

Error message in Windows XP SP2: "Windows could not start because the following file is missing or corrupt. Windows\System32\Hal.dll"

SYMPTOMS

In Windows XP Service Pack 2 (SP2), you may receive the following error message:

Windows could not start because the following file is missing or corrupt.
Windows root\system32\hal.dll.
Please re-install a copy of the above file.

CAUSE

This problem may occur if one of the following problems occurs.

Problem 1

You have a bad partition or a bad boot record.

Problem 2

A file system or disk corruption causes the primary boot record, the Hal.dll file, or the Ntoskrnl.exe file to become damaged.

Problem 3

The Hal.dll and the Ntoskrnl.exe files are mismatched.

RESOLUTION

Advanced troubleshooting

If you are not comfortable with advanced troubleshooting, you might want to ask someone for help or contact support. For information about how to contact Microsoft support, visit the following Microsoft Web site:

<http://support.microsoft.com/contactus/> (<http://support.microsoft.com/contactus/>)

Problem 1

To resolve this problem, use one of the following methods.

Method 1

Repair the master boot record by using the **fixmbr** command from the Windows XP Recovery Console.

For more information about how to use the Recovery Console in Windows XP, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[307654](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/307654/) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/307654/>) How to install and use the Recovery Console in Windows XP

For more information about an error message that you may receive when you use the **fixmbr** command, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[266745](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/266745/) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/266745/>) Error message when you run **fixmbr** command

Method 2

If the primary boot partition is a FAT partition, use the **fixboot** command from the Windows XP Recovery Console to write a new boot sector on the system partition. Then, use the **fixmbr**

command to repair the master boot record.

Problem 2

To resolve this problem, start the computer by using the Recovery Console in Windows XP, and then run the **chkdsk /r** command.

For more information about how to install and to use the Recovery Console in Windows XP, refer to the resolution in the "Problem 1" section.

Note You do not have to include the **/p** switch in the **chkdsk** command because the **/r** switch causes the Chkdsk utility to locate bad sectors and to recover readable information. The **chkdsk** command implies the **/p** switch.

Problem 3

To resolve this problem, start the computer from the Windows XP installation media, start the Recovery Console, and then use the Bootcfg.exe tool to rebuild the Boot.ini file. To do this, follow these steps:

1. Configure the computer to start from the CD drive or the DVD drive. For information about how to do this, refer to your computer documentation, or contact your computer manufacturer.
2. Insert the Windows installation media into the CD drive or the DVD drive, and then restart your computer.
3. When you receive the "Press any key to boot from CD" message, press a key to start your computer from the Windows XP CD or DVD.
4. When you receive the "Welcome to Setup" message, press the R key to start the Recovery Console.
5. If you have a dual-boot or a multiple-boot computer, select the installation that you have to use from the Recovery Console.
6. When you are prompted, type the administrator password, and then press ENTER.
7. At the command prompt, type **bootcfg /list**, and then press ENTER.

Note The entries in your current Boot.ini file will appear on the screen.

8. At the command prompt, type **bootcfg /rebuild**, and then press ENTER.

Note This command scans the hard disks of the computer for Windows XP installations, and then displays the results.

9. Follow the instructions that appear on the screen to add the Windows installations to the Boot.ini file.

For example, follow these steps to add a Windows XP installation to the Boot.ini file:

- a. When you receive a message that resembles the following message, press the Y key:

```
Total Identified Windows Installs: 1 [1] C:\Windows
Add installation to boot list? (Yes/No/All)
```

- b. You receive a message that resembles the following message:

```
Enter Load Identifier
```

When you receive this message, type the name of your operating system, and then press ENTER.

Note The name is either Microsoft Windows XP Professional or Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition.

- c. You receive a message that resembles the following:

```
Enter OS Load options
```

When you receive this message, type **/fastdetect**, and then press ENTER.

Note The instructions that appear on your screen may be different, depending on the configuration of your computer.

10. Type **exit**, and then press ENTER to exit Recovery Console.
11. Type **fixboot**, and then press ENTER.
12. Type **y**, and then press ENTER.
13. Your computer restarts, and the updated boot list appears, when you receive the "Please select the operating system to start" message.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[314477](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/314477/) (http://support.microsoft.com/kb/314477/) Error message: Windows could not start because of a computer disk hardware configuration problem

For more information about how to use the System Restore feature, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[306084](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306084/) (http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306084/) How to restore the operating system to a previous state in Windows XP

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows XP Service Pack 2

Keywords: kbresolve kbhowto kberrmsg kbpubtypekc kbinfo KB945380



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