

## Re: Windows unable to run explorer.exe or IE

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2005-05/msg16609.html>

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- *From:* "Dave Sell" <davesell01@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Sun, 29 May 2005 16:50:36 -0400
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If it would help the steps I took were

- 1) run Trend Micro Housecall. I was able to run it from SafeMode with network. It was able to remove most of the junk except for 3 files needed for Trojan.StartPage. NortonAV would not load at all or when it did load at one point it would be disabled by Trojan.StartPage on subsequent reboot. Still had explorer.exe.
- 2) Attempt to remove the 3 file associated with Trojan.StartPage that continue to restore themselves. At that time the trojan processes running were 2 instances of SMSSU.EXE, 1 of Tmntsrv32.EXE, & 1 of xmlib.dll. I tried sharing drive C:\ (including Program Files, Documents and Settings, and Windows) with my laptop which has current ver of NAV. – didn't work
- 3) There is such a mixed bag of suggestions on how to remove these files and none I tried worked. Several websites (not newsgroups) suggested use of taksmgr or hijack to kill processes – didn't work. Another suggested using hijack to delete files on reboot feature – didn't work. All sites seemed to be in agreement as to the files involved so that is where I thought the batch file would be able to run all the way through before the trojan files could replace themselves. All the batch file really did was copy freecell.exe to Tmntsrv32.EXE, SMSSU.EXE, & xmlib.dll. That worked. I got 4 instances of freecell but trojan was stopped. and NortonAV loaded and was able to clean a bunch more. On reboot this time none of my desktop icons showed up. I was unable to run explorer.exe after that. Norton & Windows were able to connect to web to update.

So there a few things I did before this went FUBAR. All the files I can run I have to start from taskmgr. Control panel files run OK. Why can't I run explorer.exe but notepad.exe runs just fine?

Dave Sell  
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- > Actually explorer.exe is just the Graphical User Interface (gui). It is
- > not "Windows". However, you need to have it run for normal operation.
- > Here's the thing – the OP didn't know this simple piece of information
- > but yet wrote a "batch file" to do who-knows-what and made numerous
- > other changes in his efforts to remove the trojan (for which there are
- > removal steps if you know where to look). I'm not saying this to hurt
- > Mr. Sells' feelings – I'm just stating an apparent fact and being

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- > practical regarding remedies.
- >
- > At this point, the system is in an unknown state. Undocumented changes
- > have been made, so unwinding from these will be most difficult. I would
- > back up any data first, either with Knoppix or a Bart's, and then try a
- > Repair Install. If the Repair Install doesn't work, the easiest and
- > probably best solution will be a Clean Install.
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- > <http://www.michaelstevensstech.com/XPrepairinstall.htm> – Repair Install
- > <http://michaelstevensstech.com/cleanxpinstall.html> – Clean Install
- >
- > <http://www.knoppix.net>
- > <http://www.nu2.nu/pebuilder/>
- >
- > Malke
- > --
- > Elephant Boy Computers
- > [www.elephantboycomputers.com](http://www.elephantboycomputers.com)
- > "Don't Panic!"
- > MS-MVP Windows – Shell/User

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• **Follow-Ups:**

- ◆ **Re: Windows unable to run explorer.exe or IE**  
◇ From: Malke

• **References:**

- ◆ **Windows unable to run explorer.exe or IE**  
◇ From: Dave Sell
- ◆ **Re: Windows unable to run explorer.exe or IE**  
◇ From: Dave Sell
- ◆ **Re: Windows unable to run explorer.exe or IE**  
◇ From: Malke

- Prev by Date: **Re: SP2 and limited connectivity**
- Next by Date: **Re: ok, let's clear this up MS – is Product Activation really restricted?**
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