

# Mac OS Internet Customer Help Sheet No.23

## “Troubleshooting Microsoft Outlook Express”

This document describes a procedure for troubleshooting problems and/or crashing/freezing with Microsoft Outlook Express (OE) email client software. Microsoft recommends reading the whole of this document before starting so that you have an idea of what you may be required to do.

### PART ONE: FIRST CHECKS

Below are some first checks that can be performed. You are advised to check *all* of the steps in this part before attempting to open/use Outlook Express again.

- Step 1: **COLD BOOT YOUR MAC:** Select “Shut Down” from the ‘Special’ menu. When the screen goes black wait for thirty seconds. Then startup your Macintosh.
- Step 2: **INTERNAL HARD DISK:** Check your hard drive over with the latest copy of Disk First Aid (this will usually be found in the “Utilities” folder or on your system software CD/Disk Tools floppy disk). More details on Disk First Aid should be in your manual or contact Apple on 0990 127753.
- Step 3: **REBUILD THE DESKTOP:** Restart your Macintosh computer and hold down the Command-Option (Apple-Alt) keys until you get the message “Are you sure you want to rebuild the desktop?” then click on the “OK” button. More details on this procedure should be given in your manual.
- Step 4: **CHECK FOR VIRUSES** Check your Macintosh out with an anti-virus application such as Symantec’s “Norton Anti-Virus” or Dr. Solomon’s “Virex”.
- Step 5: **CHECK SYSTEM SOFTWARE VERSION:** Select “About This Macintosh” or “About This Computer” from the ‘Apple’ menu. It will tell you your system software version here.

#### If Your System Version Is

B1-7.1, B1-7.1.1, B1-7.1.2  
B1-7.5, B1-7.5Px  
B1-7.5.1, B1-7.5.2, B1-7.5.3  
B1-7.5.3 Update B1-2.0  
B1-7.5.3 Revision 2.x  
B1-7.5.5  
B1-7.6  
B1-7.6.1  
B1-8.0  
B1-8.1  
B1-8.5

#### Recommended Action

Upgrade the OS or install Open Transport 1.1.2.  
Upgrade using System 7.5 Update 2.0.  
Upgrade using System 7.5 Update 2.0.  
You have the option of installing System 7.5.5 Update.  
You have the option of installing System 7.5.5 Update.  
No action required.  
Upgrade using Mac OS 7.6.1 Update.  
No action required.  
Upgrade using Mac OS 8.1 Update.  
No action required.  
Upgrade using Mac OS 8.5.1 Update.

- Step 6: **APPLE HARD DISK DRIVER:** Make sure you are using the correct version of the hard disk driver for your Apple manufactured hard disks. To check which hard disk driver you are using close all the open windows, click once on your hard disk icon (it should go dark) and select “Get Info” from the ‘File’ menu. Make a note of what it says for “Where” and contact Apple on 0990 127753 or see General Help Sheet No.2 “Hard Disk Drivers”.
- Step 7: **ADDITIONAL OR NON APPLE STORAGE DEVICES:** If you have other storage devices connected to your computer (hard disks, removal media, CD-ROM drives, CD-ROM writers, etc) make sure the software drivers for these devices are SCSI Manager 4.3 compliant (4.3.1 for Mac OS 7.6 or higher). If you are unsure about this please direct your questions towards the device manufacturer, software vendor or dealer first. Neither Microsoft nor Apple can check device driver versions for hardware/software that was not made/written by Apple. The versions you are running can be obtained as listed in step six.

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Step 8: **CHECK INTERNET SOFTWARE VERSIONS:** To do this you should run through Internet Help Sheet No.1 “Connecting”.

Step 9: **OUTLOOK EXPRESS VERSION:** To check which version you are using locate the icon for the Outlook Express application on your hard disk and then click on its icon once (it should go dark). Now select “Get Info” from the ‘File’ menu. You will get a window like the one to the right. Check what it says for “Version” against the chart below.



Version	Recommended Action
4.0a, 4.0b, 4.0c	All of these are early versions of Outlook Express. Microsoft recommends that you remove the older version and then install version 4.01 or if you have a PowerPC Macintosh version 4.5. To upgrade to 4.01 or 4.5 you must remove the older version of Outlook Express before using the newer installer.

4.01 If you have a PowerPC Macintosh you are recommended to upgrade to version 4.5.

4.5 This is the current version of Outlook Express and can be downloaded free of charge from the Microsoft web site.

## PART TWO: OPTIMUM APPLICATION/SYSTEM SETTINGS

The following steps give details of optimum settings for your system and Outlook Express. If you have been recommended to fix, install or update anything in “Part One: First Checks” your software may already be corrupted and/or you are recommended to start afresh with a clean install of the system software (see “Part Three: Installing/Updating Software” below). With this part (two) you should check each step and if you have to do something you should then retry Outlook Express before proceeding to the next step to see if it has fixed the problem.

Step 1: **POTENTIALLY UNSTABLE CONNECTION 1:** Make sure you have the correct modem/port setting in your internet connection software (see Internet Help Sheets 2 to 10).

Step 2: **POTENTIALLY UNSTABLE CONNECTION 2:** Make sure your computer’s modem is connected directly to a BT or equivalent wall socket. Try not to use adapters, splitters and/or extension cables. If you plug a normal telephone into the same socket do you get a nice clear line or are there cracks, pops and/or whistling noises on the line? Check the quality of your line with your telephone company. They can usually check this for you.

Step 3: **RAM DOUBLER/MEMORY ENHANCERS:** Internet software in general does not like memory enhancement utilities like RAM Doublor and RAM Charger. You should try turning these off temporarily for Internet usage.

Step 4: **MEMORY ALLOCATION:** To increase the RAM allocation locate the icon for the Outlook Express application (usually found inside the “Outlook Express 4.0” folder). Click on the icon once (it should go dark). Now select “Get Info” from the ‘File’ menu. You will get a window like the one to the right. If you are using Mac OS 8.5 or later you will need to select “Memory” from the ‘Show’ pop-up menu first. Check what is listed in the Memory Requirements section. Increasing the “Preferred Size” will allocate more RAM.



Note: As a rule of thumb: Minimum Size = Suggested Size and Preferred Size = Suggested Size x 1.5

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Step 5: **REMOVE OUTLOOK EXPRESS PREFERENCES FOLDER:** Double click on your hard disk icon and double click on the “Microsoft Internet Applications”, “Microsoft Internet 4.5” or “Outlook Express 4.5” folder. Then open the “Outlook Express x.x Folder” and locate the “OE User(s)” folder and drag it to your hard disk icon. Do not delete this folder as it contains ALL your Outlook settings. Restart the computer and try Outlook Express (you will be asked to enter your email settings and when you have finished new Outlook preferences will automatically be created). If the application now works one of your older settings was corrupted.

Step 6: **ELIMINATE EXTENSION CONFLICT:** An additional piece of software added to your computer could be conflicting with Outlook Express. To eliminate this possibility use your “Extensions Manager” control panel to switch your extension set to your recommended system software only and then restart your Macintosh.

*IF YOU HAVE SYSTEM 7.1.2 or lower* contact Apple on advice for troubleshooting your extensions as you do not have an Extensions Manager control panel.

*IF YOU HAVE SYSTEM 7.5.x* select your System OS version from the ‘Sets’ menu.

*IF YOU HAVE MAC OS 7.6 or later* select your “Mac OS ALL” from the ‘Selected Set’ pop-up menu then click on the “Restart” button at the bottom.

Note: If you are testing Outlook Express while connected to the internet at this step you will also need to turn on any extensions required to access the internet so that you can actually connect for testing purposes.

Step 7: **DISK CACHE:** Because Outlook Express writes information to the hard disk it can be very useful to increase the Macintosh’s Disk Cache size. Open your “Memory” control panel and check the setting for “Disk Cache”. As a good rule of thumb this should be 32Kb multiplied by how much physical RAM you have installed (check the ‘available built in memory’ in the Virtual Memory section of the “Memory” control panel if you don’t know).

For example: 16Mb RAM = 512Kb disk cache, 32Mb RAM = 1024Kb disk cache.

### PART THREE: INSTALLING/UPDATING SOFTWARE

If all the above steps in parts one and two have been checked/performed then there are only a few possibilities left and they would point to a more serious (software) corruption or the need for installation and/or updating of software. Follow the steps below to eliminate these one by one. After each step *remember* to use the Optimum Settings listed above in part two *before* testing Outlook Express out. In doing the following steps you will lose OE’s Favourites so make a note of them or back these up before continuing.

Step 1: **OE CORRUPTED/REINSTALL:** Fully remove OE and then reinstall. For information on doing this see Internet Help Sheet 15 “Installing Outlook Express”.

Step 2: **APPLE INTERNET CONNECTION KIT CORRUPTED/REINSTALL:** If you use the Apple Internet Connection Kit it is possible that some of its software has become corrupted. Remove and reinstall the AICK (see Internet Help Sheet 4 “Install AICK”).

Step 3: **SYSTEM SOFTWARE CORRUPTED:** If OE is still not working properly “clean install” your system software (contact Apple for instructions on how to do this), then install your internet access software (see Internet Help Sheets 1 to 10) and then install Outlook Express (see Internet Help Sheet 15). Do *not* install anything else on the computer until you have established that Outlook Express is working correctly.

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Note: If OE is still not working go to step four below. If it is now working successfully you may now add your other software and hardware items one at a time testing OE after each installation. If OE stops working then it is 99% certain the last item you installed is causing the problem. Contact the relevant manufacturer/vendor of this product for help.

Step 4: **HARD DISK CORRUPTED:** If OE is still not working properly “erase clean install” your system software (contact Apple for instructions on how to do this), then install your internet access software (see Internet Help Sheets 1 to 10) and then install Outlook Express (see Internet Help Sheet 15). Do *not* install anything else on the computer until you have established that Outlook Express is working correctly.

Note: If OE is still not working go to step five below. If it is now working successfully you may now add your other software and hardware items one at a time testing OE after each installation. If OE stops working then it is 99% certain the last item you installed is causing the problem. Contact the relevant manufacturer/vendor of this product for help.

Step 5: **CONTACT MICROSOFT TECHNICAL SUPPORT:** If Outlook Express still fails to work make a note of what steps you have followed and any (error) messages that have appeared before contacting Microsoft technical support.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q. I have heard that Microsoft Outlook Express 4.5 can self-heal. Can I make use of this feature in troubleshooting Outlook Express?**

A. Yes. You should run through Part One: First Checks at the beginning of this document and use this quick test to make sure the OE application and its associated system files are working correctly:

Step 1: Start up your Macintosh with extensions off (hold down the shift key at startup until the extensions off/disabled message appears).

Step 2: Then open the “Microsoft Internet 4.5” or “Outlook Express 4.5” folder and double click on the “Outlook Express 4.5” application icon. This should force, if necessary, Outlook Express to perform a “first run” installation and then open the application with access to your currently downloaded email.

Note: If this is successful it is most likely that you have an extension conflict or something has become corrupted with your system software. Follow the appropriate steps in Parts Two and Three to resolve these potential issues.

Note: If this is not successful it is most likely that some of your Microsoft Internet software has a problem. You are recommended to completely remove the Outlook Express 4.5 software and then reinstall it. See Internet Help Sheet 15 “Installing Outlook Express” for instructions on how to do this.

**Q. What is Internet Config?**

A. Internet Config is a third party utility that helps keep all your internet configuration details in one place. Microsoft recommends having this utility installed on your Macintosh if you are using Microsoft Outlook Express. OE will install Internet Config for you *unless* you have an Internet Config folder in the root directory of your hard disk. To check for this double click on your hard disk icon and look for a folder called “Internet Config”. If you do not have one, the utility will be installed for you. However, please note Microsoft applications will only check this (recommended) location. It will not check the rest of your hard disk. Other applications or even the Mac OS may install Internet Config elsewhere on your hard disk. Microsoft recommends checking your hard disk and removing duplicate copies of Internet Config if you have them.

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**Q. Where can I get anti-virus software from?**

A. “Norton Anti-Virus” is available from Symantec (01628 592222 – [www.symantec.com/uk](http://www.symantec.com/uk)). “Virex” is available from Dr. Solomon’s Software (01296 318700 – [www.drsolomons.com](http://www.drsolomons.com)).

**Q. My system software version doesn’t have B1 in front of it?**

A. You are not using a British version of the system software. Contact Apple for more information regarding this and how it will affect you and the software/updates you install.

**Q. How can I tell if I have got an Apple manufactured hard disk?**

A. Run Apple’s “Drive Setup”. This will list your SCSI/IDE devices. If your hard disk/hardware device is listed as “Not Supported” then you have third party hardware. If you have an old 68K Mac run “Apple HD SC Setup”. If it doesn’t find your SCSI hard disk you have third party hardware.

**Q. I have a third party hard disk/device, so what driver software should I use?**

**Q. Where can I get more information about hard disk drivers?**

A. You are recommended to read and work through the advice given in General Help Sheet 2 “Hard Disk Drivers for British/US System Software”.

**Q. I have “call waiting” for my telephone. Is this a problem?**

A. It can be. When you are using the phone and get another call a beep will notify you that you have another call. If you are connected to the internet at this time with a modem the beep can cause your modem to lose the connection potentially crashing/freezing your Mac.

**Q. I have RAM Doubler/RAM Charger. Why should I turn it off to use the internet?**

A. A lot of internet software, especially world wide web browsers, cache (write) information to RAM and to the hard disk. Having system enhancements like RAM Doubler might decrease performance or even cause conflicts. Try using the internet with and without your enhancement software and see which gives you the best performance/stability.

**Q. Memory allocation (Part Two: Step 4) worked really well. Is it just for OE?**

A. No. The memory allocation tip can be used for any application installed on your Macintosh.

**Q. Whenever I open Outlook Express it reports “cannot open the preferences file”. Even if I remove Outlook Express’s preference files I still get the error message?**

A. This is due to an incompatibility with the extension “InternetConfigRandomSignature”. Remove this from your “Extensions” folder and restart your Macintosh. The message should not appear now. However, this problem does not appear to happen with Outlook Express version 4.0c or later so upgrading to the latest version should solve the problem too.

**Q. I am using Outlook Express 4.0x. Can I put the “Microsoft Internet Applications” folder somewhere else on my hard disk?**

A. Microsoft recommends keeping your “Microsoft Internet Applications” at the root of your hard disk especially if you’re installing any extras or updating Internet Explorer/Outlook Express. If you have Microsoft Office 98 you are *not* recommended to put it in the “Microsoft Office 98” folder.

**Q. Is there anywhere else I can get information?**

A. If you have access to the world wide web (from another computer if necessary) then there is a third-party information source on troubleshooting Internet Explorer for Macintosh at [www.macfixit.com/reports](http://www.macfixit.com/reports). Please note that this web site is in no way affiliated with Microsoft but is certainly a recommended read.

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### PLEASE NOTE

- Microsoft strongly recommend that you backup any important data files before you attempt an update install/restore of your system software especially any files you have in the “Documents” folder (if you have one). To back up your files copy them to an external storage device such as a second hard disk, SyQuest or Zip/Jaz drive. If you don't have any of these you will need to backup your data on to floppy disks. If you have files that are larger than 1.4Mb you will need a third party compression application like “Stuffit Deluxe” (from Aladdin), “Disk Doubler Pro” (from Symantec) or the shareware utilities Stuffit Lite, Compact Pro or Zip It.
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### MICROSOFT UK

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UK support on line: [www.microsoft.com/uk/support](http://www.microsoft.com/uk/support)