

HELP!

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They may not be as certain as death and taxes but computer problems are something we are all likely to encounter sooner or later. When trouble comes there are several web sites you can turn to for troubleshooting suggestions is <http://www.vlaurie.com/computers2/articles/trouble.htm>. There is an enormous amount of support on the Internet.

If you have **Windows XP** and you haven't already looked in the Help function, try it. It includes an Internet search and can actually be useful (You can skip it in Windows 98 /Me). Otherwise, try tapping into the Microsoft resources on the internet. The Microsoft Knowledge Base is an enormous collection, containing much useful information.



Unfortunately, it is not always easy to find things, and when you do find it, you have to wade through the Microsoft-speak that is used for writing the articles. Nonetheless, this is the ultimate source for answers about many problems. Go to the link [http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=fh; \[1n\]; kbhowto](http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=fh; [1n]; kbhowto). Another Microsoft site is the Microsoft Windows XP support center at <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?acod=fh;en-us;winxp>.

Searching the Microsoft knowledge base is often easier if you use Google Advanced Search, enter your search criteria and add "site:microsoft.com" at the end. For example, to search "registry editor" use "registry editor site: **microsoft.com**". Another way is to go to

the "**Domain**" line and specify "**Only return results from the site or domain microsoft.Com**". Google can also be a great way to find information about computer problems on the internet in general, but you need to know how to narrow down your search. Otherwise, you will be overwhelmed with the number of links that turn up. Some tips on how to use Google are given by Steve Bass at <http://www.pcworld.com/howto/artoc;e/0,aid,110970,00.asp>.

Microsoft Newsgroups can be very useful, and here too, Google is the way to find things. Use the Advanced Groups Search and specify **Return only messages from the newsgroup microsoft.public.***. The wildcard asterisk will allow a search of all the Microsoft groups. If you can narrow the search even more, that will simplify the search. For example, for Windows 98 questions try just the groups **microsoft.public.win98.***. For WindowsXP questions try **microsoft.public.windowsxp.***. If you know how to use a Newsgroup reader, you can submit your question to a particular group and see if one of the many experts who frequent the groups will answer. You can also use the new Microsoft Newsgroups Web site at <http://communities.microsoft.com/newsgroups/default.asp>.

Another way to search for answers to your problem is to use the "Windows Tips Search Engine" provided by Brian Livingston at <http://www.briansbuzz.com/>. Look for it at the bottom of the page. This facility allows you to simultaneously search some of the best sources on the Web. Some of the listed sources are Annoyances. Org, Lockergnome, PCWorld.com, Tom's hardware, WinInformant, WinNetMag, Woody's Watch, Window Manager, E-Business Secrets, Win Supersite, Windows 2000FAQ, JSI, Inc., and Langa List.

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