

11 ways to fix 'The System Cannot Find The Path Specified' error on Windows

Are you currently getting The System Cannot Find The Path Specified error on your Windows computer? There are many other reasons why you see this message, from simple errors like entering the wrong path on Command Prompt or installing a program.

However, it can also mean that there is a registry problem in the system, such as an invalid key or worse, a virus attack. Therefore, if you see this error, do not take it lightly! Here are 11 fixes you can take to get this problem fixed right away.

1. Run Command Prompt with admin rights

Windows utilities cannot access all the files and folders available on your device. Admin privileges are required to access specific system files. Therefore, if you try to access a file or folder path that the Command Prompt is not authorized to access, this error may occur. To rule out this possibility, you must give Command Prompt exclusive access to restricted files.

2. Make sure the file is not password protected

If the file you are trying to access through the Command Prompt is password protected, the file may not be accessible. This can result in an error message stating that the specified path cannot be found by the system.

Therefore, you should check the file or directory that the system cannot find the path. If the file is password protected, remove the password and the problem will be solved. If you are sure that the file is not password protected, skip this section and move on to the next section.

3. Check the system for viruses

Virus attacks may not be the most common reason you see the "The System Cannot Find The Path Specified" error. However, it is still best to check for viruses in the system before you proceed with other fixes. This ensures that your computer is safe and free of threats before you start tweaking system settings.

If you have a third-party antivirus program installed on your computer, you can run it to check for threats. However, if you don't have one, you can use your system's built-in antivirus, called Windows Defender.

Scanning may take a while if you have a lot of files stored on your computer. If done and no threats found, move on to the next fixes. If some threats are found, quarantine the files and check if that fixes the problem.

4. Verify the path of the file

If you receive this error message on Command Prompt, check that you are entering the correct path. In most cases this is human error - the user can put the wrong path or name on the command line. So execute your command again and make sure that the path is entered correctly.

If you get this error when trying to download files to your system, check if your default download directory has been changed and make sure that the download location exists in your system .

5. Remove special characters from path

Special characters in a path may not be interpreted correctly by the Command Prompt; they can be interpreted as an operator or something else. Therefore, the translated path will be different from the one you originally wrote. As a result, you may see an error stating that the specified path cannot be located because it has been modified.

Check the path name you specified in Command Prompt. If the filename contains special characters, the best solution is to rename the file and remove any special characters that the file has. If the problem is still not resolved after applying this fix, continue with the next fix.

6. Make sure the code is correct

While it's pretty obvious, running the code incorrectly can also result in the "The System Cannot Find The Path Specified" error. Again, double check the code you're running and see if there are any errors in the path you added. If there are errors in the syntax or the command line, fix them and you won't see them anymore.

7. Remove any invalid paths in environment variables

Environment variables contain data that can affect the way processes running in the system behave. So, if you run a program on your computer from the command line, the PATH environment variable plays an integral role by saving searchable directory paths.

To understand how it works, imagine a computer with two different folders. If you are trying to run a current program in a different directory, your system will look for directories written in the PATH variable. If the program is available in any folder, your system can run it without any problem.

However, if you set an invalid path variable, the process will be interrupted, causing the error "The System Cannot Find The Path Specified". So the best way to fix this problem is to remove the invalid paths from the environment variable.

Follow the instructions below to delete the paths:

1. On your computer, open File Explorer.
2. Then, find the **This PC** path on the left navigation, right-click it and select **Properties**.

3. In the new window, click the **Advanced system settings** link on the right.

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4. From the **Advanced tab on the System Properties** window , click the **Environment Variables button**.

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5. In the **User variables** section , check **the Path** variable by clicking on it and pressing the **Edit button**. This will display all user variables.

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6. Next, check that the paths are correct and working. To do this, simply copy the path and paste it into File Explorer's address bar. This will allow you to see if File Explorer can find the path. If you can't find it, then the path is incorrect and you must delete or edit it. Do this on all paths provided on the path variable. Once done, press **OK**.

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7. Then in the **System variables** section , click on **Path variable** and press the **Edit button**.

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8. Repeat step 6 to check if all paths work.

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You can view all path variables in Command Prompt. Just type **echo %PATH%** and press **Enter**. However, it won't tell you if the path is invalid.

8. Check for incomplete downloads

Make sure that the file or folder you are trying to access has been properly installed or downloaded. Sometimes, the download is interrupted while downloading a file or folder, resulting in an incomplete download. Therefore, accessing such corrupted files using File Explorer or Windows Command Prompt can lead to errors.

Therefore, go to the location of the inaccessible Command Prompt file and see if it downloaded correctly. If a file is installed or downloaded incorrectly, try installing or downloading again. This will likely fix the problem. If that doesn't work, try the next fix.

9. Check the system registry

If you have edited the AutoRun keys in Registry Editor, that could be the reason why you are getting the "The System Cannot Find The Path Specified" error. AutoRun keys work by automatically executing a command when opened. If the information specified in the keys is incorrect, an error may occur. Follow the instructions below to resolve this issue.

1. Press and hold **Win + R** key to open Run. Then type **Regedit** and press **Enter**.

2. On the **Registry Editor** , copy and paste the following path into the address bar:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINESoftwareMicrosoftCommand Processor
```

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3. Next, check if there is an **AutoRun** key . If so, delete or modify the data.

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4. Finally, check if you still have the same problem.

10. Run an SFC scan

If none of the above methods work, you can run a System File Checker (SFC) scan to find corrupted files in your system and fix them automatically.

11. Update OS

The last thing you need to do to fix this error is to update your Windows system. You should not run an outdated system, doing so can cause various problems for your system, including "The System Cannot Find The Path Specified" error.

Usually, the "The System Cannot Find The Path Specified" error is usually caused by an invalid path or a corrupted file in the system. After doing the above mentioned fixes, your system should run smoothly without any problem. If you are trying to run a program and get this error, finding the exact installation location of the software can help fix the problem.

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