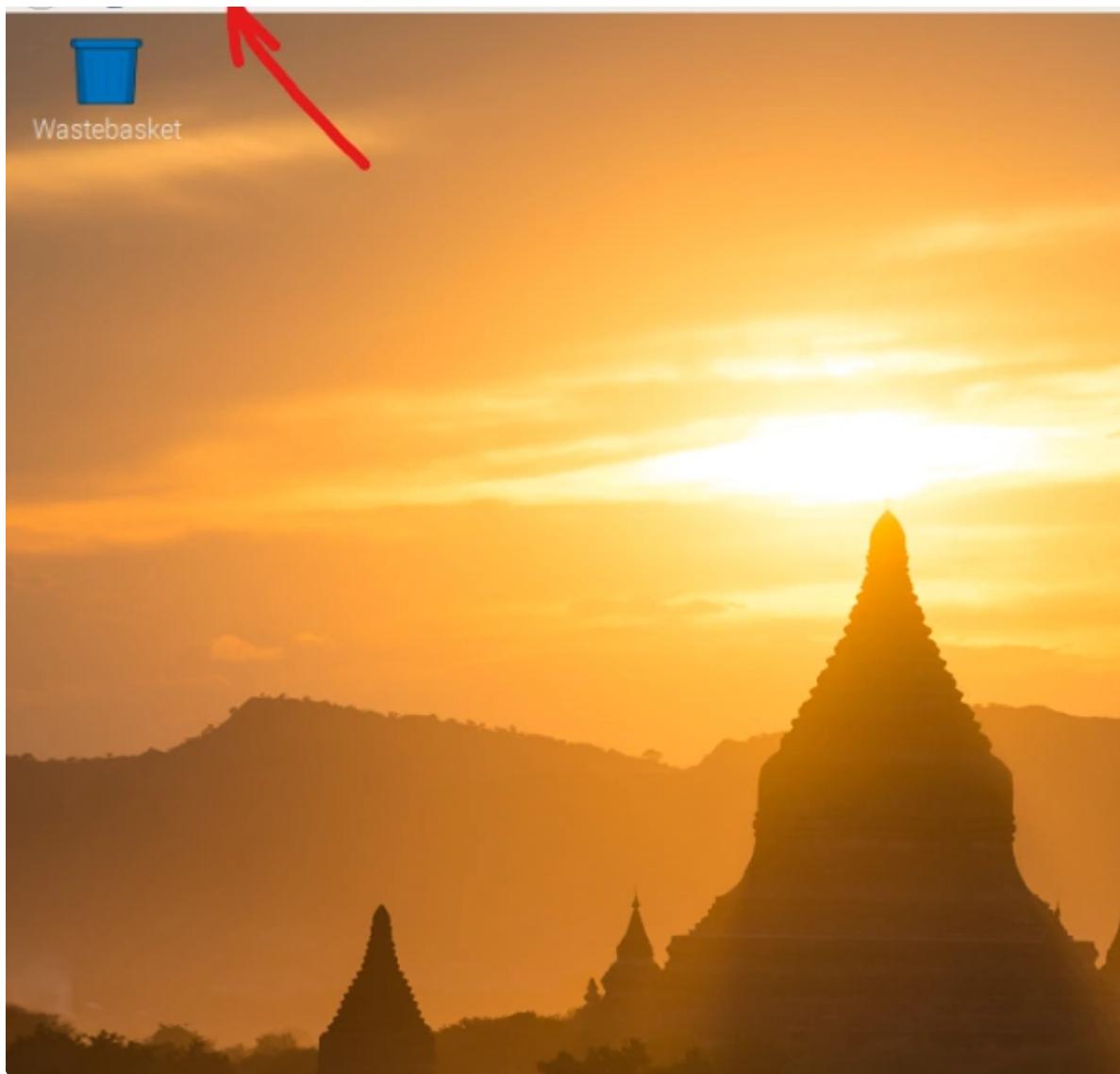
### 2. Boot your Raspberry Pi and open a terminal window

Once you have back your screen on your Pi, click on the terminal icon on the taskbar (left upper corner of your screen), a terminal window will appear.

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### 3. Find out your Raspberry Pi OS version

Depending on the version of your Raspberry Pi OS, the fix will be slightly different. So before fixing the issue we have to find out which OS version we are running. If you didn't change the default wallpaper, it's easy to recognise:

- wallpaper with tempels (see picture above) : version 10 (Buster)
- wallpaper with lake (see picture below) : version 11 (Bullseye)

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X



If you changed the wallpaper or if you are accessing your Pi through a ssh-connection, enter the following command:

```
cat /etc/os-release
```

and look for the number after 'VERSION\_ID'.

#### 4. Switch to root user

First, enter :

```
sudo -s
```

#### 5. Only for version 10 : Change the display settings in your config.txt file as follows :

Enter or copy and paste :

```
echo 'hdmi_force_hotplug=1'>> /boot/config.txt
echo 'hdmi_group=2'>> /boot/config.txt
echo 'hdmi_mode=51'>> /boot/config.txt
```

```
pi@raspberrypi:~ $ sudo -s
root@raspberrypi:/home/pi# echo 'hdmi_force_hotplug=1'>> /boot/config.txt
root@raspberrypi:/home/pi# echo 'hdmi_group=2'>> /boot/config.txt
root@raspberrypi:/home/pi# echo 'hdmi_mode=51'>> /boot/config.txt
root@raspberrypi:/home/pi#
```

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```
nano /boot/config.txt
```

Have a look at the bottom of the file.

## 6. Only for version 11 : Change the display settings in the Raspberry Pi Software Configuration

Tool (raspi-config) as follows :

To open the raspi-config tool, enter :

```
raspi-config
```

Then, to be sure, we first update the tool to the latest version. Navigate with your keyboard arrows to :

```
8 Update
```

After the Update operation, the tool will restart automatically.

Now we navigate to :

```
2 Display Options
```

then to :

```
D5 VNC Resolution
```

and select a resolution that suits you best. I always choose the maximum resolution :

```
1920x1080
```

Click on your 'Tab' and then 'Enter' key to select the chosen resolution.

Click on 'OK' and then 'Finish' to save your settings.

## 7. Reboot

Now you can remove the HDMI-cable from your Pi if you want. A monitor directly connected to your Pi isn't necessary anymore to have your screen back on the VNC viewer.

Finally, enter :

```
reboot
```

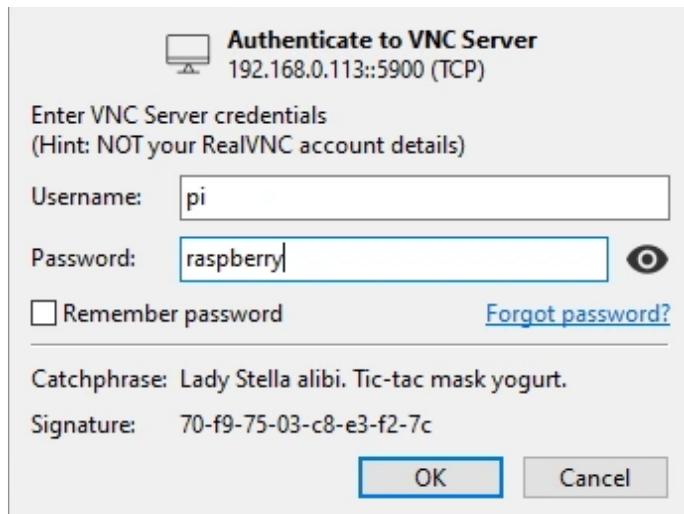
## 8. Reconnect remotely with your VNC viewer.

That's it ! Now you can establish a remote connection to your Raspberry Pi again. And if you executed previous steps carefully, the black screen with 'Cannot currently show the desktop' won't appear any more.

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## Remark

If you want to change the display settings to a lower resolution for example, you can do it with the Raspberry Pi Software Configuration Tool (`raspi-config`). You'll find more information how to use this tool in the Raspberry Pi documentation :

<https://www.raspberrypi.org/documentation/computers/configuration.html>

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George · 23/10/2021

Thanks for this : I was pulling my limited hair out.  
You can also ssh into the pi and run your commands.

Thanks again.

Reply ↤

Santosh

27/01/2022

Thanks for the solution. It fixed the problem in a minute or two. 😊

Reply ↤

jule

28/01/2022

Hi. Thanks for this. Unfortunately it didn't fix my issue. My issue with the same symptoms you describe was due to 'Enable Legacy Camera Support' being enabled. Logging on again via ssh – running raspi-config and disabling legacy camera support fixed the problem.

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20/10/2022

This was very helpful, thank you!

Reply ↶

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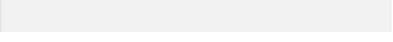
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