



Basic Troubleshooting Checklist

These are some simple troubleshooting steps you can perform yourself before calling the Help Desk. These are tasks a technical support analyst would normally lead you through to pinpoint and resolve your problem. Performing these steps may even resolve your problem without having to make a call to the Help Desk.

Troubleshooting Steps

- Make sure all components of the affected computer system (the monitor, the CPU, the printer, etc.) are switched on and receiving power. If there is a power problem, try performing a power check. If you call the Help Desk for assistance, make sure to tell the technical support analyst the results of your power check test.
- Check to see if all cables attached to the affected equipment are firmly connected. If you find any cable connections that seem loose, push them snugly into place. For more details on how to test cable connections for different types of computer peripherals, try the equipment connect check.
- Turn your printer off and shut down the computer. Turn the printer back on, then restart the computer. Sometimes rebooting can resolve certain computer problems.
- If a keyboard, mouse, or monitor is not working properly, swap it out for one that is known to be working correctly on another computer. For example, if your keyboard is not working, disconnect it from the computer and plug in a known-working keyboard from another computer. If the "swap test" does not resolve the problem and you need assistance from the Help Desk, make sure to tell the technical support analyst that you tried the "swap test" and it failed.
- If you are having trouble printing, check to see if other computers are using the same printer. Try printing from one of those other computers. When you call the Help Desk, tell the technical support analyst if you were able to print from any of the other computers connected to the printer.
- Check to see if your computer is the only one in your school being affected by the problem. Knowing if the problem is an isolated case or it is affecting other systems in your building will help the technical support analyst pinpoint the cause of the problem when you call the Help Desk.

Find out if any changes have been made to your system. If equipment was added to your set-up, software installed, or any components dropped on the floor shortly before the problem appeared, remember to provide this information to the technical support analyst when you call the Help Desk.



Power Check

When troubleshooting any computer hardware problem, it is critical to first check to make sure that all units experiencing problems are receiving power.

Checking the power means checking both the unit and the unit's source of power.

1. Make sure all power cords are firmly in place.

Power cords can fall out of ports or sockets, so check to make sure they are firmly plugged in.

If the device experiencing problems has a removable power cord, make sure that the cord is plugged firmly into both the device and the electrical outlet. Also check the power cord to make sure that it is not damaged. Sometimes power cords can get severed or partially cut in high traffic areas.

2. Make sure that all equipment power lights are on.

A device may be firmly plugged in, yet not have power.

Monitors, CPUs, printers, hubs and routers have power indicator lights on the front of the unit.

Make sure that each piece of equipment that is plugged in has its power indicator light on. If the light is not on then either the electrical outlet is not delivering any power, the power cord is damaged, or the unit cannot receive power and is therefore in need of repair.

3. Test the equipment and electrical outlet.

Unit Test: Plug the unit into another electrical outlet that you have confirmed is working by conducting an electrical outlet test (see below). If the unit works, then the original outlet should be serviced. If, however, the unit still doesn't work after being plugged into the new outlet, then report the problem to the Help Desk because the unit may need servicing.

Electrical Outlet Test: Plug another device like a lamp or clock into the electrical outlet in question. If the test device works, then the electrical outlet is working. If the test device does not work then the electrical outlet may be in need of repair and appropriate action should be taken.

Power Cord Test: If the power cord is removable, you can try replacing it with another removable power cord. If the unit works with a new power cord, your original power cord is damaged and should be replaced.



Equipment Connection Checks

Cable Connections

When you are experiencing problems with equipment, you should first check whether or not the connecting cables are securely plugged into the appropriate port. Additional connection confirmation procedures for specific devices are discussed below.

Keyboard and Mouse

If you have problems with a mouse or keyboard, make sure that they are firmly connected to the computer.

1. It is easy for keyboard and mouse cable plugs to work their way out of ports or sockets. When you check them, make sure they are securely plugged in. If you find that a mouse or keyboard plug is loose, plug it firmly into the port, reboot your computer and test the keyboard or mouse.
2. If you continue to have problems, try replacing the current mouse or keyboard with one that you know works, then reboot your computer. If the swapped-out device works then the original device needs to be permanently replaced and/or repaired. Report this to the Help Desk to initiate the repair process.
 - If you have problems with the swapped-out mouse or keyboard, then call the Help Desk to report the incident because there may be a problem with your computer.

Monitor

If you have problems with a monitor and it is not integrated into the computer (such as in Apple I Mac models), make sure that the serial cable from the monitor to the computer is firmly connected to the computer.

1. Just as with the keyboard and mouse, it is easy for monitor cable to become loose. When you check the cable, make sure it is securely plugged in. After you have reseated the cable, reboot your computer and monitor.
2. If you continue to have problems, try replacing the current monitor with one that you know works, then reboot your computer. If the swapped-out monitor works then the original monitor needs to be permanently replaced and/or repaired. Report this to the Help Desk to initiate the repair process.
 - If you have problems with the swapped-out monitor, then call the Help Desk to report the incident because there may be a problem with your computer.



Equipment Connection Checks (continued)

Printer

If your computer is connected to a printer, check the connection between the computer and the printer.

1. Make sure that all plugs are firmly in their appropriate ports.
2. If you had to re-plug any cable or cord, then reboot your workstation and try to print.

If your configuration uses a hub, then you want to:

1. Confirm the connection between the printer and the hub;
2. Confirm the connection between hub and any workstation that can't print;
3. Perform a power check on the hub;
4. Perform a hub port check on the port to which the printer is connected.