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# How do you force Visual Studio to regenerate the .designer files for aspx/ascx files?

Ask Question



Sometimes when I'm editing page or control the .designer files stop being updated with the new controls I'm putting on the page. I'm not sure what's causing this to happen, but I'm wondering if there's any way of forcing Visual Studio to regenerate the .designer file. I'm using Visual Studio 2008



**EDIT:** Sorry I should have noted I've already tried:

64

- Closing & re-opening all the files & Visual Studio
- Making a change to a runat="server" control on the page
- · Deleting & re-adding the page directive

asp.net visual-studio visual-studio-2008

edited Nov 2 '08 at 2:06

community wiki 6 revs, 4 users 100% Glenn Slaven

55 It's it ridiculous that in 2012 Visual Studio still doesn't have a context menu item to regenerate designer files from source files? It's akin to not

being able to rebuild a corrupt DLL. I don't understand it.. Especially with external source control and external editors you leave Visual Studio crippled. Waste of money, if you ask me. I'm actually trying to regenerate resource file designers. I managed to get *edit* it regenerated, but it's through obscurity... Augh!!!1 – bambams Nov 21 '12 at 15:06

- @bamccaig, if I had a penny for every weird "feature" like this, I would be richer than Bill Gates. If you think this is bad, look at where Outlook Express stores its mail data. It's buried deep in the user folder under a cryptic folder name that's hidden by default. ATL\_DEV Jul 15 '14 at 3:41
- 11 Is there any solution for VS 2015? Anton Oct 25 '15 at 10:19
- 1 Not a permanent fix but this restores control references in the .cs file: 1. Open the related .aspx file; 2. Delete the single ">" at the end of the <%@ Page directive line; 3. Wait a second or two; 4. Put the ">" back. 5. Switch over to the .cs file and you'll see it is now free of control reference errors. I've been doing this for ages now, works every time, in every VS version. ingredient\_15939 Mar 1 '17 at 4:55

### 44 Answers

1 2 next



If you open the .aspx file and switch between design view and html view and back it will prompt VS to check the controls and add any that are missing to the designer file.



360

In VS2013-15 there is a **Convert to Web Application** command under the **Project** menu. Prior to VS2013 this option was available in the right-click context menu for as(c/p)x files. When this is done you should see that you now have a \*.Designer.cs file available and your controls within the Design HTML will be available for your control.



PS: This should not be done in debug mode, as not everything is "recompiled" when debugging.

Some people have also reported success by deleting the .designer.cs file and then recreate an empty file with the same name.

edited Feb 13 '16 at 12:55

community wiki 4 revs, 3 users 75% Espo

- 1 This only worked for me after closing down every instance (even those with totally different solutions) of VS2008 Kevin Feb 18 '10 at 17:50
- 10 I found that changing from debug mode to release mode dig the trick for me, Thanks Chris Jun 22 '10 at 16:06
- Just wanted to say that I was having the same error and tried everything on this page, with nothing working. Turned out I was missing a ">" close tag on a div that had runat="server". Running VS-2008. – Ber53rker May 16 '12 at 14:07
- 10 To make "Convert to Web Application" appear, first you need to delete the Designer.cs file BY RIGHT CLICKING the aspx file in Solution Explorer and selecting delete. This worked for me in VS 2010. – DeveloperDan May 16 '12 at 21:02
- 43 VS2013 has the Convert to Web Application under the Project menu.

  Just no longer in the context menu. Dennis Burton Jul 21 '14 at 19:35



One of my solution, which works for me.

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- 2. Remove hidden .vs directory
- 3. Remove existing .sln file
- 4. load the project in visual studio using .csproj file

answered Jul 11 '18 at 6:30

community wiki Niaz Morshed



- 1. Close designer.cs.
- 2. Change your aspx file to design view.
- 3. Right-Click -> Refresh.



4. Save

answered Oct 19 '17 at 12:52

community wiki Glaucyo Ricas

Home

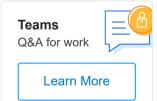
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Tags

Users

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I thought I had this problem and was tearing my hair out, but then I realised that I was trying to reference a control from a static method.

Making the method non-static resolved the issue for me.

answered Apr 12 '17 at 15:21

community wiki Knickerless-Noggins

For VS2015... here's a VB example for switching from a WebSite



project to a Web Application Project that worked for me. None of the other solutions worked for me, which is why I'm sharing this. It's not elegant, but works.

Step 0: Replace all "CodeFile=" with "CodeBehind=" in your project Step 1: Close the Solution. Step 2: Run a home-grown Windows app with the following code (below steps). Step 3: Re-open the solution. Step 4: In Solution Explorer, make sure you are Showing All Files, and search for designer.vb (or designer.cs for C#) Step 5: Select all the missing files, and include them in your project. Step 6: For each file, view the main page / control and save it.

```
private void button1 Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
        ProcessDirectory(new DirectoryInfo(textBox1.Text));
    private void ProcessDirectory(DirectoryInfo directory)
        ProcessMask(directory, ".ascx", ".vb");
        ProcessMask(directory, ".aspx", ".vb");
        foreach (DirectoryInfo directoryInfo in directory.GetDirectory
            ProcessDirectory(directoryInfo);
    private void ProcessMask(DirectoryInfo directory, string maskStar
        FileStream fs;
        foreach (FileInfo file in directory.GetFiles(string.Format("))
maskEnd)))
            string designerFileName = file.Name.Replace(string.Forma-
maskStart, maskEnd), string.Format("{0}.designer{1}", maskStart, mask
            if (directory.GetFiles(designerFileName).Length == 0)
                using (fs = File.Create(Path.Combine(directory.FullNa))
designerFileName)))
                    fs.Close();
```

answered Jan 17 '17 at 15:17

community wiki Sean Tovson



in solution explorer just right click and select convert to web application. It will generate all the designer files again.

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answered Mar 17 '16 at 20:48

community wiki user3911976



Within the Visual Studio:

2

1) Remove your aspx.designer.cs file



2) Right click on your aspx file and select "Convert to Web Application" This should add the aspx.designer.cs back and up to date.

If you get an error saying:

"Generation of designer file failed: The method or operation is not implemented."

Try close Visual Studio and then reopen your project and do step number two again

### How to generate aspx.designer.cs in visual studio?

edited May 23 '17 at 12:10

community wiki 2 revs nouman arshad

"Convert to Web Application" does not exist on the context menu of an aspx file. At least, it doesn't in VS Professional 2015. – Chris Walsh Nov 26 '15 at 1:37



If you are using VS2013 or later , make sure that the code referenced with attribute "CodeBehind" not "CodeFile", then do below steps



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<<@ Control Language="C#" AutoEventWireup="true" CodeBehind="yourCon"
Inherits="yourControl.yourControl" %>

- create empty designer page (or clear it if it's already exists "yourControl.ascx.designer.cs")
- in the ascx (or aspx) copy all code , the delete it, then save. repast it again , then save.
- the designer file should be populated now.

answered Feb 11 '15 at 18:56

community wiki Tarek El-Mallah



## TL;DR;

Edit the Inherits attribute of the ASPX page's @Page directive and hit Save. Your designer file should be regenerated.



Ensure that Inherits = <namespace>.<class\_name> and CodeBehind = <class\_name>.aspx.cs

I was trying to do this on a **Sharepoint 2010 project, using VS 2010 and TFS**, and none of the solutions above worked for me. *Primarily, the option,* "Convert to Web Application" is missing from the right-click menu of the .ASPX file when using TFS in VS 2010.

This answer helped finally. My class looked like this:

```
namespace MyProjects.Finance.Pages
{
    public partial class FinanceSubmission : WebPartPage
    {
        protected void Page_Load(object sender, EventArgs e)
        {
        }
        // more code
    }
}
```

And my @Page directive was (line-breaks here for clarity):

```
<%@ Page Language="C#" AutoEventWireup="true"
   CodeBehind="FinanceSubmission.aspx.cs"
   Inherits="MyProjects.Finance.Pages.FinanceSubmission"
   MasterPageFile="~masterurl/default.master" %>
```

I first changed the Inherits to MyProjects.Finance.Pages, hit Save, then changed it back to

**MyProjects.Finance.Pages.FinanceSubmission** and hit Save again. And wallah! The designer page was regenerated!

Hope this helps someone using TFS!

edited May 23 '17 at 12:10

community wiki 4 revs

SNag



Convert to Web Application did not work for me.

Deleting designer.cs and pasting a blank designer.cs did not work either.



But yes this worked:

- 1. Select all(Default.aspx)
- 2. Cut
- 3. Save Default.aspx
- 4. Paste
- 5. Save Default.aspx

Done. New designer.cs generated. :)

edited Feb 14 '14 at 9:41

community wiki 2 revs, 2 users 71% O D



21

Most of the solutions here don't work if you're running Visual Studio 2013 and possibly 2012. Microsoft probably introduced some optimizations to make the IDE snappier, consequently they've reduced the number of cases that trigger the code generator. The following scenarios that used to work no longer do:

- 1. Delete the aspx or ascx file -- No longer checks for this case
- 2. Cut all the content and repaste into the aspx or ascx file -- No longer works, no change in the references
- 3. Convert to Web Application -- Option no longer available
- Arbitrarily changing content on the aspx/ascx file -- No longer works (see 2).

The solution is surprisingly simple, but it's slightly cumbersome. In order to trigger the code generator, change something that would require the designer.aspx.cs to be generated. Changing content that doesn't affect code, such as a CSS style or adding text, won't trigger the code generator. You must change a referenced control. Here's how to do it:

In the ascx or aspx change the ID of the control

```
<asp:HyperLink ID="MyLink" runat="server" NavigateUrl="~/Default.asp:

to

<asp:HyperLink ID="theLINK" runat="server" NavigateUrl="~/Default.asp:
Text="Home" />
```

Go to the ascx.cs or aspx.cs and make sure you rename all references to "MyLink" to "theLINK" as well. Save and do build and the you should be good to go.

answered Jan 29 '14 at 23:36

# community wiki ATL DEV

- 3. 'Convert to Web Application' is made available in the 'PROJECT' menu if an appropriate file is selected. WynandB Jul 22 '14 at 7:24
- 2 Hmm. Unfortunately, this option isn't available if it's already a web application. − ATL\_DEV Jul 23 '14 at 12:19 ✓



Another thing which worked was -

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- 1. Manually delete & then Create a designer file in filesystem.
- 2. Edit Project file.



3. Add code to include designer

- 4. Reload Project
- 5. Open as(c/p)x file in design/view mode & save it.
- 6. Check designer file. Code will be there.

answered Nov 12 '13 at 5:17

community wiki Vandesh



I'm in VS 2003 and none of these worked for me. What worked was to open the code at the top of the .vb page in the section labeled





Web Form Designer Generated Code (the part that says not to edit there) and declare it there, where the system declared all the other controls. Bizzare.

answered Aug 14 '13 at 15:13

community wiki Joanne









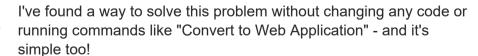
I had the same problem with a resource file. I edited it outside Visual Studio and the designer file hadn't updated properly.

Renaming the file did the trick of regenerating the Designer file. I just renamed it to the initial name again and that worked just fine!

answered Jun 24 '13 at 8:06

community wiki Aries51







What I found was that restarting Visual Studio often solves the problem, but sometimes it doesn't. In those cases, if you close Visual Studio and then **delete all content in the "obj" directory for the web project** before you open it again, it has always worked for me.

(when started again you just add a space and remove it again and then hit save to have the designer file properly regenerated)

answered Feb 1 '13 at 9:21

community wiki tommycode



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I've encountered the same problem for years now, working in Visual Studio 2008. And I've tried every "solution" on StackOverflow and dozens of blogs, just like I'm sure all of you have. And sometimes they work, and sometimes they don't, just like I'm sure all of you have encountered. And apparently it's still an issue in VS2010 and VS2012.

So finally, a couple of months ago, I decided enough was enough, and over a few weeks I built a tool called "Redesigner" that generates .designer files. It's open-source under the BSD license, with the source code available on SourceForge — free to use, free to steal, free to do anything you please with. And it does what Visual Studio fails to do so often, which is generate .designer files guickly and reliably.

It's a stand-alone command-line tool that parses .aspx and .ascx files, performs all the necessary reflection magic, and spits out correct .designer files. It does all the parsing and reflection itself to avoid relying on existing code, which we all know too well is broken. It's written in C# against .NET 3.5, but it makes pains to avoid using even System.Web for anything other than type declarations, and it doesn't use or rely on Visual Studio at all.

Redesigner can generate new .designer files; and it offers a -- verbose option so that when things go wrong, you get far better error messages than "Exception of type System.Exception was thrown."

And there's a --verify option that can be used to tell you when your existing .designer files are broken — missing controls, bad property declarations, unreadable by Visual Studio, or otherwise just plain borked.

We've been using it at my workplace to get us out of jams for the better part of the last month now, and while Redesigner is still a beta, it's getting far enough along that it's worth sharing its existence with the public. I soon intend to create a Visual Studio plugin for it so you can simply right-click to verify or regenerate designer files the way you always wished you could. But in the interim, the command-line usage is pretty easy and will save you a lot of headaches.

Anyway, go download a copy of Redesigner now and stop pulling out your hair. You won't always need it, but when you do, you'll be glad you have it!

https://sourceforge.net/projects/redesigner/

answered Jan 21 '13 at 6:23

community wiki Sean Werkema

1 @ChrisMcGrath Maybe overkill, but I have felt the pain that prompted this tool. I admire his dedication to put in the time to build it :) – Jordan Rieger Jul 14 '14 at 21:25 ▶



The solution the worked for me is:

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I just copied the page and and pasted it in the same portion, then renamed the first page(what ever name) and renamed the copied page as the original page. Now the controls are accessible.

edited Oct 22 '12 at 0:10

community wiki 2 revs, 2 users 75% you y



This can also happen if you update the namespace and don't update the namespace in the designer file. Fix: Update the namespace in the designer file too.



answered Jul 13 '12 at 8:51

community wiki Ben Weeks



Just to add to the long list of answers here - I've just run into this issue in VS2010 (SP1) with an .aspx file. I tried adding and removing standard ASP controls (which has worked in the past) but in the end, I had to remove one of the **runat=server lines** from an existing control (and save) to force the designer file to regenerate.



community wiki Rory Solley

One thing that nobody's mentioned is to visit the page. I had my





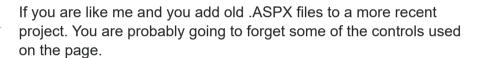
designer file stop regenerating because I was including a user control that didn't exist (for various reasons), and none of the things suggested here worked. For whatever reason, I didn't get any errors in Visual Studio - besides the one complaining about the fact that my client-side controls didn't exist because they weren't being regenerated, of course.

It took actually visiting the page to get ASP. Net to tell me the error.

answered May 17 '12 at 23:11

community wiki **Tacroy** 







If so, first thing, if there are multiple files you are installing; Fix one at a time first.

When you compile, fix errors generated. They will probably be the same errors in all the files.

Next, if you have Designer files, delete all of the inserted - designer files. Next, make sure there are not any other errors when you compile, other than the designer files.

Finally right click your web project and click on Convert to Web Application. This will insert the designer files you need.

These are the absolute best steps to fix the issues.

edited Jan 4 '12 at 13:50

community wiki 2 revs, 2 users 86% Carlo



I had the problem that my new controls would not generate in the designer file when declared in the .ascx file. The problem was that i declared them in the code behind also. So deleting the declaration in the code behind solved my problem.



answered Jul 19 '11 at 10:51

community wiki
The Demz



I know I'm late to the party, but I thought if after trying the accepted answer by @Glenn Slaven and the current highest rated answer by @Espo you are still out of luck, the following might save some people out there some trouble.



User Controls (.ascx) are what constantly stop auto-generating for me. I've found that in the instances where I use other User Control(s) in my User Control, it breaks the auto-generation.

The solution I came up with was to use the trick we all know of for getting IntelliSense to work in User Controls or Skin files when using CSS classes from external sources. Instead of just referencing the CSS file, now I Register the other User Control(s) that I need. It looks something like this:

```
<% If False Then %>
<%@ Register TagPrefix="uc" TagName="Title" Src="~/controls/title.as</pre>
```

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="../css/common.css" />
<% End If %>
```

After that, I Save the file, which prompts the auto-generation to regenerate, and I'm back up and running.

answered Jun 1 '11 at 18:09

community wiki
Code Mayerick



In my case, it was fixed when I added a CodeBehind to the @Page section.





answered Apr 29 '11 at 16:13

community wiki Boris Lutskovsky



I recently saw that I was having the same problem. Visual Studio 2010 was refusing to update the designer file.





As it turns out, VS doesn't modify the designer file for a page that uses CodeFile (run off of pages) instead of CodeBehind (DLL). This is true no matter how many times you close VS, reload the project, re-create the control(s), or modify a file. Nothing would prompt VS to regenerate the designer. It's as if it doesn't create the designer file for CodeFile pages but does require it to be there.

I changed it to CodeBehind and saved the page. The designer file updated immediately. Then I just changed it back and everything was still golden. This behavior seems to be new with VS 2010 / .NET 4.0 as VS 2008 by default didn't suffer from this.

It's this part:

```
<%@ Page Language="vb" AutoEventWireup="false" CodeFile="YourPage.as|
Inherits="YourPageClass" %>
```

Change CodeFile to CodeBehind, save, and then revert.

answered Jan 22 '11 at 20:18

community wiki Geoff

1 Mine was set to CodeFile, I changed to CodeBehind, saved, back to CodeFile, saved, everything is Golden. The previous attempts at fixes didn't do it for me. VS 2010 Pro – Dan Mar 18 '16 at 21:05



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Apart from all the good answers already given, I'd like to add to @johan-leino's great answer. In my case, for some arbitrary reason, the CodeBehind attribute was omitted from the @Page directive/.aspx file. Likewise, it might be worthwhile to check the CodeFile attribute for @Control directives/.ascx files (obviously in conjunction with an Inherits attribute in both cases).



Depending on the exact scenario and reason required to 'force' a regenerate of .designer.cs, one could also try to format the document (potentially indicating a parsing error) before (quick) saving

(regardless whether there were any changes or not) and check the Error List for warnings.

edited Nov 24 '10 at 6:54

community wiki 2 revs Wynand



When you are in design view, right click on the screen and hit refresh.







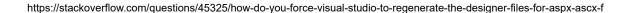
community wiki yertle



I've had this problem a lot, and just did again. I tried fixing it using these suggestions, and nothing worked. I finally found that I had the 'Title' attribute in the page header twice(I added to the end, not realizing that VS added a blank Title="" to the beginning)-- removing the extra attribute caused VS2008 to re-generate the designer file... I hope VS2010 fixes this problem, letting us know why the designer file generation isn't happening...

-- Derek

answered Sep 9 '10 at 16:36



community wiki
Derek Kalweit



I had two problems... outdated AJAXControlkit - deleted the old dll, removed old controls from toolbox, downloaded new version, loaded toolbox, and dragged and dropped new controls on the page (see <a href="http://www.experts-">http://www.experts-</a>



exchange.com/Programming/Languages/.NET/Visual\_Studio\_.NET\_ 2005/Q\_24591597.html)

Also had misspelling in my label control (had used 'class' instead of 'cssclass').

Ta

answered Jul 8 '10 at 4:55

community wiki user381377



I have had this issue before. I usually just hit enter to add a line and then wait for the plus/minus to show on the html page and the designer should add what you need. I have also had to close the project and reopen it to get it to work.



answered Jul 6 '10 at 15:08

community wiki VoltaicShock

1 2 next

Answer This Question