

Solving Problems

This section provides suggestions for instructors to solve simple software and hardware problems without calling technical support personnel

Using Help

Windows 95 Help can provide you with step-by-step tips on how to troubleshoot software problems. Click **Start | Help**, look for “**Troubleshooting**” in the Help Contents, and choose a topic.

Types of Problems

COMPUTER PROBLEMS

■ **Computer will not start.**

If the power button is pushed, but nothing happens, take the following steps.

1. Push the power button again. If there is no clicking sound the button may be broken.
2. Check the electrical outlet at the wall or power bar to make sure the computer is plugged in.
3. On the power bar, toggle the switch to the “On” position. Does a light appear to indicate that the power is on?
4. Check the plug point at the back of the computer itself. Make sure it is plugged in.
5. Check the plug to the monitor. Does a light appear on the computer tower? Yes: this means that the computer has power, but the monitor does not. Check the monitor cable. Does a light appear on the monitor, but there is no picture? Yes: the monitor’s connection to the computer is loose; you must check both ends of the cable from the monitor to the computer.
6. If none of these suggestions helps, call in a technician.

■ **A computer screen is frozen. A program has stopped responding to the mouse or keyboard.**

Computers “freeze” and stop interacting with learners. There are a couple of reasons why this may occur: the computer’s resources are overtaxed, or the learner’s over-zealousness in clicking has overwhelmed the computer. It is best to restart a computer if an application is frozen, since it is an indication that the computer’s resources are becoming dangerously low.

To restart a computer, do not turn off the power. Hold down the **Ctrl** and **Alt** keys and press the **Delete** key. A dialog window will appear. Highlight the program name and the message **Not responding**, click **End Task**, wait up to one minute and the application will disappear. Then try starting the program again, or restarting the computer by clicking **Start | Shutdown | Restart | OK**.

■ **A computer crashes on a regular basis.**

If a computer crashes (the screen goes dark and nothing is happening), restart it and then:

1. Scan the hard drive for errors. Click **Start | Accessories | System Tools | Scan Disk**. Choose the hard drive disk (C:), select the Automatically Repair Errors box, and click **Start**.
2. If you did not select **Automatically Repair Errors**, and the system prompts with a possible error, make a note of it, click **Ignore This Error**, and click **Close**.
3. Defragment the hard drive. Click **Start | Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Disk Defragmenter**. Choose the hard drive disk (C:). If the system recommends a “defrag,” click **Yes**. If the system does not recommend a “defrag,” click **Exit**. If “yes,” this defrag may take from one to five hours, so it is recommended that you perform this at the end of the last class.

● TROUBLESHOOTING

CD PROBLEMS

■ **A computer will not accept a CD.**

Remove the CD from the CD drive and inspect it. If there are deep scratches, they may be the problem. If the CD is soiled by residue from handling, then a light polish with alcohol and a soft cotton towel will clear up this problem.

MOUSE PROBLEMS

■ **The mouse does not work.**

The mouse is essential for basic interaction with the computer, so if the mouse is not completely plugged in at the back of the computer you will usually get an error message. Take the following steps to try to solve mouse problems:

1. Check that the mouse is plugged in at the back of the computer.
2. Check that the mouse cord is not pinched.
3. Clean the mouse.
 - a. Turn off the computer.
 - b. Turn the mouse over. Push down on the holding plate surrounding the ball, turn in the direction of the arrows, and lift out.
 - c. Clean the ball and contact points inside the mouse with a cotton swab and alcohol. Replace the ball into the mouse and screw the holding plate onto the mouse.
4. Check the “Handedness” of the mouse. The mouse buttons can be reversed, so that a left-handed person can use the mouse and access most computer functions by clicking the right button. These buttons may have been reversed, making the mouse non-functional for a right-handed learner. To reverse the mouse buttons, click **Start | Settings | Control Panel**. Double-click the Mouse icon. Select the Buttons tab, choose the left or right button, and click **OK**.

■ **The mouse pointer has a trail.**

Some learners may alter a computer setting so that the mouse is leaving trails on the screen. To reset this, click **Start | Settings | Control Panel**. Double-click the **Mouse** icon. Select the **Motion** tab, uncheck **Show Pointer Trails**, and click **OK**.

SOUND PROBLEMS

■ **There is no sound.**

Take the following steps to try to resolve sound problems.

1. Check the headset yourself. It may be that the learner has a hearing problem. On the right side of the taskbar, in the notification area, check the Volume icon. If it has a red circle with a stroke through it, the mute feature is turned on. To rectify this, click the **Volume** icon, and uncheck the **Mute** box.
2. Check connections:
 - a. of the headset to the computer itself: The black plug should be plugged into the headset icon, and the grey plug should be inserted into the speaker icon on the right side of the monitor.
 - b. at the back left side of the monitor base, the white and orange RCA jacks should be inserted in the left and right points (for sound).
 - c. at the back left side of the monitor base, the yellow microphone jack should be plugged into the MIC outlet.
3. Take the headset to another computer to see if it works there.
4. Click **Settings** | **Control Panel** | **Multimedia** | **Audio tab**. Ensure that the slider for audio playback is in the middle and that **SB16 Wave Out (280)** is selected in the Preferred Device area. Click **OK**. Restart the computer.
5. Still no sound? Call a technician.

■ **The sound is too loud (or too low).**

To change the sound level, click on the **Volume** icon in the notification area of the taskbar and drag the slider up or down. Click outside the volume control to close it.

■ **The microphone does not work.**

1. Check that the sound is working.
2. Place the headset on your head. Click **Start** | **Programs** | **Accessories** | **Multimedia** | **Sound Recorder**. Click on the record button (red dot), say a few words into the microphone and click the forward arrow (play) to hear your voice.
3. Check connections. (See “There is no sound.”)
4. Take the headset to another computer and test it out there.
5. Replace the headset, and test a new set.
6. Click **Start** | **Settings** | **Control Panel** | **Multimedia** | **Audio**. In the recording section, click on **Advanced** properties. Ensure that the slider for sample rate is set to **Best**. Click **OK**.
7. Still no sound? Call a technician.

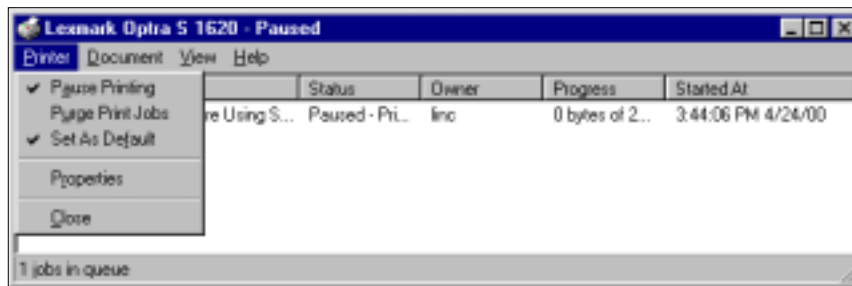


● TROUBLESHOOTING

PRINTER PROBLEMS

■ **The printer is not printing.**

1. Check that the master computer (usually Workstation 1) is turned on.
2. Check that the printer is turned on.
3. Check that the paper trays have paper.
4. Look on the LCD display for an error message.
5. Check the Printer Controls of Workstation 1 to see that Pause Printing has not been selected. Sometimes a learner opens Control Panel | Printer and clicks Pause Printing, thereby not allowing any of the terminals to print. To solve this problem:
 - a. Double-click the **Printer** icon in the notification area of the taskbar to open the Printer window.
 - b. Click **Printer** | **Purge Print Documents** to delete all the print jobs that have accumulated by over-anxious learners who have pressed the Print button numerous times
 - c. Deselect Pause Printing
 - d. Instruct learners to print their documents again.



DISPLAY PROBLEMS

■ **Alignment**

If the image on the screen is not aligned properly, use the CustoMax program.

Click **Start** | **Programs** | **CustoMax** | **CustoMax 2.1**. Click one of the Main icons and follow the instructions to make the necessary adjustments.

■ **Learners are getting headaches when they are in the computer lab.**

Problems can arise when computer programs are made for a specific resolution (the number of picture elements [pixels] or dots on the computer screen displayed by width and height), but your screen is set to a different resolution.

LINC computers are set at 800 by 600. However, ELLIS software is more effective at 640 by 480, since at 800 by 600 it does not occupy the whole screen. Changing the resolution may make it easier for learners to use ELLIS.

To change the resolution of the screen, click **Start** | **Settings** | **Control Panel**. Double-click on the **Display** icon. Click the **Settings** tab, drag the slider to **640 x 480**, and click **OK**.

■ **The colours on the screen are not normal. They are banded.**

Changing the colour depth may solve this problem. Colour depth refers to the number of colours the monitor is allowed to display. Most programs for ESL are set to work at 8 bit or 256 colours.

To change the colour depth click **Start | Settings | Control Panel**. Double-click on the **Display** icon. Choose **High colour 16 bit** and click **OK**.

DESKTOP PROBLEMS

■ **Taskbar**

• **Learners cannot click a response in ELLIS.**

The taskbar may be in the way. You can prevent the taskbar from covering any ESL software applications by hiding it. Click **Start | Settings | Taskbar | Start Menu**. Uncheck **Always on top** and click **OK**. To get the taskbar back on screen, press the **Ctrl** and **Esc** keys together.

Or you can click **Start | Settings | Taskbar | Start Menu | Auto hide | OK**. The taskbar disappears while you are working in a window, and then reappears when you move the mouse to the bottom of the screen.

■ **Colours**

• **Learners want a green desktop, the same as their computers at home.**

To change the desktop's background to the default green, right-click on a blank area of the desktop, and click **Properties** in the popup menu. Click the **Background** tab. Click **Wallpaper**. Locate and choose **None**. Click **Pattern**. Locate and choose **None**. Click the **Appearance** tab. Click **Colour** and select the green colour you want. Click **OK**.

• **How can I switch back to the default colour scheme "Windows Standard"?**

To change the desktop's colours to the default "Windows Standard," right-click on a blank area of the desktop, and click **Properties** in the pop-up menu. Click the **Appearance** tab. Click **Items** and choose **Desktop**. Click **Schemes** and choose **Windows Standard**. Click **Colour** and select a colour. Click **OK**.

■ **Icons**

• **The icons on the desktop are too small.**

To change the desktop's icons, right-click on a blank area of the desktop. Click **Properties** on the popup menu. Click **Appearance | Item | Icon | Size**. Type the number you want. (**32** is the default.) Click **Font**, and select the print style you want. (**MS Sans Serif** is the default font.) Click **OK**.

• **The desktop looks messy. There are icons all over the screen.**

To bring a sense of uniformity to all of the desktops in the classroom you could have all of the learners arrange their desktops as a group. Right-click on a blank area on the desktop. Click **Arrange icons** on the pop-up menu and click **by Type**.

● TROUBLESHOOTING

- **There are too many icons on the desktop.** Some programs have more than one icon. You arrive at the lab and find that one of the computers has too many icons on the screen. Close investigation indicates that the names of each of the extra icons have a bracket 2 at the end, such as ELLIS Middle Mastery (2), or Copy of ELLIS Middle Mastery.

To clear the extra icons from the desktop:

1. Hold the **Ctrl** key down on the keyboard and click each of the extra icons. When finished release the **Ctrl** key.
2. Press the **Delete** key.
3. Click **Yes** to confirm sending to the Recycle Bin.

- **An icon's label has changed.** To change an icon's label, right-click on the icon. Click **Rename** in the pop-up menu. Make the necessary changes and press **Enter**.

- **A program icon has disappeared.**

To add an icon for a program:

1. Click **Start | Find | Files or Folders**. In the named area, type in the first few letters of the program followed by an *. Click **Find Now**. This will help you locate the icon files for your program.
2. Double-click the program folder from the list that appears at the bottom of the Find dialog box.
3. Right-click the program folder and select **Create Shortcut**. When a dialog box asks if you want the shortcut to be placed on the desktop, click **Yes**.

SCREEN SAVERS

- The screen saver comes on too quickly. The learners find this distracting and it seems to zap the computer's resources.

To change a screen saver's "Time out" settings, right-click on a blank area of the desktop. Click **Properties** in the pop-up menu. Click the Screen Saver tab. Click in the **Screen Saver** option area and choose an option (**Flying Windows**). Note that the option **Wait:** becomes active. Click here to choose a time out; 20 minutes is recommended. Click **OK**.

It is true that the screen saver is always running in the background and is actually using valuable computer resources. It may be best to turn it off. To turn off the screen saver, right-click on a blank area of the desktop. Click **Properties** in the pop-up menu. Click the **Screen Saver** tab. Click in the screen saver option area, choose **None**, and click **OK**.

ACCESSORIES

- The clock does not show the correct time or date. To reset the time or date, double-click on the clock on the taskbar. This will open the **Date/Time Properties** dialog box. Use the controls in this box to adjust the time. Click **Apply | OK**.