

Ask Ubuntu is a question and answer site for Ubuntu users and developers. It's 100% free.

Sign up ✕

## E: Unable to correct problems, you have held broken packages

I am using Ubuntu 13.04 which I installed few days back. I am trying to install nodejs and npm. I tried to install from command line first and then uninstalled it. Then something broke.

```
sudo apt-get install -f nodejs npm
Reading package lists... Done
Building dependency tree
Reading state information... Done
Some packages could not be installed. This may mean that you have
requested an impossible situation or if you are using the unstable
distribution that some required packages have not yet been created
or been moved out of Incoming.
The following information may help to resolve the situation:
```

```
The following packages have unmet dependencies:
 nodejs : Conflicts: npm
E: Unable to correct problems, you have held broken packages.
```

The output of `/etc/apt/sources.list` is below

```
cat /etc/apt/sources.list
# deb cdrom:[Ubuntu 13.04 _Raring Ringtail_ - Release amd64 (20130424)]/ raring
main restricted

# See http://help.ubuntu.com/community/UpgradeNotes for how to upgrade to
# newer versions of the distribution.
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring main restricted
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring main restricted

## Major bug fix updates produced after the final release of the
## distribution.
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-updates main restricted
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-updates main restricted

## N.B. software from this repository is ENTIRELY UNSUPPORTED by the Ubuntu
## team. Also, please note that software in universe WILL NOT receive any
## review or updates from the Ubuntu security team.
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring universe
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring universe
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-updates universe
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-updates universe

## N.B. software from this repository is ENTIRELY UNSUPPORTED by the Ubuntu
## team, and may not be under a free licence. Please satisfy yourself as to
## your rights to use the software. Also, please note that software in
## multiverse WILL NOT receive any review or updates from the Ubuntu
## security team.
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring multiverse
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring multiverse
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-updates multiverse
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-updates multiverse

## N.B. software from this repository may not have been tested as
## extensively as that contained in the main release, although it includes
## newer versions of some applications which may provide useful features.
## Also, please note that software in backports WILL NOT receive any review
## or updates from the Ubuntu security team.
deb http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-backports main restricted universe
multiverse
deb-src http://in.archive.ubuntu.com/ubuntu/ raring-backports main restricted
universe multiverse

deb http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring-security main restricted
deb-src http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring-security main restricted
deb http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring-security universe
deb-src http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring-security universe
deb http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring-security multiverse
deb-src http://security.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring-security multiverse

## Uncomment the following two lines to add software from Canonical's
## 'partner' repository.
## This software is not part of Ubuntu, but is offered by Canonical and the
## respective vendors as a service to Ubuntu users.
# deb http://archive.canonical.com/ubuntu raring partner
# deb-src http://archive.canonical.com/ubuntu raring partner

## This software is not part of Ubuntu, but is offered by third-party
## developers who want to ship their latest software.
deb http://extras.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring main
deb-src http://extras.ubuntu.com/ubuntu raring main
```

The output of `cat /etc/apt/sources.list.d/*` is below

```
cat /etc/apt/sources.list.d/*
deb http://ppa.launchpad.net/chris-lea/node.js/ubuntu raring main
# deb-src http://ppa.launchpad.net/chris-lea/node.js/ubuntu raring main
### THIS FILE IS AUTOMATICALLY CONFIGURED ###
# You may comment out this entry, but any other modifications may be lost.
deb http://dl.google.com/linux/chrome/deb/ stable main
### THIS FILE IS AUTOMATICALLY CONFIGURED ###
# You may comment out this entry, but any other modifications may be lost.
deb http://dl.google.com/linux/chrome/deb/ stable main
### THIS FILE IS AUTOMATICALLY CONFIGURED ###
# You may comment out this entry, but any other modifications may be lost.
deb http://dl.google.com/linux/chrome/deb/ stable main
deb http://deb.opera.com/opera/ stable non-free
deb http://deb.opera.com/opera/ stable non-free
deb http://deb.opera.com/opera/ stable non-free
deb http://deb.opera.com/opera/ stable non-free
```

apt package-management

asked Oct 21 '13 at 17:07

 **John Qualis**

188 1 1 4

- Not sure whats the question however this can help you Go to synaptic package manager. Edit > Fix broken Packages. – danijelc Oct 21 '13 at 17:15
- when I do 'gksudo synaptic' nothing happens – John Qualis Oct 21 '13 at 17:17
- You need to install it first sudo apt-get update sudo apt-get upgrade sudo apt-get install synaptic – danijelc Oct 21 '13 at 17:20
- Another way you can get a similar error (though apparently not for the OP) is to set APT::Default-Release . If that requires a package be installed from an older release than dependencies that are already present, they may be incompatible, which gives you the same error. – poolie Dec 15 '13 at 19:09

3 Answers

You should be able to see the list of held packages by:


```
apt-mark showhold
```

and then un-hold them by

```
sudo apt-mark unhold <package name>
```

After that, you should be able to remove the conflicting package (it seems to be npm ) and then reinstall all.

answered Oct 21 '13 at 18:15

 **Rmano**

15.9k 5 42 82

- 28 When I tried that with wine1.6, apt-mark showhold outputs nothing. Any other ideas? (I am also in Ask Ubuntu Chat) :) – Madara Uchiha Dec 21 '13 at 11:18
- 3 Yup. Me too. For me this command never outputted anything, ever. – xacrocheur Apr 13 '14 at 17:37
- Same here with wine 1.7 – jplandrain Jun 22 at 9:12

Use aptitude instead of apt-get. It is more intelligent. It not only will handle downgrading conflicting packages for you, but will make a series of recommendations asking you which of many possible suggested working scenarios you would like.

```
sudo aptitude install myNewPackage
```

If you don't have aptitude on your machine yet, get it with

```
sudo apt-get install aptitude
```

answered Apr 20 '14 at 3:40

 **DragonLord**

563 3 5

- 3 The best answer. I have tried apt-get for the last couple of days. With aptitude this was solved in seconds :) – Johan Karlsson Sep 4 '14 at 10:58
- 1 Great answer.My dear life saver – Don Chakkappan Dec 9 '14 at 9:37
- 2 Thank you. I have spent so much time reading different ways to fix the problem that apt-get won't explain that I was astounded when aptitude just laid out the specific problem and even provided a solution. –

For me to solve this problem, I just had to install synaptic first using below commmand, and then everything works fine.

```
sudo apt-get install synaptic
```

edited Dec 17 '13 at 0:00

 **Richard**  
4,133 4 21 52

answered Dec 16 '13 at 23:19

 **Alaa ElSaman**  
21 2