

# Re: Help with slow computer

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*Source:*

[http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.help\\_and\\_support/2009-02/msg01860.htm](http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.help_and_support/2009-02/msg01860.htm)

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- *From:* Skip Haberlack <[SkipHaberlack@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:SkipHaberlack@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Mon, 23 Feb 2009 19:57:01 -0800
- 

I changed the registry and checked and it is now set to DMA mode. This seems to be just what I needed as everything seems to be working fine now. I just want to give my thanks to you and everybody else that helped out with my problem. Anyway, I appreciate everything, thank you!

Skip

"Daave" wrote:

"Skip Haberlack" <[SkipHaberlack@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:SkipHaberlack@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in message [news:BE3A6230-45F2-4006-983B-DDCED292757E@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:BE3A6230-45F2-4006-983B-DDCED292757E@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Dave, Thanks for the reply. Here's some answers to your questions.

1. I have 1024MB RAM

Generally, that is more than adequate for most XP users. So, that's good.

2. Commit Charge –  
Total: 674100  
Limit: 2517616  
Peak: 900388

Physical Memory –  
Total: 1046704

This is also good. It means you \*do\* have enough RAM. There is no need to purchase more!

3. 60GB Hard Drive, 25GB Free

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Also good.

4. I don't remember exactly what I was doing. I know it was around the time I got Civilization IV Beyond the Sword. More than likely, though, it started after I downloaded a Windows or HP update.

I think we have a winner. Not too long ago, I worked on a laptop that had similar performance problems. A Windows update turned out to be the culprit. Why don't you uninstall (via Control Panel | Add or Remove Programs) \*all\* the Windows updates since that point in time a few months ago. You will eventually reinstall them of course. You may also need to uninstall Civilization IV if no joy. I'm not sure what kind of HP updates you are talking about. Is it a BIOS update? Or something else?

Regarding Windows Updates, make sure you only install critical updates. \*Never\* install hardware device drivers from the Microsoft site! Personally, I shut off Automatic Updates and visit the Microsoft site once a month and manually download the critical updates. If you want to run Automatic Updates, I would recommend choosing "Notify me but don't automatically download or install them."

5. I did use to have Norton. After my computer started acting this way, a friend of mine told me about Norton being a resource hog and to get rid of it so I did. I ran the uninstaller from the Norton website so I would assume that it would be uninstalled completely.

Sounds like it is. Good, also!

6. It is a HP Pavilion dv5224nr.

I also checked my hard drive access mode. My Primary IDE Channel Device 0 is set to Transfer Mode: DMA if available and Current Transfer Mode: PIO Mode. The Current Transfer Mode is stuck in PIO Mode and can't be changed. I read that link you sent me and although I'm fairly computer literate user wise, I don't know how to create registry keys. If there is anything else

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that you need to know or if you have any other suggestions, I would appreciate it. Thanks for the reply.

PIO mode makes your PC run like a dog! You need to change it back. It's not hard to create a key in the registry. Open regedit. Navigate to the locations

[HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\Class\{4D36E96A-E325-11CE-BFC1-

and

[HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\Class\{4D36E96A-E325-11CE-BFC1-

Then right-click in a white area in the right window and select New, then DWORD value. The name of the key will be ResetErrorCountersOnSuccess. Enter the number 1 in the Value Data box.

Of course, you should always back up the registry before you make any changes to it.

If you would rather not manually edit the registry, this MVP site has a very helpful .vbs script that will do the trick:

<http://winhlp.com/node/10>

Under Quick solution, Step 1 is a link that says "Click here." This is for resetdma.vbs.

Good luck and remember to let us know how you make out!

"Daave" wrote:

"Skip Haberlack" <Skip  
Haberlack@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in  
message  
[news:A0040C06-BFEC-409D-8246-B37073FD4DA9@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:A0040C06-BFEC-409D-8246-B37073FD4DA9@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

For the past few months my computer has been running very slow and jerky whenever I start up any program. It's really bad during Windows start up. Watching the Task Manager, anytime I start up a new program, CPU usage

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shoots  
up to 100% causing everything to slow  
down. I also have problems  
streaming  
video (movie previews, etc.) without the  
videos jumping and  
skipping  
excessively. I've tried defragging, cleaned  
the hard disk, run  
Spybot  
and  
Adaware as well as Registry cleaners  
(Registry Mechanic and  
CCleaner)  
and  
searched for viruses with AVG and nothing  
seems to work. I've also  
downloaded and installed all new drivers for  
everything in my  
computer. I'm  
currently running on XP Media Center  
Edition. I just want to be  
able  
to use  
my computer because it's gotten to the point  
where I am ready to  
throw  
it out  
the window due to frustration. If anybody  
can assist with this, I  
would  
greatly appreciate it. Thanks.

We will need some more information:

1. How much RAM do you have?
2. What are your Total, Limit, and Peak values under Commit Charge (see number 4 below)?
3. How large is your hard drive and how much free space do you have?
4. What happened a few months ago that may be responsible for the sluggishness? Did you install any programs or updates (especially Windows updates) at that time?

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5. Did you once run either Norton or McAfee products? If not  
\*completely\* uninstalled, the traces left behind can cause problems.

6. What is the make and model of your PC?

Regarding sluggishness in general, here are its usual causes:

1. Malicious software (malware)
2. Certain programs that are designed to combat malware (e.g., Norton and McAfee). Ironically, they can slow things down because they simply use way too many resources. Sometime they cause conflicts with other programs. And their default mode is to scan your entire hard drive each time you boot up.
3. Too many of \*certain types\* of programs always running in the background -- with or without your knowledge.

Use these sites to determine what these programs are and to learn how to configure them not to always run at startup:

[http://www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup\\_content.php#THE\\_PROGRAMS](http://www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup_content.php#THE_PROGRAMS)  
<http://www.bleepingcomputer.com/startups/>  
[http://www.answersthatwork.com/Tasklist\\_pages/tasklist.htm](http://www.answersthatwork.com/Tasklist_pages/tasklist.htm)

Sometimes it is recommended to use msconfig to configure the programs to not run at startup. A better, more thorough program is Autoruns:

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/bb963902.aspx>

4. Not enough RAM, which causes the PC to overly rely on the pagefile. A quick way to determine if this is happening is to open Task

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Manager  
(Ctrl+Alt+Del) and click the Performance tab. Then note the three values under Commit Charge (K): in the lower left-hand corner: Total, Limit, and Peak.

The Total figure represents the amount of memory you are using at that very moment. The Peak figure represents the highest amount of memory you used since last bootup. If both these figures are below the value of Physical Memory (K) Total, then you probably have plenty of RAM. Otherwise, you may want to explore this further by running Page File Monitor for Windows XP:

[http://www.dougknox.com/xp/utills/xp\\_pagefilemon.htm](http://www.dougknox.com/xp/utills/xp_pagefilemon.htm)

5. You might also want to check that your hard drive's access mode didn't change from DMA to PIO:

<http://www.technize.com/2007/08/02/is-your-hard-disk-cddvd-drives-too-slow-while-copying>

and

[http://users.bigpond.net.au/ninjaduck/itserviceduck/udma\\_fix/](http://users.bigpond.net.au/ninjaduck/itserviceduck/udma_fix/)