A Few Common Computer Errors
(And What They Mean)

Computer errors can pop up when least expected, they can cause the entire system
to suddenly shut down, and they can inadvertently corrupt data to the point
where it can't be deciphered. Although they can't always be avoided, it's
important to remember that computer errors can be corrected. The key is to
understand what computer errors are, understand what they mean when they show
up, and understand how to minimize their occurrence in the first place.

Basically, computer errors are the result of a number of things that may or may
not have anything to do with the way the computer is used. They "operate"
whenever there's a conflict among commands. Remember that computers essentially
run off of a series of commands and it's usually a smooth process. But when one
command conflicts with another command - or when one command asks for a process
or information that isn't available, the computer returns results that aren't
useable. That's an error.

A prime example of this kind of error is when users attempt to use software that
isn't applicable for their system. Almost all software accompanies a list of
system requirements which dictates what a computer needs to have in order for
the software to work properly. To minimize errors of this sort, always verify
that your computer has the required components. A project management program
that you're interested in may require a specific operating system, like Windows
XP for example. And although this program may install just fine on a Windows 98
machine, it will generate a multitude of errors once its started.

Insufficient memory will cause errors as well. That's why software programs
include minimum memory requirements. A program that needs 14MB of memory will
generate errors on a computer that only has 4MB of memory if it runs at all. The
same goes for disk space, monitor color depth and resolution. In these
situations, problems occur the moment that a piece of software attempts to
access the things (hardware, memory, space, resolution, etc.) that it cannot
find.

Because some programs share common files, errors can also occur when these
shared files are not up to date. For instance, let's say that Program A is
already installed on a computer and it's working just fine. Then let's say that
the user of that computer downloads and installs Program B. Program B uses a
file that Program A installed much earlier, but when Program B is run, errors
popup. Those errors are the result of Program B attempting to use an outdated
(shared) file that was installed by Program A. In order to fix that problem, the
user would have to download an updated version of the shared file (which to say

the least - is not an easy thing to find or do).

Sometimes, errors occur because a system doesn't have the required drivers or the drivers that are on the system are the incorrect version. Both errors in these cases can be resolved by updating the computer on a regular basis. Microsoft provides a section on its website that can automatically update a computer online and it does this at no cost in an effort to reduce errors like this. Always try to keep your computer updated so that should a program share a file, it will share a file that has been updated on hundreds of thousands of computers, like yours.

This article doesn't even begin to cover the entire gamut of computer errors - but additional information regarding how to get help with a computer issue (including computer errors) can be found in our article titled, "Computer Help" no matter what the problem is.

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