

Title:

What is smss.exe?

Word Count:

411

Summary:

smss.exe is one of the many processes that runs behind the scenes on Microsoft Windows operating systems such as XP and Vista.

Keywords:

SMSS.EXE

Article Body:

smss.exe is one of the many processes that runs behind the scenes on Microsoft Windows operating systems such as XP and Vista. SMSS stands for Session Manager SubSystem, the program that is in control of handling all of the sessions that are active on a user's computer. Unlike many of the behind the scenes processes found on Windows, smss.exe is a required process and should not be quit.

What does the Session Manager Subsystem actually do?

The smss.exe application is responsible for the control of many Windows related activities as they pertain to the end user. smss.exe starts up when Windows does, as it is immediately required for starting each user's session. Furthermore, the smss.exe application also sets the operating system's variables as well as launches Winlogon, the program that handles many startup procedures for the Windows operating system.

What happens if smss.exe quits or fails to load?

If smss.exe fails to load, Windows will not start. Sometimes this problem may require a reboot into safe mode to see where the issue lies. Other times, it can be a problem with an improper shutdown, requiring the user to simply attempt another reboot and hope for the best.

If smss.exe is quit while Windows is running, the system may freeze, requiring a hard reboot.

Where is smss.exe located?

The application for smss.exe is always located in the C:\Windows\System32 folder

under Windows XP systems.

What if smss.exe is located elsewhere?

If you find that there is another smss.exe that is running from another folder, chances are that it is a trojan, a type of virus. There are several types of malware that masquerade as smss.exe because it is a common system process that users are unlikely to detect. However, a quick examination of your running processes and their locations is an easy way to determine if you are infected by an smss.exe type malware.

In the event that you are infected with a smss.exe virus, attempt to terminate the rogue smss.exe application and remove it from your system. This may require booting into safe mode and manually removing it, or your anti-virus program may be able to do the job for you. Furthermore, if the smss.exe is serious, there may be a Windows update that is designed to remove or patch the exploit that the virus is currently taking advantage of.