

HELP!! My Computer Is Not Working!

Computer Club Technology Center

John Santora
Technology Center Director

July 23, 2025



HELP!! My Computer Is Not Working!

Introductions

•Who are we?

- **Willow Valley Computer Club**
 - formed by resident volunteers over 25 years ago
 - almost 1000 lifetime resident members
 - \$20 per resident **LIFETIME** membership fee
 - supported by about 30 volunteers in various specialties

HELP!! My Computer Is Not Working!

Introductions

•Who are we?

- **Computer Club Technology Center**
 - drop-in on Mondays at North J Building, 5th floor
 - resident “house calls” depending on availability
 - supported by 6-10 resident volunteers

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HELP!! My Computer Is Not Working!

Introductions

•Who is John Santora?

- moved to Willow Valley in April 2023
- 40-year career as a CPA; experience as a university instructor; retired since 2017
- active on nonprofit boards and government advisory panels
- worked with Windows and Apple Macintosh computers in various workplace environments
- joined the Computer Club Technology Center in January 2024
 - currently serve as the director of the Tech Center

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HELP!! My Computer Is Not Working!

What we will cover

- the immediate problem(s), and some common causes

What you can try

- some simple fixes

How WVCC might be able to help

- troubleshooting via drop-in, residential visit, and telephone support

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Common Problems...

What are some symptoms?

- my computer won't start, won't wake from sleep, or won't stay awake
- my computer is "frozen" and won't respond to mouse movement or input
- I often see the spinning circle for more than just a few seconds

Windows



Macintosh



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Common Problems...

Why does these happen?

- spinning physical hard drive issues
 - old, slow drive
 - nearing or at capacity
- insufficient RAM to keep the system and modern programs running efficiently
- something might be going on in the background
 - software updates
 - “runaway” or “endless loop” processes
- looking for devices that are no longer connected

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Common Problems...

Try these actions:

- wait a few minutes
- computers are fast, but... not always!

NOTE: the following may result in losing data in unsaved work

- desktop PCs – cycle the power button or unplug briefly, then restart
- laptop PCs – plug in the power adapter, and hold down the power button for 15-30 seconds, or until the computer restarts
- Phones, tablets, etc. – the restart process varies widely

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Common Problems...

What if those actions don't work?

- you may have a more serious issue that requires technical intervention
- call WVCC for advice and assistance – **717-464-6330**
- or visit the Tech Center in North J Building

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More Serious Problems...

What are some other symptoms?

- my computer screen flashes in unusual ways
- my computer displays warnings that it is infected with viruses or malware

Why does this happen?

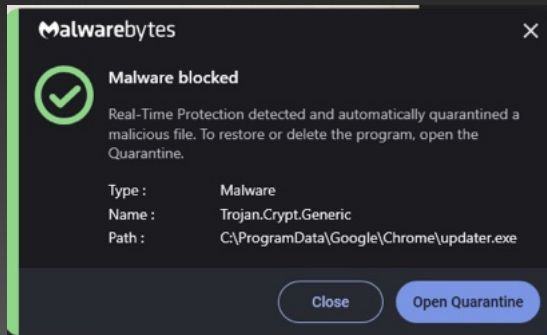
- a legitimate warning from Windows Defender or Malwarebytes
- possibly the result of a phishing or other malicious intrusion

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More Serious Problems...

Sometimes, these are helpful warnings



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More Serious Problems...

Is the problem over?

- maybe; while it's good that a threat was flagged and likely quarantined...
- you need to understand WHY that happened

Did you...

- visit a "shady" website?
- get an email or text from your "bank" or "investment firm" and clicked on a link?
- install software from an unknown source?

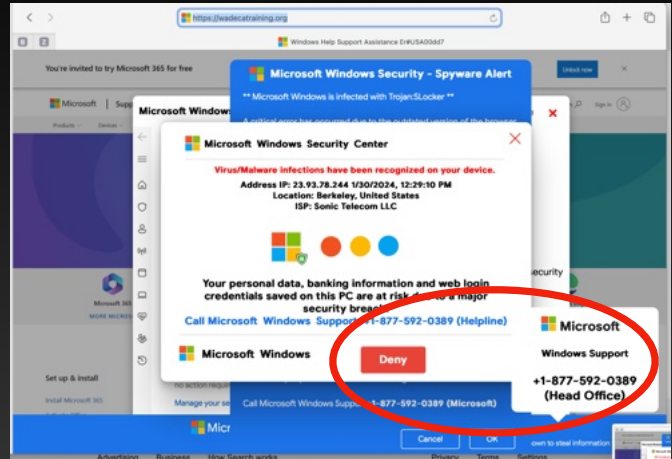
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More Serious Problems...

Know the difference between real and fake “warnings”

- malicious “warnings” are too numerous to cover today, but...
- this is just a sample of a fake “warning” appearing in a web browser
- real warnings will NEVER ask you to call a “support” phone number
- other WVCC presentations cover this!



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Helpful Hints

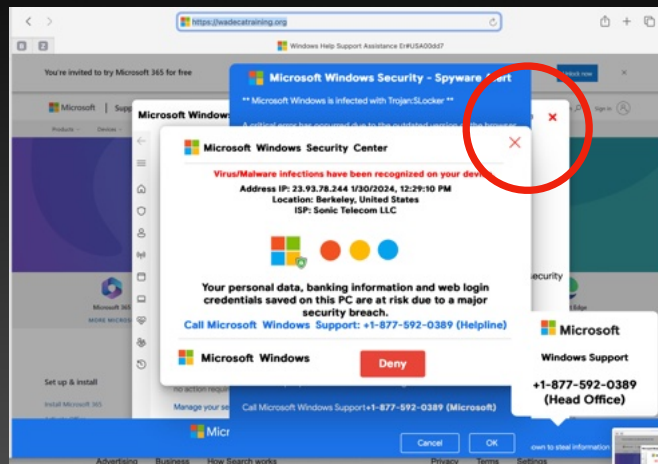
What should you do (or **NOT** do)?

- do **NOT** click on any links in emails, texts, websites or dialog boxes when you are unsure of the source
- **NEVER** call “support” telephone numbers
- exit from your web browser (if you can...)
 - use CTRL-Q – **NOT** the red X at the upper far right of the browser window

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Helpful Hints



These are NOT legitimate “close” buttons!

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Helpful Hints

What should you do (or **NOT** do)?

- do **NOT** click on any links in emails, texts, websites or dialog boxes when you are unsure of the source, and **NEVER** call “support” telephone numbers
- exit from your web browser (if you can...)
 - use CTRL-Q – **NOT** the red X at the upper far right of the browser window
- shut down!
 - even if the message says you will lose data, that is rarely the case
 - unplug if necessary, or hold down the power button on a laptop
- call WVCC for assistance at **717-464-6330**

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Helpful Hints

What are warning signs?

- malicious “warnings” are too numerous to cover today; here are some of the most common



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Helpful Hints

What are some other warning signs?

- **PHISHING** is a form of “social engineering”
- asking for personal information should ALWAYS be viewed with suspicion!
- other WVCC presentations cover these in greater detail!



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Helpful Hints

What about **REALLY** serious problems?

- broken laptop displays or phone screens
- one or many keys on your keyboard no longer work, or work intermittently
- grinding or other unusual sounds from inside the computer

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Your PC ran into a problem and needs to restart.
Restart will be available:(15% completed)

You can search for this error online: HAL_INITIALIZATION_FAILED

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- one or many keys on your keyboard no longer work, or work intermittently
- grinding or other unusual sounds from inside the computer
- unexpected restarts, shutdowns or frequent crashes
- the dreaded “blue screen of death”
- **shut down!**
 - even if you can’t see the display, you will rarely lose (much) data, IF you have a backup
 - unplug if necessary, or hold down the power button on a laptop

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- call WVCC for assistance at **717-464-6330**

A Few Words About Windows 10

October 14, 2025

Microsoft will no longer provide security updates

- Windows 10 will prompt you to check if your PC is eligible to be upgraded to Windows 11

but...

- PCs built before 2019 will likely not be upgradeable to Windows 11
- how can I tell how old my PC is?
- in the Search Bar, type "System Information" and click on that

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A Few Words About Windows 10

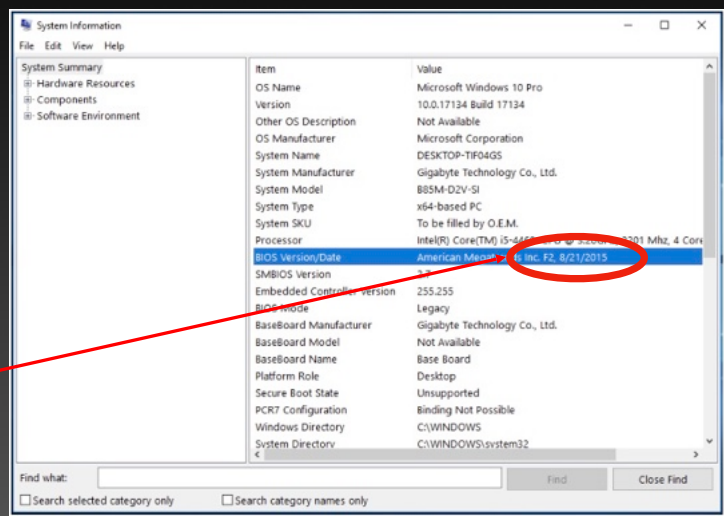
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A Few Words About Windows 10

October 14, 2025

Microsoft will no longer provide security updates

- PCs built before 2019 will likely not be upgradeable to Windows 11
- Windows Defender and third-party malware detection programs will still provide (some) protection

What can you do?

- request replacement hardware from CCTC (if available)
- purchase a one-year, Extended Security Update from Microsoft (\$30; details not yet available)
- seek advice on upgrade decisions from WVCC
- continue to use Windows 10 (NOT recommended)

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Do Macs Have the Same Issue?

MacOS is generally updated annually

Current version: Sequoia [15.5], originally released September 2024

- most Macs built since **2018** will run Sequoia
- the previous two versions – Sonoma [14]-2023 and Ventura-[13]-2022 – are still receiving updates

What can you do?

- check your Mac; if you're using Sequoia or Sonoma, it's all good
- if you are on Ventura, Apple **may** discontinue support this fall
- continue to use an older, unsupported MacOS version (NOT recommended)
- seek advice on upgrades



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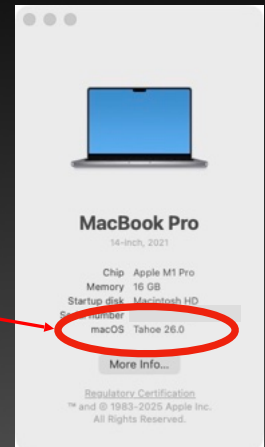
Do Macs Have the Same Issue?

MacOS is generally updated annually

Current version: Sequoia [15.5]

Next version: Tahoe [26.0]

- Yes, a new numbering scheme...
- The next version (Tahoe [26]-2025 will be released this fall, and is currently in beta testing
- The numbering scheme will now conform to the year that the OS is most active in - and this will be true among all Apple devices and OSes



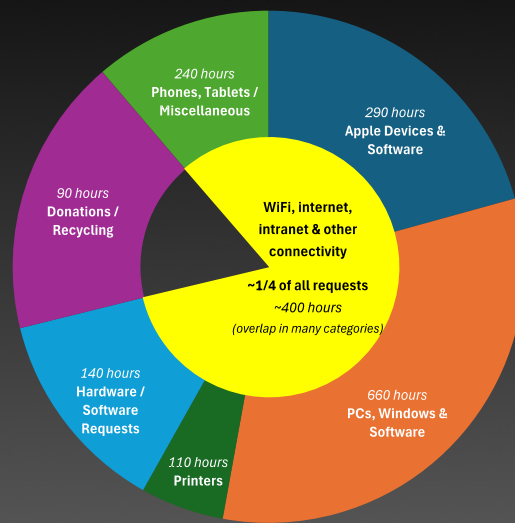
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Computer Club Technology Center High demand for support from residents

• Visit us on most Mondays

- drop-in to North J building, 5th Floor – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- in 2024, volunteers provided over 1600 hours of support in the Tech Center to about 450 WV residents
- WVCC also provides resident onsite and telephone support, depending on volunteer availability
 - the majority of those onsite interactions are NOT included in these totals!



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*We are here
to help!*

gethelp@wvcomputerclub.org

717-464-6330

Questions?

Willow Valley Computer Club

John Santora

Technology Center Director

717-464-6727

Text: 410-937-2611

jsantora@mac.com

Al Williams

Computer Club President

atwilliams136@gmail.com