

PRINTABLE GUIDE

Check a printer that will not print

Check the printer, connection and queue in that order. These Windows 11 steps cover common issues; use the printer's manual for model-specific instructions.

Windows 11; home printer | 2 min read | 5 steps

Before you start

- ☐ The printer model and its manual
- ☐ One harmless single-page document

1. Read the printer display

Check that the printer is on, has paper and reports no jam or cartridge problem. Follow its manual to clear warnings. Try its own test page if available; failure suggests a printer issue rather than an app issue.

- ☐ Done this step

2. Check the connection

For USB, check the cable is firmly attached. For Wi-Fi, ensure the computer and printer use the same home network. A guest network can stop discovery. Restart the printer using its power button and allow it to settle.

- ☐ Done this step

3. Select the correct destination

Open the document and choose Print or press Ctrl + P. Select the physical printer by name, rather than Microsoft Print to PDF. Check that the page range is valid and begin with one page.

- ☐ Done this step

4. Review queued jobs

Open Settings > Bluetooth & devices > Printers & scanners, select your printer and open its queue. Cancel your own stalled or duplicate jobs if necessary. Do not delete another person's work on a shared printer.

☐ Done this step

5. Use supported troubleshooting

If it still fails, use Windows Get Help for printer troubleshooting and the manufacturer's official help for your model. Note any error code. Driver or hardware problems may require further help rather than repeated printing.

☐ Done this step

Try it for yourself

Locate the printer in Windows settings and check whether jobs are waiting.

☐ I tried the task.

My notes

Why did Print create a file instead of paper?

You probably selected a PDF destination. Choose the physical printer in the print window when you want a paper copy.

Official help and the online guide

Windows printer troubleshooting - <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/hardware/printer/fix-printer-connection-and-printing-problems-in-windows>

Read online: <https://plaintech-guides.pages.dev/guides/check-printer-queue/>