

Device Dilemmas

Sometimes the peripheral devices you use with your Mac may suddenly start acting up or stop working altogether. When this happens, follow the steps below to troubleshoot the issue. If your device works when it's the only one connected to your computer, but doesn't work as expected when other devices are connected, be sure to read the device compatibility troubleshooting steps too.

- [My USB device \(keyboard, mouse, printer, and so on\) doesn't work as expected](#)
- [My FireWire device \(iPod, external drive, DV camera, and so on\) won't work with my Mac](#)

My USB device (keyboard, mouse, printer, and so on) doesn't work as expected

If your keyboard, mouse, printer, digital camera, or other USB device doesn't work as expected with your Mac (you may experience decreased or intermittent performance), or it doesn't work at all with it, try the following steps to troubleshoot the device.

Troubleshoot the device

1. Make sure that the USB cable is properly and securely connected to both the device and your computer's USB port.
2. If your device is powered, make sure that it's turned on and that it's plugged into a working electrical outlet.
3. If your device is USB bus-powered, plug the device directly into one of your computer's USB ports (don't connect the device to a low-powered USB port such as one on your keyboard).
4. Try unplugging the device and then plugging it back in again.
5. Try another USB port. If your device works as expected in the second port, you may want to get service for your other USB port.
6. If you have another USB cable that you know works, replace the original with the working one. If your device suddenly works as expected, you should replace the original cable.
7. Test another known working device in your computer's USB ports. If the device doesn't work in one or more USB ports, you may want to get service for your computer's affected USB ports.
8. Make sure that your computer is updated with the latest version of Mac OS X, and that each device has the most up-to-date firmware installed. (You can use Software Update to get the latest Apple updates—from the **Apple** menu, choose **Software Update**.)
9. If you have another computer, test the device on that machine to verify that it's working properly.
10. Try restarting your computer and testing your device.
11. Unplug all other devices from your computer, except for your mouse and the

affected device, and test. If the device works, skip to "Troubleshoot device compatibility" to scope out the hardware conflict.

12. If after verifying that the ports and cables are good but the device still doesn't appear to be working as expected—or at all—you may need to replace that device.

Troubleshoot device compatibility

If the steps above don't resolve your USB issue, try the following steps to troubleshoot device compatibility:

1. Unplug all USB devices except for your Apple mouse and Apple keyboard—make sure that both of these devices work as expected.
2. Reconnect one of your USB devices to your computer and test it to make sure that it works as expected (for example, move your mouse, type on the keyboard, and print a test page with the printer if you connected a printer).
3. Repeat step 2, gradually adding one device at a time, until a device causes another to stop working as expected. At that point, you can pinpoint which device caused the issue (the most recent one you added). You may want to contact the manufacturer of that device for more information or assistance.

My FireWire device (iPod, external drive, DV camera, etc.) won't work with my Mac

You may run into a situation where your Mac won't recognize a connected FireWire device, or that the device won't work properly with your Mac. If this is the case, troubleshoot the issue:

Troubleshoot the device

1. Make sure that the FireWire cable is properly and securely connected to both the device and your computer's FireWire port.
2. If your device is powered, make sure that it's turned on and that it's plugged into a working electrical outlet.
3. Make sure that you've installed any necessary software to use the device with your Mac, and that it's up to date.
4. Try another FireWire port. If your device works as expected in the second port, you may want to get service for your other FireWire port.
5. If you have another FireWire cable that you know works, replace the original with the working one. If your device suddenly works as expected, you should replace the original cable.
6. Test another known working device in your computer's FireWire ports. If the device doesn't work in one or more FireWire ports, you may want to get service for your computer's affected FireWire ports.
7. Make sure that your computer is updated with the latest version of Mac OS X, and that each device has the most up-to-date firmware installed. (You can use

Software Update to get the latest Apple updates—from the **Apple** menu, choose **Software Update**.)

8. If you have another computer, test the device on that machine to verify that it's working properly.
9. Restart your computer and test your device.
10. Unplug all other devices from your computer, except for your mouse and the affected device, and test. If the device works, skip to "Troubleshoot device compatibility" to scope out the hardware conflict.
11. If after verifying that the ports and cables are good but the device still doesn't appear to be working as expected—or at all—you may need to replace that device.

Troubleshoot device compatibility

If the steps above don't resolve your FireWire issue, try the following steps to troubleshoot device compatibility:

1. Shut down the computer.
2. Disconnect all FireWire and USB devices and cables (including hubs), except for the keyboard and mouse.
3. Disconnect your computer from the power outlet and wait 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Plug the computer back into the power outlet and turn it on.
5. After your computer has started up, reconnect the affected FireWire device and test. If it's not working correctly, go to step 6. If it's working correctly, connect another device and test again. If the device suddenly stops working correctly after connecting another device, there is an incompatibility between the two; check with the device manufacturers for more information.
6. Disconnect your device, restart your computer, and immediately press and hold the Command, Option, P, and R keys simultaneously to reset the PRAM (parameter random access memory).
7. When you hear the startup sound for the second time, let go of the keys to start up your computer normally.
8. Reconnect your device and test it. If it works as expected, connect other devices one-by-one and test for compatibility.