Fix printer connection and printing problems in Windows – Microsoft Support

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Windows 10

Notes:

- If you need help installing your printer in Windows 10, see Install a printer in Windows 10.
- If your PC is running Windows 10 S, some printers might not work with it, or they might have limited functionality. For more info, see Device support on Windows 10 S.
- If a USB printer port is missing, see USB printer port missing after disconnecting printer while Windows 10 (version 1903 or later) is shut down.
- If you're looking for help with a scanner, see Install and use a scanner in Windows 10.

Step 1. Unplug and restart your printer

Sometimes power cycling your printer can resolve the issue. Turn off your printer and unplug it, wait 30 seconds, plug your printer back in, and then turn the printer back on.

If your printer still doesn’t work, continue to step 2.

Step 2. Check cables or wireless connection

Check the cables (for wired printers). Make sure that the printer's USB cable is properly connected from the printer to your PC. If your USB isn’t recognized, see Automatically diagnose and fix Windows USB problems.

Check the wireless connection (for wireless printers). Do one of the following:

- Make sure the printer’s wireless option is turned on and available. Many printers have a button that displays a blue wireless icon when a wireless connection option for the printer is available. To learn where this button is located on your printer and to find instructions about how to turn it on,

see the instructions that came with the printer or check the manufacturer's website for instructions.

- Run the printer’s wireless connectivity test. Many printers have a menu option to test the printer’s wireless connectivity. Read the instructions that came with the printer or check the printer manufacturer’s website for instructions about how to do this.
- If those check out and you’re still having problems, your PC may not be connecting to your wireless network. To learn more, see Why can't I get online? For more advanced help, see Fix network connection issues in Windows.
- If you're having trouble connecting to a Bluetooth printer, see Fix Bluetooth problems in Windows 10: FAQ.

Notes:

- If you use wireless access points, extenders, or multiple wireless routers with separate SSIDs, make sure you're connected to the same network as the printer for your PC.
- If your printer's status displays "Printer in error state," there may be a problem with the printer itself. If these first two steps did not resolve the error, check the printer for low paper or ink, and be sure the cover isn't open and the paper isn't jammed.

If your printer still doesn’t work, continue to step 3.

Step 3. Uninstall and reinstall your printer

Try removing and reinstalling the printer.

Remove your printer

1. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings** > **Devices** > **Printers & scanners** . Open Printers & scanners settings
2. Under **Printers & scanners**, find the printer, select it, and then select **Remove device**.

Reinstall your printer

You'll need to follow different steps to reinstall or add a wireless or local printer. Here's how.

Reinstall a wireless printer

1. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings** > **Devices** > **Printers & scanners** .
   Open Printers & scanners settings
2. Select **Add a printer or scanner**. Wait for your device to find nearby printers, choose the one you want, and then select **Add device**.

If your printer is turned on and connected to the network, Windows should find it easily. Available printers can include all printers on a network, such as Bluetooth and wireless printers, or printers that are plugged into another computer and shared on the network. You might need permission to install some printers.

Notes:

- If you use wireless access points, extenders, or multiple wireless routers with separate SSIDs, make sure you're connected to the same network as the printer for your PC to find and install it.
- If you have a new wireless printer that hasn’t been added to your home network, read the instructions that came with the printer and check the printer manufacturer’s website to learn more and to get up-to-date software for your printer.

Tip: You can print a test page to make sure the printer is working correctly. If you've installed the printer but it doesn't work, check the manufacturer's website for troubleshooting information or driver updates.

Reinstall a local printer

If you want to reinstall or add a local printer, plug the USB cable from your printer into an available USB port on your PC, and then turn on the printer.

1. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings** > **Devices** > **Printers & scanners** .
   Open Printers & scanners settings
2. Under **Printers & scanners**, look for your printer.
   - If you see your printer listed, you'll know it's installed.
   - If you don't see your printer listed, select **Add a printer or scanner**. Wait for your device to find available printers, choose the one you want, and then select **Add device**.

Tip: You can confirm the printer is working by printing a test page. If you've installed the printer but it doesn't work, check the manufacturer's website for troubleshooting information or driver updates.

If your printer still doesn’t work, continue to step 4.

Step 4. Install the latest driver for your printer

Most printers require the latest driver to work well. To learn more, read How to download and install the latest printer drivers.

If your printer still doesn’t work after you install the latest driver for your printer, continue to step 5.

Step 5. Clear and reset the print spooler

If the previous troubleshooting step is not successful, you may need to clear spooler files and restart the spooler service. The print spooler is a file that manages the printing process. To clear and reset the print spooler:

1. In the search box on the taskbar, type **services**, and then select **Services** in the list of results.
2. Select the **Standards** tab, and then double-click **Print Spooler** in the list of services.
3. Select **Stop**, and then select **OK**.
4. In the search box on the taskbar, enter **%WINDIR%\system32\spool\printers**, select **%WINDIR%\system32\spool\PRINTERS** in the list of results, and then delete all files in the folder.
5. In the search box on the taskbar, search for **services**, and then select **Services** in the list of results.
6. Select the **Standards** tab, and the double-click **Print Spooler** in the list of services.
7. Select **Start**, select **Automatic** in the **Startup Type** box, and then select **OK**.

If your printer still doesn’t work, continue on to step 6.

Step 6. Change a printer's status to "online"

If your printer displays an "offline" status, check out Troubleshooting offline printer problems.