How to troubleshoot Windows with Event Viewer log

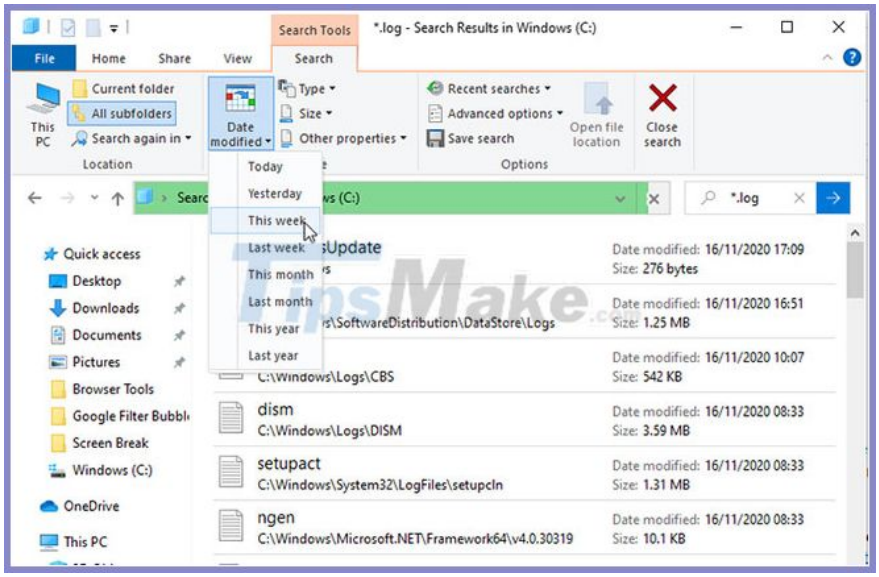
There are several ways to view log files in Windows, so you can diagnose problems like crashes, freezes, and improper functioning. The following article will explain best methods to find the solution you need.

Windows keeps a log of any important events that happen on your PC. Most of these files contain detailed information about the program's actions, changes in settings, and many other everyday activities. The log also records when things weren't working as they should, which becomes useful when troubleshooting problems.

How to find log files through File Explorer

To see all log files stored on your PC, open File Explorer and select drive **C:** (or whatever your primary drive letter). Type *** .log** in the search box and press **Enter.** This will scan your entire hard drive for Windows log files and programs, which can take a few minutes.

There can be thousands of results across multiple directories, so filter the list to show only the most recent events. Click the **Date modified** button on the File Explorer toolbar and choose **Today, Yesterday** or **This week** .



Filter the list to show only the most recent events

Double-click the log file in plain text to open it in Notepad. Most log files contain technical data that only developers can understand, but you might see a simple English reference of the error you are experiencing, such

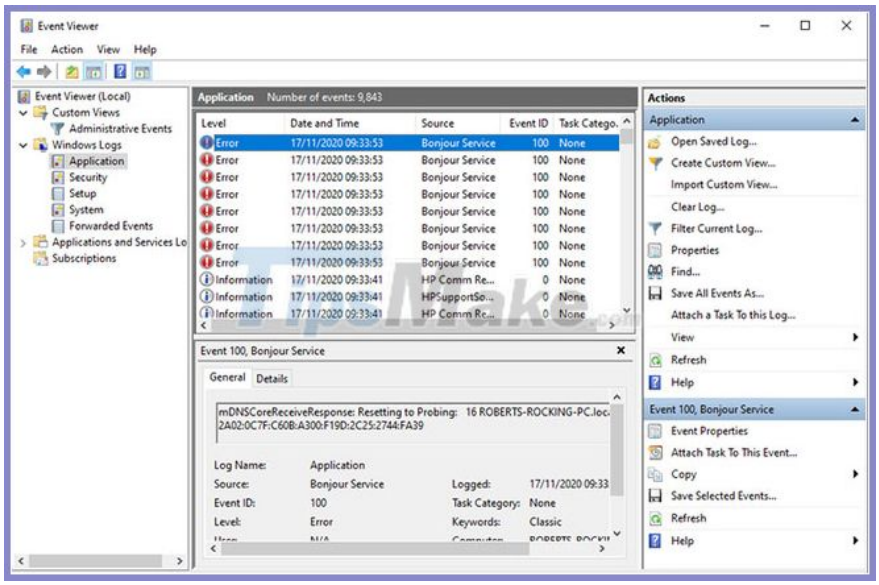
as missing files or values. incorrect.

How to check the log in Event Viewer

The built-in Event Viewer in Windows allows you to browse the logs of all events on your computer, even when something goes wrong. If program crashes, operation fails, or you have activated a blue screen of death, Event Viewer can help you diagnose the problem.

Launch Event Viewer by typing **event** in the Start menu search bar and clicking on **Event Viewer** . Important information is stored in **Windows Logs** , so double-click that option in the tree to open its subfolders.

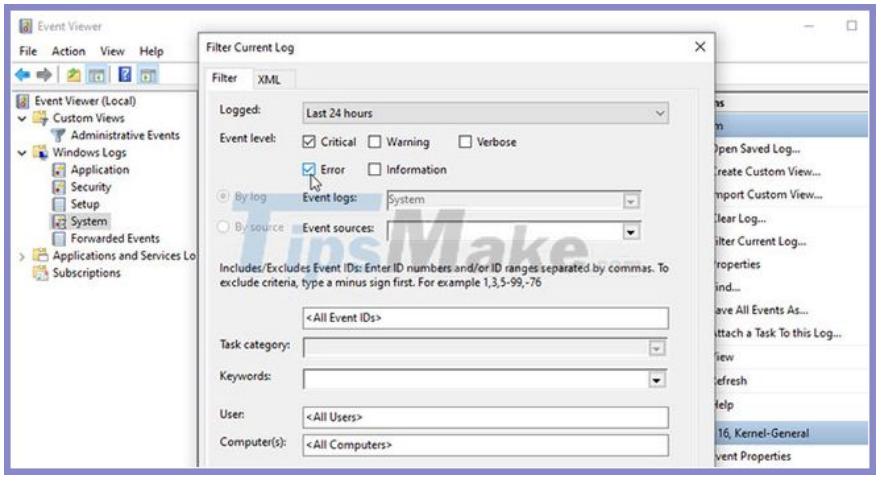
If the problem is related to a program or service, click **Application** . If it is related to Windows itself, such as boot or shutdown error, click on **System.** Either option will show you a long list of records, including the date and time of the events that happened.



A long list of records will be displayed

Look for logs marked with **Warning** (which usually just means something undesirable has happened), **Error** (something failed), or **Critical** (something urgent needs addressing). To help you navigate through the entire list, click the **View** menu and choose **Sort By> Level** to place the problem-related logs at the top.

Alternatively, to filter the logs by date and severity, click **Filter Current Log** in the **Actions** section **.** Choose an option from the **Logged** menu , such as **Last 24 hours** or **Last seven days** . Check the **Error** and **Critical** boxes , and then click **OK.**

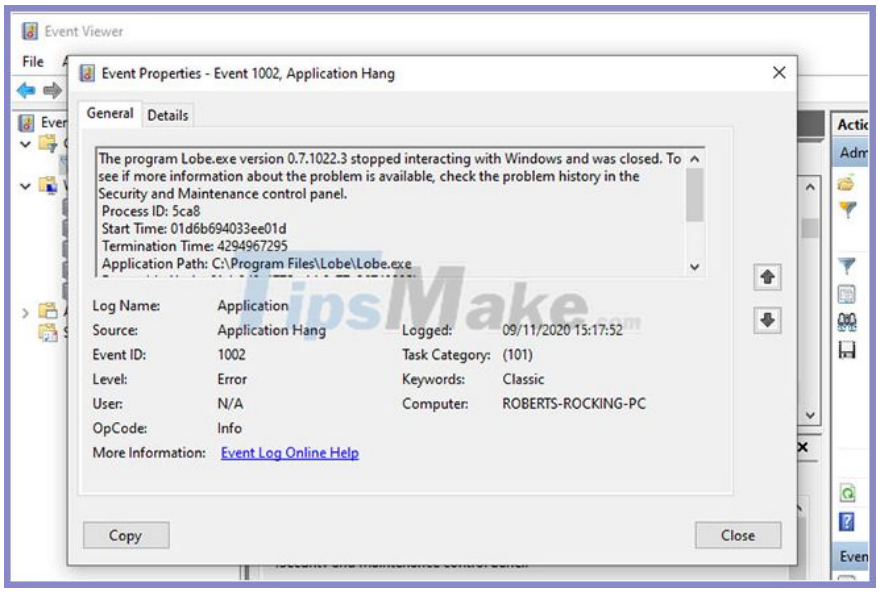


Filter logs by date and severity

You can also click **Custom Views> Administrative Events** in the directory tree to see all warnings, errors, and important events across all types of logs. This list does not include an Information log of successful activities, so browsing is faster.

To save even more time, you can search for log files for a specific Windows program or feature. Click **Find** in the **Actions** list , enter the name of the tool, and continue to click **Find Next** to explore related logs.

Select a log to display event details in the section below. Double-click the log to see more information in the **Event Properties** window . The log summary can indicate the cause of the problem, but you're more likely to need to figure this out yourself.



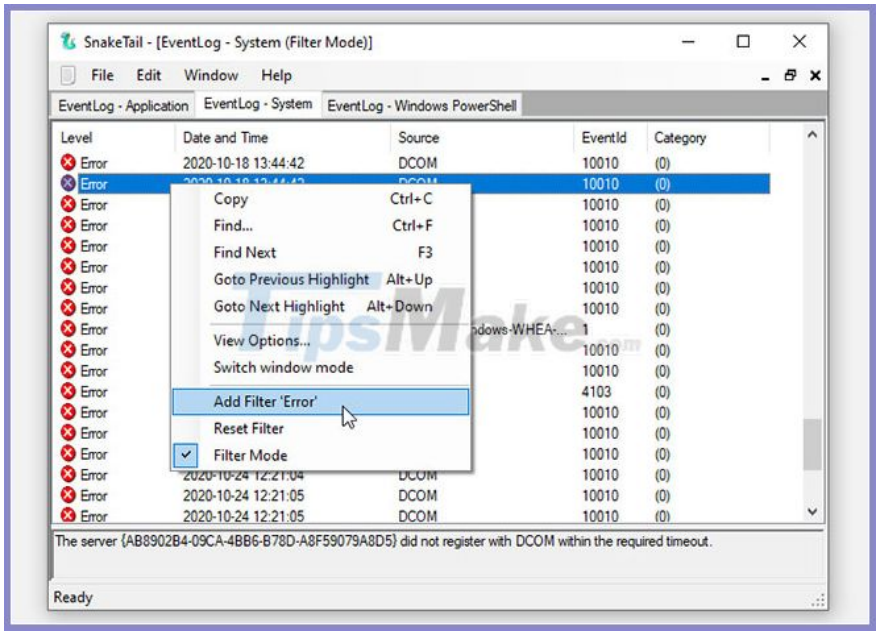
The log summary can indicate the cause of the problem

How to browse diaries using SnakeTail

Event Viewer can be slow and complicated to navigate, unless you know exactly what you're looking for. To make browsing event logs faster and simpler, you can download, extract and run the free SnakeTail program. You don't need to install it. Just double-click the file to run it once the download is complete.

1. Download SnakeTail for Windows 10 (Free)

Go to **File> Open EventLog** and choose the type of log to open, such as **Application** or **System.** SnakeTail has a tabbed interface, so you can view multiple log lists at the same time.

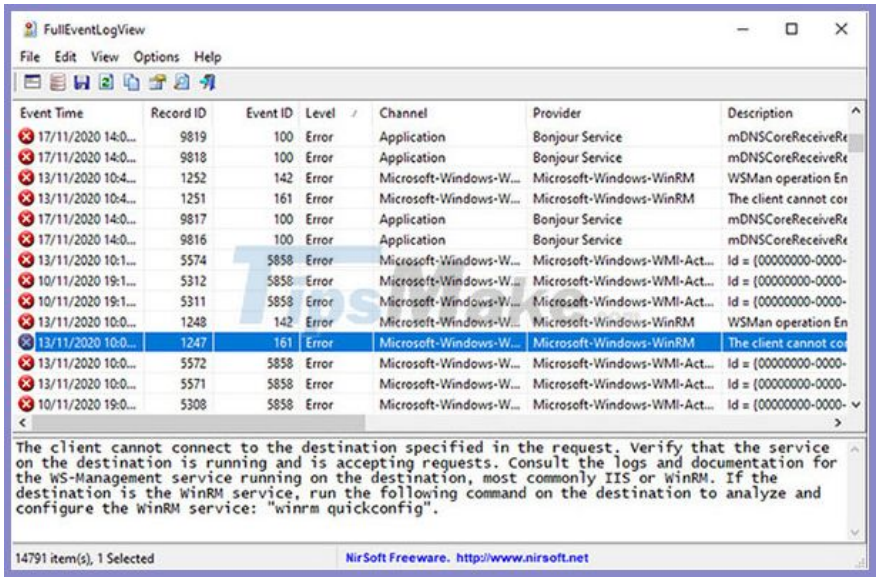


Besides loading logs instantly, SnakeTail makes it easy to filter them. Right click on a level (such as **Error**), date or source and choose **Add Filter** to show only relevant results. Select an event to see details in the section below.

How to browse logs with FullEvenLogView

FullEventLogView from NirSoft is also worth a look. This free tool lists all of your logs in one simple interface, allowing you to sort your data by criteria, including event times, levels, vendors, and keywords.

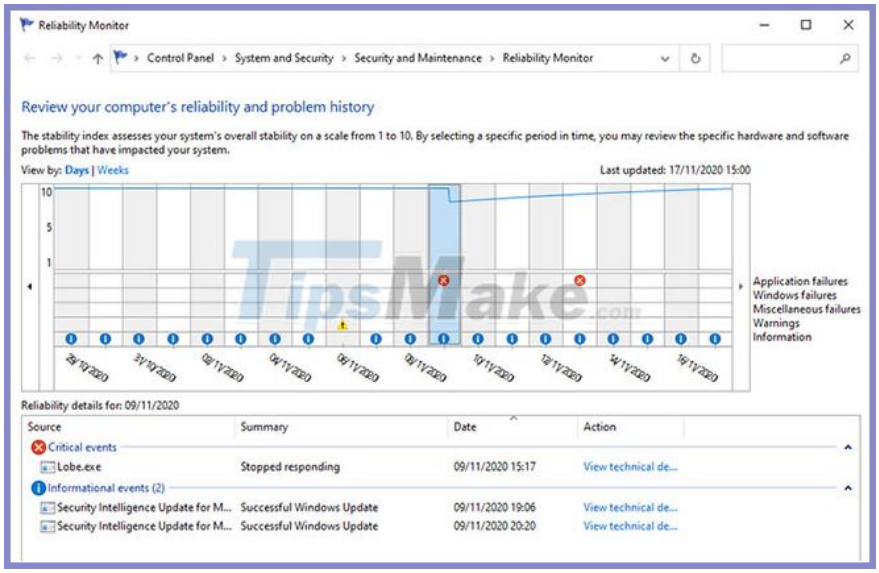
Scroll to the bottom of the page to find download links. When the download is complete, run the program.



How to view the log in Reliability Monitor

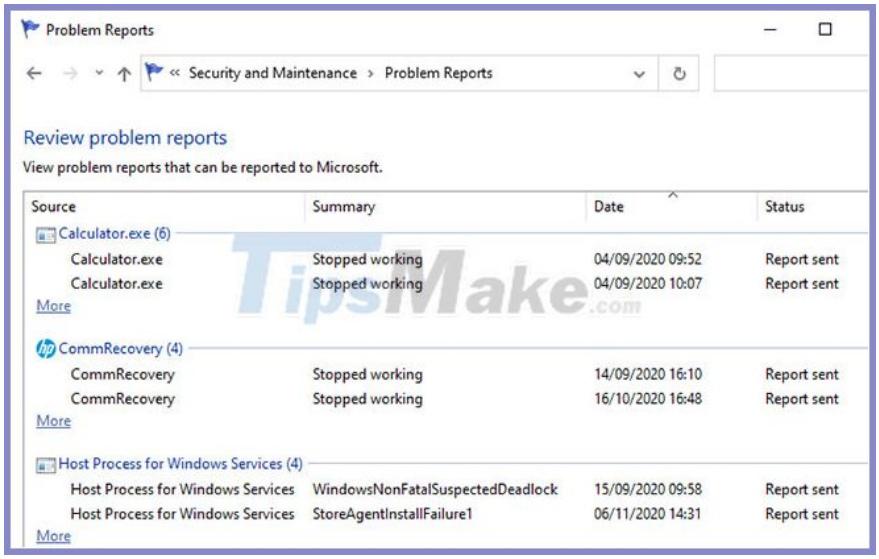
Instead of scrolling through long log lists, you can use the reliable Windows built-in Reliability Monitor to visually browse important logs. This makes it easy to pinpoint when an error or critical event occurred, and why.

The fastest way to access the Reliability Monitor is to enter **reliability** into the Start menu's search bar and select **View reliability history** . You can browse through the Reliability's graph by day or week, and click the arrows on either side to scroll back and forth over time.



Find the red error slash and the yellow warning triangle, and then click a result to see the summary in the box below. Reliability Monitor only highlights hardware and software issues that have affected system stability, so you won't see as many events as in Event Viewer.

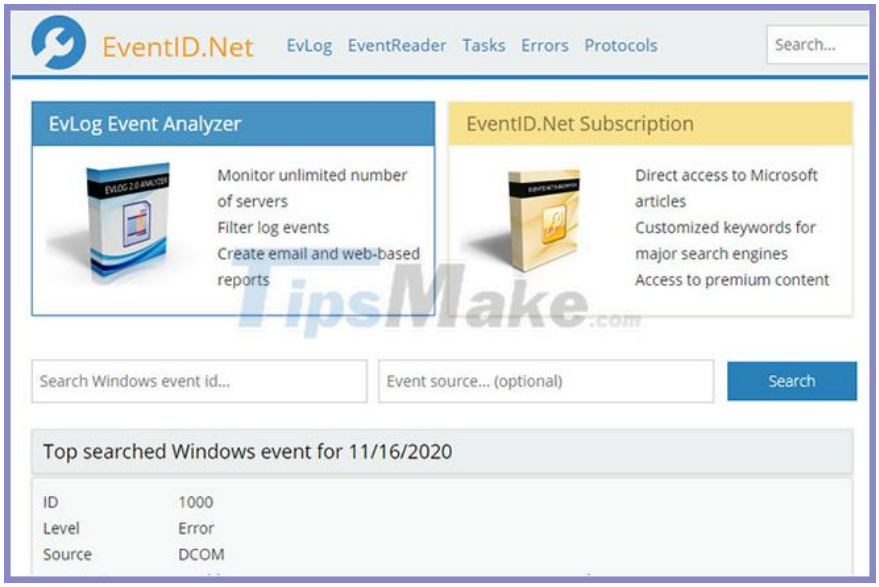
Click **View technical details** to read an explanation of the problem. You can also choose **View all problem reports** (which the Reliability Monitor calls the log) to go through all the stability issues your PC has recently had.



Solve specific problems with log file

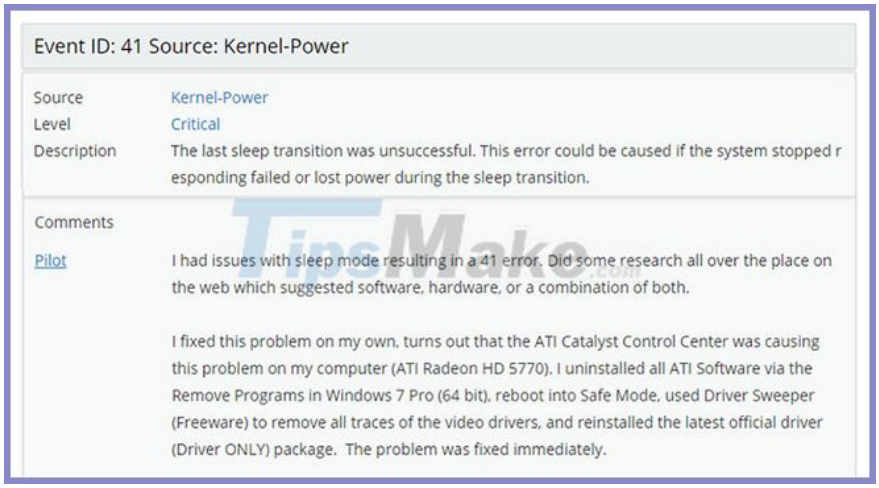
While Event Viewer tells you what caused the error or critical event on your PC, its log doesn't help you fix the problem. Clicking the **Event Log Online Help link** in the **Event Properties** window only sends the log to Microsoft and opens the Microsoft Support page (on the home page, not a related post).

Fortunately, there is help from a great website called **EventID.Net.** This tool not only explains what specific Windows events really mean, but also reveals how serious (or not) they are and provides the troubleshooting advice you need.



Copy and paste the log event ID number from the Event Viewer (or SnakeTrail) into the search box on the EventID.Net home page, along with the Source (the source of the program or service). For example, if you've encountered a blue screen of death (BSoD) issue, the event ID is usually 41, but the source will be different (Kernel-Power is common).

The website's search engine will return relevant events, with helpful comments from the EventID.Net community. As for the BSoD error, there are a number of possible causes and solutions, all of which are clearly explained.



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At the time of writing, the EventID.Net extension database includes 11,588 Windows event IDs and 638 event sources, with 19,234 comments. The site is free to use, but some features, such as recording event descriptions in plain English, require a paid subscription.

If EventID.Net doesn't have help or the log doesn't provide an ID number, it's best to copy and paste the event summary into Google or the Microsoft Community site. Someone may have encountered the same problem.