

# SIMPLE IT FIXES FOR HOMEWORKERS



A guide to resolving common IT problems  
experienced by homeworkers

# Introduction

**When you're working from home, you're bound to run into some IT issues now and then.**

Your IT department is there to help, and you should always consult them if you're stuck, experiencing a problem repeatedly or concerned about the security of your systems.

However, there are some common problems that can easily be fixed by anyone with basic computing knowledge. This guide will help you resolve some of the issues you may encounter and adapt your set up to make working from home that little bit easier.



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# Before you start

Whether it's your PC, internet connection, WiFi or printer that's causing your problems, try these three quick checks to resolve common issues. They may seem very simple but we can promise that even the best techs have fallen foul of missing check number one at times.

## Top three quick fixes



### Check power

Ensure your device is plugged in at the wall with the socket switched on, that the cable connection to your device is not loose and that power switches are set to "on". Don't forget that your PC probably has an additional power switch on the back side of the tower. Wireless mice and keyboards may need fresh batteries.



### Check cables

Check for loose or missing cables between peripherals (keyboards, mice, printers, etc). If you have a spare, swap in another cable to verify whether the original cable is faulty.



### Turn it off and back on again

Often, the simplest solutions really do work.

# PC & Remote Desktop

Your PC and remote desktop connection are two of the basics you'll need for working from home.

## Speed up a slow PC

As a last resort, you may want to reset your PC if it's running frustratingly slowly, but before you do that, try these four steps.



### Stop apps launching at startup

Open the Task Manager (Ctrl+Shift+Esc) and navigate to the Startup tab. Here you can disable any apps you don't want running in the background to save some memory.



### Run updates

Windows updates might seem annoying, but they exist to patch up any bugs that might cause your computer to run slowly or worse, make it vulnerable to cyber attacks.



### Scan for viruses

Run a scan on your anti-virus software to make sure malware or adware isn't causing the problem.



### Check your internet speeds

If your PC is slow when you're browsing the internet or using cloud apps, it may be that your computer is fine but your internet connection can't keep up with everything you're doing.

## If this doesn't work, try resetting back to factory settings\*:

1. Ensure data is backed up.
2. Press the Windows key on your desktop or keyboard and type "Reset this PC".
3. Click the first search result.
4. A prompt will ask if you would like to keep your files or remove everything.
5. Select which option you would like to take. If you have selected to remove everything, you'll be asked if you want to clean the drives or just remove the files. Make your selection and proceed.
6. All your chosen options will be displayed at this point. Check them over and confirm that you wish to continue.
7. Press reset.
8. Once finished, you may need to run through the Windows set up wizard. When complete, you will be presented with a fresh install of Windows 10.

\* Consult your IT dept before doing this.

# “Log on attempt failed” when connecting to remote desktop

Without being able to log into your work PC via remote desktop, you'll find working from home a struggle, so the error “Log on attempt failed” is an unwelcome sight when you're sipping your first coffee of the day. Luckily, it should be quite easy to resolve.

## Before you start

Is your remote PC on? If you can't connect it could be that the PC has shut down due to power issues or an update.

1. First go to the Windows start menu and click your profile picture (or the generic placeholder profile picture), then click “Sign out”.
2. Once you have signed out, press enter and you'll get to the sign in screen. Instead of logging in as you normally would, click on “other profiles”, and sign in using your email and password here, even if this is what you normally use to sign in, it will allow fresh access to the server.
3. Once signed in, click on your server and go to log into it. It will most likely tell you that the login attempt failed, but this time it will have saved your email, put your password in again and you will actually be into the server.
4. Do this for the rest of your apps, signing into Office365, Teams, etc.
5. If this does not work, try resetting your password or asking your system administrator to do it for you.

# Printers, screens & keyboards

Printers, screens and keyboards (otherwise known as peripherals) can be temperamental at times but problems are often easy to fix. Here are the resolutions to some of the most commonly seen issues with peripherals.

## Printer troubleshooting

### Hardware issues

1. **Is the printer plugged in** and displaying the correct lights?
2. If any lights are flashing or a different colour to usual, **do you need to replace ink/toner or paper?**
3. If it's a wireless printer, **has it been disconnected from your WiFi network?**
4. If you usually use the printer on a wireless connection, **have you tried plugging it in to your PC to print?**

### Software issues

If the above hasn't worked go back to your PC and try these steps.

Manage your printer by going to the bottom left search bar and typing "Printer" and clicking "Printers and scanners" OR press the Start (Windows) button > Settings (Cog icon) > Devices > Printers & Scanners. Find your printer in the list and select it.

1. **Clear your print queue** by selecting "Open queue" then selecting documents listed, clicking "Document" menu and choosing "Cancel".
2. **Set your printer as the default** by selecting "Open queue", clicking "Printer" and selecting "Set as default printer"
3. **Reset your printer drivers** by clicking "Remove device", then wait for the printer to disappear from the list. Click "Add a printer or scanner" and select your printer from the list, click "Add printer".

To print a test page, choose "Manage" then "Print a test page" from the left hand menu.

# Using a local printer in a remote desktop session

As well as using a local printer in a remote desktop session, you can also make use of your storage devices e.g. Hard drive, Shared drive and USB.

1. Type “Run” into the Windows search bar.
2. Choose Run Desktop App
3. Type in “MSTSC” and hit enter.
4. A “Remote Desktop Connection” window will appear. Click “Show options”.
5. Choose the “Local resources” tab.
6. On this tab at the bottom there is a section called ‘Local devices and resources’. There is a ‘Printers’ selection box that when ticked allows your local printers to appear within the server connection. Tick this box.
7. Printers will show up in the ‘Printers and Faxes’ window with their names followed by ‘Redirected’ and a number. When next logging in to the server after the change they should all be showing.
8. To add your own drive, in the “Local devices and resources” section, click ‘More...’ There is an option to tick ‘Drives’. This allows you to access drives from your local desktop within the server. They will appear as network drives in your ‘My Computer’ area.
9. Should you still be having issues getting them to appear in the server you may need to update your computer with .NET Framework 3.5 update.

## Keys on my keyboard have swapped round

Usually when we see this problem, it's because the keyboard language has changed to English (US). For users in the UK you'll usually notice this when your “ and @ symbols swap over. It's easy to fix by following this guide.

1. Click the Start (Windows) button
2. Go to settings (Cog icon)
3. Select Time & Language
4. Select Language
5. Under Preferred languages, check if “English (United Kingdom)” appears
6. If it does, drag it to the top of the list
7. If it does not appear, click “Add a language” and search English (United Kingdom), select it and click “Next”.
8. Make sure the tickbox is selected and click “Install”
9. Going back to Preferred languages, drag “English (United Kingdom) to the top of the list

## How to use two screens in a remote desktop session

1. Close the remote desktop services session you have open.
2. Ensure both monitors are working as they should outside of the server session and that you can drag from left to right on the screens in the right direction.  
If you can't do this, please go to your desktop, right click, and click on “Monitors”, then drag the displays to the correct way round and click “Apply”.
3. Then, right click on the remote desktop icon you have set up and click “Edit”.
4. Click “Show options” if you do not have a list of tabs to choose from, otherwise, click on “Display”.
5. Click “Use all my monitors for the remote session”
6. Go back to the “General” tab and click “Save”.
7. Close the dialog box and use it as normal, you will now be set up for working with two or more screens.

# Broadband and WiFi

How much work can you get done at home when your internet connection's down or your WiFi keeps dropping? Not a lot? Try these troubleshooting tips to get back online.

## First things first



### Restart your router

Before getting stuck in with the following troubleshooting tips, we'd recommend restarting your router, which can often get you back on track if you're disconnected from the internet or your WiFi is patchy.



### But beware!

It's very easy to confuse a restart with a reset, which would set your router back to factory settings and erase the configurations your ISP has made.

To restart the router, just press the on/off button to turn it off, wait a few moments then turn it back on again.

If you see a button labelled "Reset", steer clear! If it's a "WPS/Reset" button then you should only need to press the button briefly for WPS (to connect a new device to your network), don't hold it down.

# Broadband troubleshooting steps

## Is your internet connection definitely to blame?

If you're using a cloud application and it stops working, it may well be due to a loss of internet connectivity, but you'll want to confirm this. When you open your internet browser, see what it says here, can you connect to a page or does it tell you that you have no internet?

## Check airplane mode

Check to see if you have turned airplane mode on by mistake. Using Windows 10, look in the bottom right of your screen, and click the up arrow or the notification button on the far right to see if airplane mode is turned on. If it is, then turn it off and see if you can connect now.

## Is your router plugged in correctly?

Are all the correct cables connected and are all the correct lights on to indicate that you have an internet connection?

## Check speeds

If your broadband seems to be connected but it's running slowly and dropping out, a good idea would be to check your internet speeds using an online speed checker. Bear in mind that your connection speed can vary due to things like connecting through WiFi rather than a wired connection, but significant fluctuations or a big gap between the speeds you signed up for and what you are receiving should be reported to your ISP.

# WiFi troubleshooting tips

## Is the router connected to the internet?

You may be connected to the WiFi but if your router's not connected to the internet you won't get very far. Check that the relevant light on your router indicates a connection to the internet.

## Check your password

Have you used the right SSID (The name given to your router) and or/password?

## Network reset

When you've tried the above and still get an error message saying "**Windows can't connect to the network**", then you may wish to perform a Windows network reset, which should fix most WiFi adapter problems.

1. Ensure all your work is saved as this will require a reboot.
2. Open Settings by clicking the Windows icon (bottom left) then the Settings gear icon on left hand side.
3. In settings, click "Network and Internet".
4. Under "Status" scroll down and you will see the "Network Reset" option.
5. Click "Reset now".

This will take around 15 minutes, and once complete you should be able connect to your WiFi.

This guide is not a replacement for professional IT support. Advice should be sought before making any major changes or if a problem persists.

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#### How to get in touch

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