

## **Error: "The Adobe Acrobat/Reader that is running cannot be used to view PDF files in a web browser..." when you view a PDF file in a browser**

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### **Issue**

When you view a PDF file in a browser (for example, Internet Explorer or Firefox), the following error message occurs, "The Adobe Acrobat/Reader that is running cannot be used to view PDF files in a web browser. Adobe Acrobat/Reader version 8 or 9 is required. Please exit and try again."

### **Reason**

This error can occur when the folder that contains Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader, or one of its parent or sub-directories has been renamed or moved, or Adobe Reader or Acrobat has otherwise become confused which exact application to use as helper application within the browser.

### **Solution**

#### **Solution 1: Repair the Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader installation.**

Repair the current installation by doing one of the following:

- Go to Help > Repair Acrobat Installation or Help > Repair Adobe Reader Installation.
- Go to the Windows Add/Remove Control Panel, choose Adobe Acrobat or Reader and select Change.

In both these cases, the set-up wizard that starts will allow you to repair the currently installed Acrobat or Reader application.

#### **Solution 2: Make sure the registry setting that tells the browser where to find Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Reader is present and correct.**

**Disclaimer:** The registry contains system-related information that is critical to your computer and applications. Before modifying the registry, be sure to make a backup copy of it. Adobe doesn't provide support for problems that may arise from improperly modifying the registry. Adobe strongly recommends that you have experience editing system files before you modify the registry. For information on the Windows Registry Editor, see the documentation for Windows or contact Microsoft Technical Support.

1. Go to Start > Run
2. Type **regedit** and click OK.
3. Browse to the following key: HKEY\_CLASSES\_ROOT\Software\Adobe\Acrobat\Exe
4. Make sure that the correct Default data value is set for the path where Adobe Reader or Acrobat are installed.

The default installation values are "C:\Program Files\Adobe\Reader 9.0\Reader\AcroRd32.exe" or "C:\Program Files\Adobe\Acrobat 9.0\Acrobat\Acrobat.exe", depending on whether Adobe Reader or Adobe Acrobat is installed.

**Note:** If the path in which the Acrobat application is installed is not the same as the default path, make sure that the key's default value points to this actual location.

In case the above registry does not exist on the system, do the following:

1. Go to Start > Run
2. Type **regedit** and click OK.
3. Go to Edit > New > Key and create the missing HKEY\_CLASSES\_ROOT\Software\Adobe\Acrobat\Exe
4. Go to Edit > New > String Value and name this 'Default'
5. Set the value data for this string to the path where the Acrobat or Reader executable is installed.

After making this registry edit, it is recommended you restart the computer.

**Solution 3: Make sure all previous version of Acrobat and Adobe reader are removed from your computer.**

Make sure all previous versions of Acrobat and Reader have been removed from your computer. Reinstall from the Acrobat disk or download. In the case of Reader install from the download. If installing on Vista then right-click on the Installer and choose to Run As Administrator.

**Solution 4: Configure the browser to use Acrobat or Adobe Reader as a helper application.**

After you configure Acrobat or Adobe Reader as a helper application, the browser starts the helper application in a separate window and displays PDF files within that window. Acrobat and Adobe Reader both include a preference that lets you specify Acrobat or Adobe Reader as the helper application.

To configure Acrobat or Adobe Reader as a helper application:

1. Start Acrobat or Adobe Reader.
2. Choose Edit > Preferences.
3. Select Internet on the left.
4. Deselect Display PDF In Browser Using [Acrobat application], and then click OK.
5. Quit Acrobat or Adobe Reader.

The next time you select a link to a PDF file in the browser, a dialog box asks what you would like to do with the file. If you select Open It, the browser opens the PDF file in Acrobat or Adobe Reader (the helper application); if you select Save It To Disk, the browser saves the PDF file to your hard drive.

**Solution 5: Run Acrobat/Reader in a new local administrator account.**

Create a new user account that has the same permissions as the account you use when the problem occurs, or create a new local administrator account. If the problem doesn't recur when you are logged on to the new account, then the original user account may be damaged.

For information on setting up a user account, see "Create a user account" in Windows Help And Support, or contact your network administrator. For information on setting up a new local administrator account, see "Create new local administrator account (Windows Vista)" (TechNote [kb404912](#)).