

Troubleshooting Your Computer

First, clear your head. There are few things as frustrating as a PC that acts kooky for no reason. In order to troubleshoot effectively, you must be calm so you can think the problem through and apply level headed deductive reasoning. Deep breaths, good thoughts.

Deductive reasoning

Look for evidence and start a process of elimination. If, for example, your monitor stops displaying properly all of a sudden, you can probably rule out such things as the hard drive and processor. Your targets will be the monitor and its cabling, the video card, and its software drivers.

Simple stuff

Check the simple stuff first. Ensure that all your cables are attached firmly and correctly. Look for signs of damage to cables or connectors such as bent pins.

Scan for viruses

Viruses are evil little devil spawns that can enter your system unbeknownst to you and wreak havoc. If you have the skills scan for viruses using antivirus software.

What's changed recently?

Try uninstalling stuff you've recently added, one at a time, and see if the problem goes away. If your system is loaded with software and peripherals you rarely ever use, get rid of them. A spartan system always runs best.

Check the company's web site

If a certain piece of software or hardware starts acting funny or doesn't work at all when you first start using it, check the manufacturer's web site. If you have the skills there may be software patches or driver updates available for download.

Try a troubleshooting application

If you have the skills, you might want to try using a troubleshooting application (like Norton Utilities or McAfee's Nuts & Bolts) in an attempt to identify the culprit.

Read the manuals

Manuals typically contain troubleshooting tips for common problems. Help files are even easier to use than manuals because you can search specific problems by keyword.

Start fresh

If you have the skills, you might consider reinstalling Windows.

Call for help

When all else fails ? call in an expert from COMPUTER TROUBLESHOOTERS