

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/3045633/software/3-fixes-for-a-dead-windows-10-start-menu.html>

3 fixes for a dead Windows 10 Start menu

So much for the triumphant return of the Start menu. If it doesn't pop up for you, try these workarounds.



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Pat Stuhlman was happy with Windows 10. Then, suddenly, the Start menu stopped working.

The return of the Start menu is probably Windows 10's most popular feature. But it doesn't work on all PCs. You can click the Start button, or press the Window key until Apple, Google, and Microsoft all merge together and switch to Linux, but the menu just won't come up.

Here are three possible fixes. I can't guarantee that any of them will work, but hopefully one will.

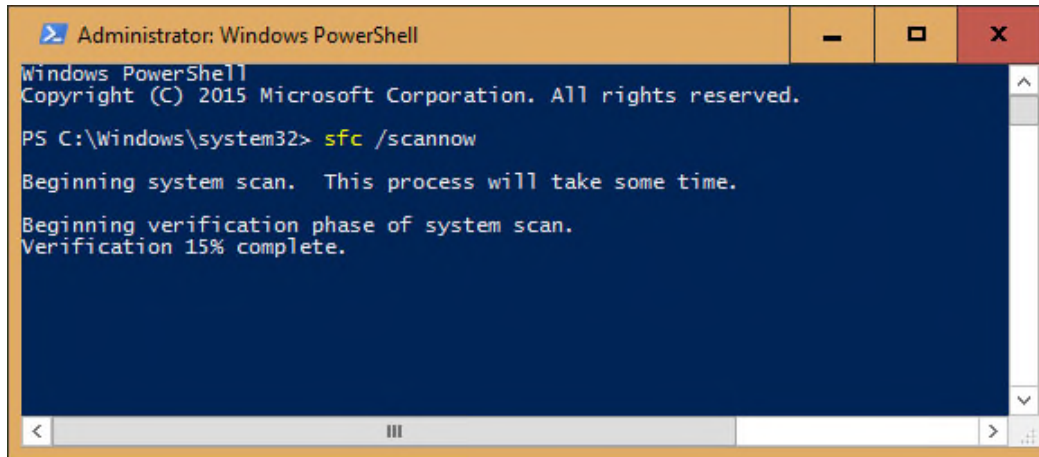
1. Fix corrupted files

If the Search bar still works, search for `powershell`. Then right-click *Windows PowerShell* in the search results

and select *Run as administrator*.

But if the search bar doesn't work either, press Winkey-R, type `powershell`, and press *Enter*. Right-click the PowerShell icon on the taskbar and select *Pin to taskbar*. Close the PowerShell program. Hold down Shift and Cntrl while you right-click the PowerShell icon again. Select *Run as administrator*.

Once you're in the Powershell command-line environment, type the command `sfc /scannow` and press **Enter**. Then wait. It can take quite a while.



```
Administrator: Windows PowerShell
Windows PowerShell
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PS C:\Windows\system32> sfc /scannow

Beginning system scan. This process will take some time.

Beginning verification phase of system scan.
Verification 15% complete.
```

Eventually, the program will tell you either that it found no corrupt Windows files, it found and fixed them, or it found some but couldn't fix them. If you get the latter response, try the command

```
dism /online /cleanup-image /restorehealth
```

This should (hopefully) download replacement files.

2. Remove and reinstall your Metro/Modern apps

Relax. This isn't as bad as it sounds. First of all, this only effects the Metro/Modern/Windows 10 apps that you get through Microsoft's Store. Old-fashioned Windows programs won't be affected.

Second, it's all automated.

Open PowerShell as an administrator as described above. Type in the following command—or better yet, just copy and paste it:

```
Get-AppXPackage -AllUsers | Foreach {Add-AppxPackage -DisableDevelopmentMode -Register "$($_.InstallLocation)\AppXManifest.xml"}
```

When it's done doing its job, reboot.

3. Reinstall

I hate to say it, but you just might have to reinstall Windows 10 from scratch to fix this problem.

First, make sure you've got an up-to-date backup. If not, copy the contents of your library folders to an external hard drive. You probably won't need it, but it's best to be safe.

Press Winkey-L to log out of Windows. Click the the welcome screen to get to the login screen. Click the power button in the lower-right corner, then hold down Shift as you select *Restart*.

This brings you to the Recovery environment. Select *Troubleshoot > Reset this PC > Keep my files* and follow the onscreen directions.

When it's over, you'll have to reinstall all of the programs that didn't come with Windows.



Lincoln Spector Contributing Editor

Freelance journalist (and sometimes humorist) Lincoln Spector has been writing about tech longer than he would care to admit. A passionate cinephile, he also writes the Bayflicks.net movie blog.

Comments

Percy Reads

hi . am having this problem - my start edge playstore notifications and rightclick on task bar are not working ! I have tried all possible solutions i found on the net - using powershell ,scannow,dism cmd(it shows source file not found),start menu trouble shooter(apps not installed properly error found but could not automatically fix it),restarting/ending explorer, opening in safe mode,disabling fast reboot ,toggling start menu and task bar , adding new account(which i was not able to do in settings only from cmd i was able to do)and finally reinstalled windows 10 with keep my files option .It just doesnt seem to work ! Please please someone tell me how to fix this . its driving me crazy .

Thanks in advance

Kerry Webster

Here's what worked for me. Open up 'Task Manager' (Ctrl+Alt+Del and select Task Manger - there are other ways of course. Once open, make sure 'more details' is on) >> go all the way down to the Windows processes (Apps, Background processes, then Windows processes) >> look for a process named 'Windows Explorer' >> right-click and select 'Restart' (first option I believe). All was well for me after that. No reboot required. This is definitely something MS needs to look at but historically windows explorer has been a dog.

Hayden Hutsell

After disabling fast boot, start menu and right click functions in the task tray are now operational. Try disabling fast boot if your start menu is bugged. (and then rebooting)

Charles Beatty

When the article help didn't work I scrolled down here before the re-install and this worked....woohooo!

Edward Brown

I tried all of the suggested fixes short of re-installing Windows 10. None of them worked. But then disabling the fast startup fixed it! Thanks!.

Percy Reads

It didnt for me :(pls tell me another option !

Kerry Webster

Here's what worked for me. Open up 'Task Manager' (Ctrl+Alt+Del and select Task Manger - there are other ways of course. Once open, make sure 'more details' is on) >> go all the way down to the Windows processes (Apps, Background processes, then Windows processes) >> look for a process named 'Windows Explorer' >> right-click and select 'Restart' (first option I believe). All was well for me after that. No reboot required. This is definitely something MS needs to look at but historically windows explorer has been a dog.

Ben Jefferson

I had the same problem and here is how I fixed it. Windows 10 offers a fast startup option under power settings. I unchecked that box, shutdown (not restarted) my computer, then turned it back on and let it go through the long boot up process and my start menu is now back as well as my notification box coming up. Here is a link to step by step instructions on how to change from fast startup to standard startup.

<http://www.tenforums.com/tutorials/4189-fast-startup-turn-off-windows-10-a.html>

Justin Yoder

I have found If the issue arises for a user that was migrated and not a new account. Rename the C:\Users\%USERNAME%\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\userclass.dat for the particular account affected and log in with the account now and the start menu and notification center should work.

Matt Baretich, P.E., Ph.D.

When I run the dism command, it says "source files could not be found." How do I locate the source files and how do I specify their location in the command line?

William Stevens

I had this problem happen after the first major update by Microsoft. Before that, no problem at all. Now I get many little irritating problems with Windows 10 Professional. The menu problem has not happened again but there are things taking place in this OS that I know nothing about and Windows 10 will not mention it either.

Hemo2

When this has happened to us in our enterprise environment, the only solution that works is a complete wipe and re-image. Also, when this happened to us, the user could not run "any" of the Universal apps when this problem strikes you. So basically you have no Start Menu, can't run any of the universal apps and just sit there staring at a broken computer. This problem is rare, but it can pop up at any time randomly. (Thanks Microsoft.)

Steve Sadler

Heh, I'd never notice if the Windows 10 Start Menu is not working. Classic Shell is always one of the first thing I install on Windows 10 (or on 8/8.1). I like having a configurable hierarchical start menu.

Byron Knight

I use Classic Shell and never have to see the Mini-Metro screen. I don't know if it still works or not. That, and Cortana, are my least favorite "features" of Windows 10. Cortana has been evicted from my laptop and

Windows 10 runs great without it.

Daniel Livingston

The simplest fix is to crash your computer. Yes, just pull the plug and then restart your computer. Win 10 seems to fix the issue when it boots back up.

Vinod_55

Great. It worked :)

Carlo D'Amato

Thank you very much! I tried all the other nerdy hocuspocus first, and nothing worked. Then I read your comment. You are THE BEST!

JiggyS4w

Solution 4: Create a new user, and sign in with that user. Creation of the new user will fix the underlying problem and you can now open start menu on your main user too. You can delete the new user after logging in with your main user account.

stairmand

You can also try typing (copy paste is a better idea) this into Powershell `Get-AppXPackage -AllUsers | Foreach {Add-AppxPackage -DisableDevelopmentMode -Register "$($_.InstallLocation)\AppXManifest.xml"}`

stairmand

Just noticed that was option 2. Ooops

orlbuckeye

I did that and the new account worked fine but the Old account was still broke. The issue is the C:\users\account (profile is corrupt). Creating the new account had Window screate the new profile from scratch. I did copy the folders from the old profile to get access to my pictures, Docs and other folder in your profile.

Hensley Garlington

This is ultimately what I had to do in the past. I'm surprised Mr. Lincoln Spector didn't recommend this as a last ditch solution.

Michael Cook

Thanks! I just started having this issue on a brand new laptop a few days ago, this seems to have fixed it for now. Before, the only other thing that would fix it was logging out and then logging back in, but that was temporary, and the issue would eventually come back.

Michael Cook

Thanks to JiggyS4W, sorry I forgot to mention who I was responding to.

mbe2014

That's interesting about the Start menu. It's an indication that the Start menu was treated as an afterthought by Microsoft and not part of the core OS, because a part of the core OS shouldn't die.

A fourth option would be to purchase a third-party product, such as Start10 (by Stardock), but that wasn't the intent of this article. The intent was to provide some help when the Start menu stops working.

stairmand

Terrible idea, I've lost count of the number of times an update has caused problems because of bloody Stardock start menu.

rradina

Your comment appears to criticize W10 and/or Windows architecture. Linux offers many different flavors of desktops GUIs that clearly aren't part of the "core" OS. Is that also a "bad" thing? The Linux world believes this to be a strength since folks can swap desktops and run whatever flavor that works best for them.

Regarding the Window start menu, the Windows desktop (which includes the start menu) is just a GUI running on top of the OS. Windows 8 made the start menu and modern apps full screen, like smart phone apps. A lot of folks hated it. In W10, they put the "windows" back in Windows and offered folks a choice. The familiar "quarantined" the start menu (i.e. less-than-full-screen) or the W8 tablet-mode full screen menu. Apps also have a choice to run less-than-full-screen or full screen windows.

Because the desktop is purposely NOT part of the core OS, it can be replaced or enhanced with various products like those from the Stardock folks.

Sometimes the desktop will crash. It looks like you have to reboot but BECAUSE (a strength) the desktop isn't part of the "core" OS, all applications are still OK. Remain calm. Press CTRL+ALT+DEL and select Start Task Manager. Calmly kill all explorer processes and then kick-start the desktop with file->new task, type explorer.exe, click OK. Desktop restarts. (If you don't care that all the user applications are closed, you can also logoff and log back on.)

Unfortunately this article appears to describe a problem where the application libraries/configuration that supports the W10 start menu get corrupted to the point where it no longer works. This is unacceptable. Microsoft should be embarrassed. They have ~\$100B in cash reserves (almost all off-shore). It's ridiculous to think they cannot spend a few million to make sure the customer can easily select a mechanism that can self-heal the start menu (along with most other ailments) without invoking baffling-to-most powershell commands or reinstalling the OS.

orlbuckeye

Windows has a Kernal also with the desktop GUI built on top. It's that theres only one Windows.

orlbuckeye

The problem is that it's part of the OS but it's also specific to your profile and changes alot so it's more susceptible to corruption. Working in IT i've seen lots of corrupt profiles in previous versions on Windows.