Outdated Drivers Are Slowing Down Your Windows PC: What to Do?

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Old drivers appear and disappear (Windows Update is not enough)

Windows Update handles the basics, including security patches, feature updates, and providing a basic and essential set of device drivers. However, it's far from comprehensive when it comes to driver management.

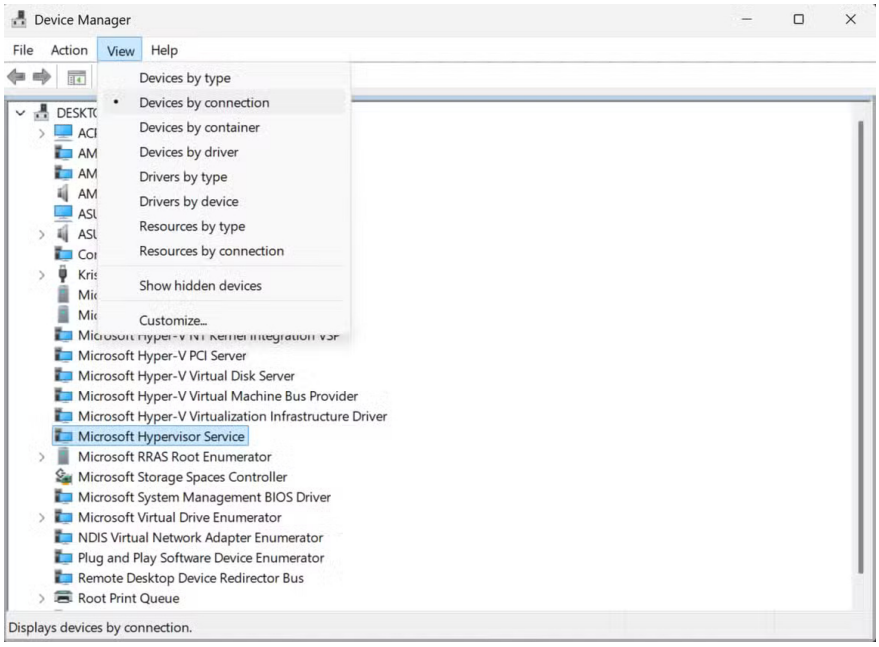
Microsoft's update system prioritizes stability over performance, often sticking with older, tested drivers instead of installing the latest versions. This can result in your graphics card, network adapter, or other hardware running outdated drivers that have been around for months.

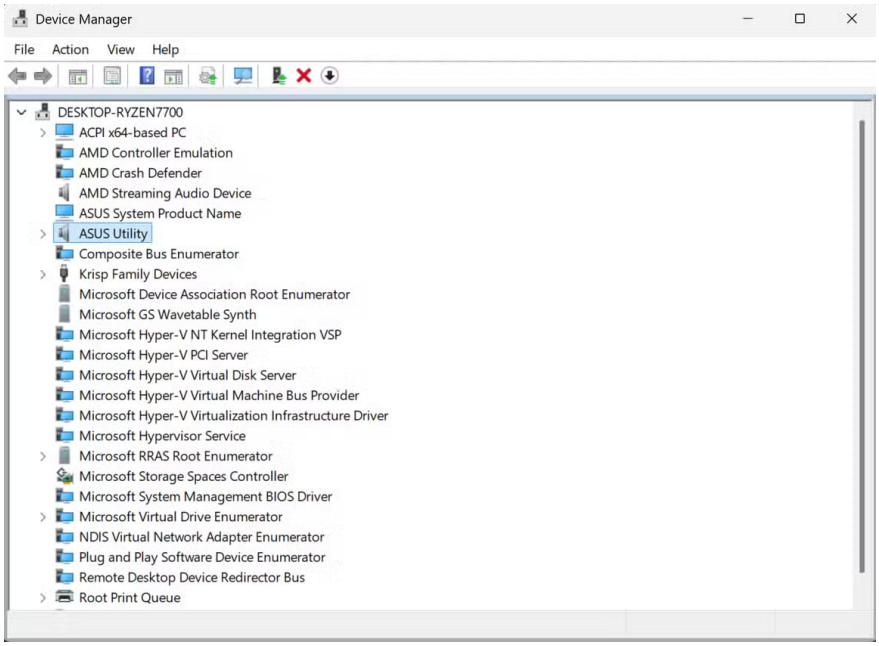
Some manufacturers regularly release driver updates, especially for graphics cards and network adapters. These updates often include performance improvements, bug fixes, and compatibility improvements that Windows Update misses. So if you want to properly update your graphics drivers, you'll need to download the optimized versions from Nvidia or AMD, rather than Microsoft's automated system.

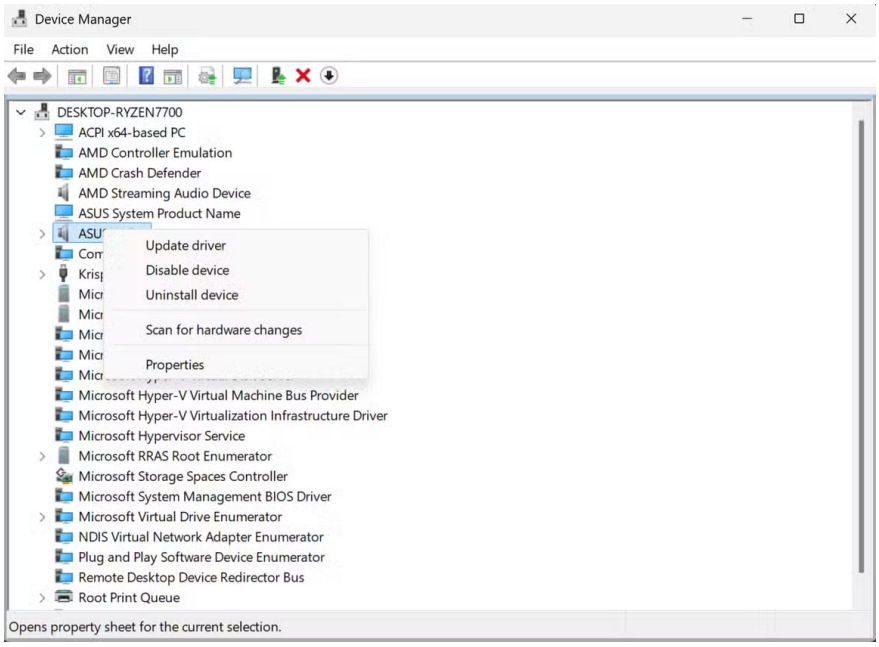
Windows driver update attempts can also sometimes fail when updating drivers. You may encounter driver loading errors that prevent newer versions from installing, leaving you stuck with outdated software that degrades system performance over time.

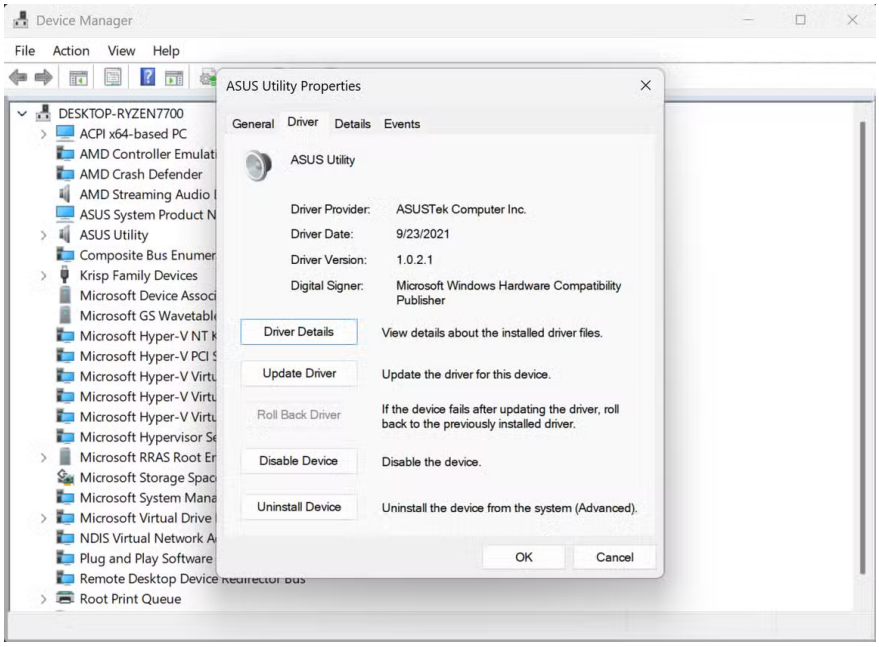
While Windows Device Manager displays basic driver information, its view options show more information. Here's how to access detailed information:

1. Press **Windows + X** and select **Device Manager** .
2. Click **View** on the menu bar and select **Devices by connection** instead of the default category view.
3. Right-click on any device and select **Properties** .
4. Navigate to the **Driver** tab to see the version number, date, and digital signature.


Device Manager
File
Action
View
Help
Devices by type
Devices by connection
Devices by container
Devices by driver
Drivers by type
Drivers by device
Resources by type
Resources by connection
Show hidden devices
Customize...
Microsoft Hyper-V PCI Server
Microsoft Hyper-V Virtual Disk Server
Microsoft Hyper-V Virtual Machine Bus Provider
Microsoft Hyper-V Virtualization Infrastructure Driver
Microsoft Hypervisor Service
Microsoft RRAS Root Enumerator
Microsoft Storage Spaces Controller
Microsoft System Management BIOS Driver
Microsoft Virtual Drive Enumerator
NDIS Virtual Network Adapter Enumerator
Plug and Play Software Device Enumerator
Remote Desktop Device Redirector Bus
Root Print Queue
Displays devices by connection.


Device Manager
File
Action
View
Help
DESKTOP-RYZEN7700
ACPI x64-based PC
AMD Controller Emulation
AMD Crash Defender
AMD Streaming Audio Device
ASUS System Product Name
ASUS Utility
Composite Bus Enumerator
Krisp Family Devices
Microsoft Device Association Root Enumerator
Microsoft GS Wavetable Synth
Microsoft Hyper-V NT Kernel Integration VSP
Microsoft Hyper-V PCI Server
Microsoft Hyper-V Virtual Disk Server
Microsoft Hyper-V Virtual Machine Bus Provider
Microsoft Hyper-V Virtualization Infrastructure Driver
Microsoft Hypervisor Service
Microsoft RRAS Root Enumerator
Microsoft Storage Spaces Controller
Microsoft System Management BIOS Driver
Microsoft Virtual Drive Enumerator
NDIS Virtual Network Adapter Enumerator
Plug and Play Software Device Enumerator
Remote Desktop Device Redirector Bus
Root Print Queue





This view shows exactly how the hardware connects to the motherboard and where bottlenecks might occur.

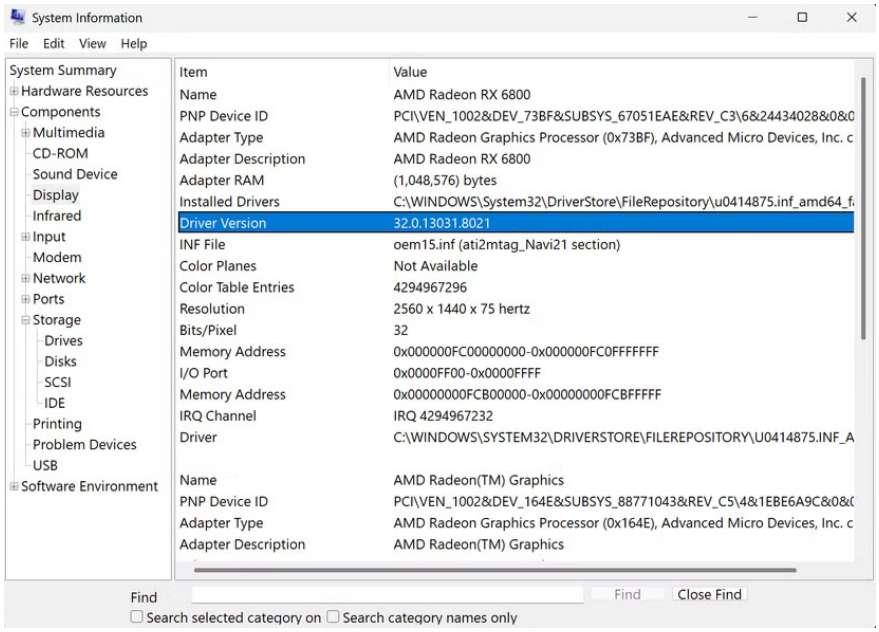
Tools to find hidden driver problems

Finding a problematic driver isn't as simple as checking Device Manager.

System Information Reveals Everything

Windows' built-in System Information tool (msinfo32) provides comprehensive driver details that Device Manager may not display. Follow these steps to check the details:

1. Press **Windows + R** and type **msinfo32.**
2. Navigate to **Components** in the left panel.
3. Expand each category to see all installed drivers with exact version numbers.
4. Check the **Driver Date** and **Version** columns for outdated entries.

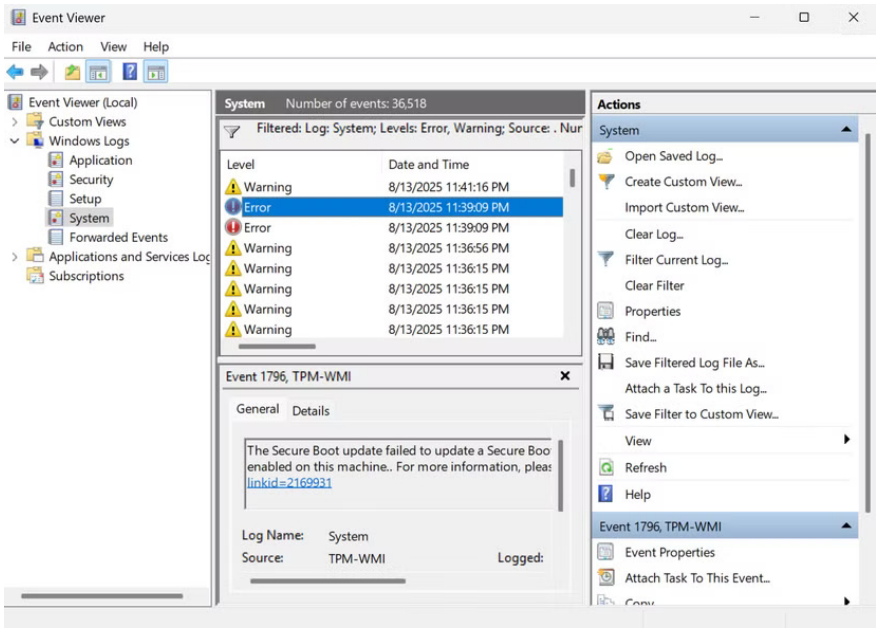


This tool helped detect that the network adapter was using the generic Microsoft driver instead of the latest Realtek version.

Event Viewer tells the real story

Event Viewer logs many driver-related errors and warnings, although some driver problems may not generate obvious events. Here's how to check the event log:

1. Press **Windows + X** and select **Event Viewer** .
2. Navigate to **Windows Logs** , then to **System** .
3. Click **Filter Current Log** in the right panel.
4. Select the **Error** and **Warning** check boxes , and then click **OK** .
5. Look for events from sources like **Kernel-PnP** or specific hardware manufacturers.

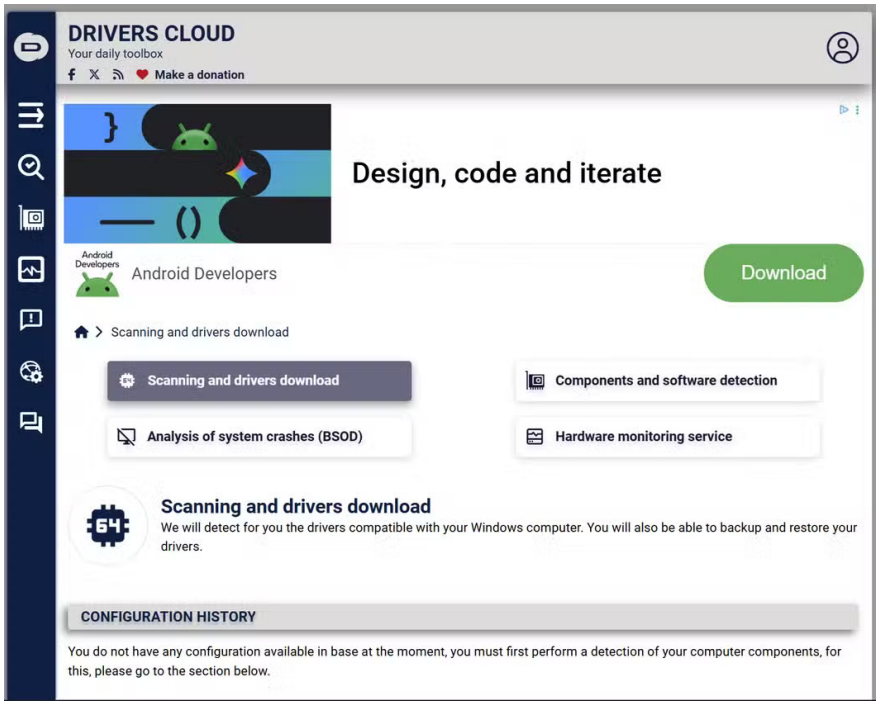


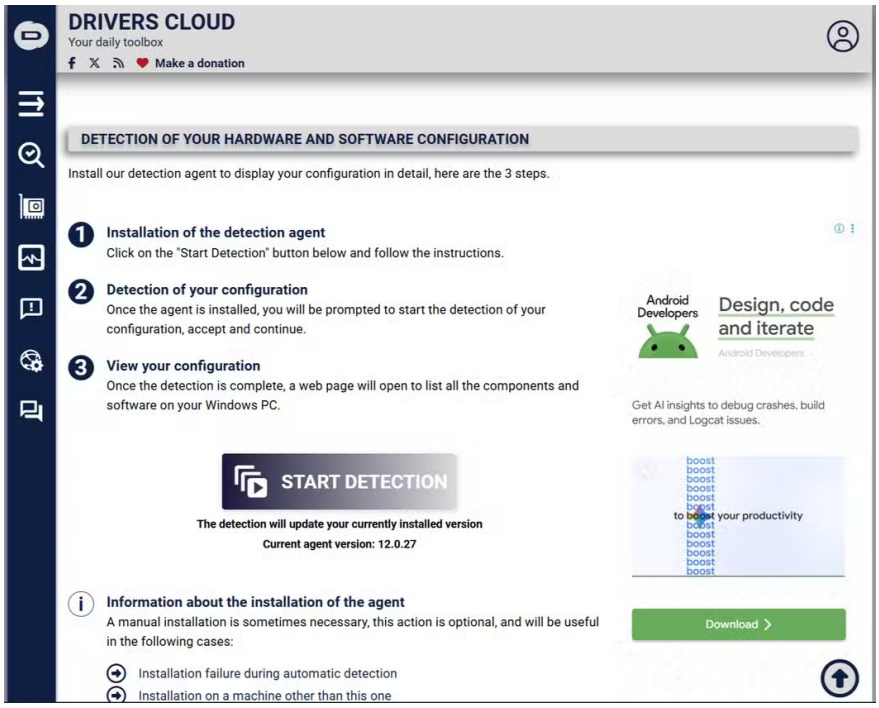
These errors often reveal drivers that are not loading properly or causing system instability.

Driver Cloud: Your favorite scanning tool

Manual testing works for some devices, but you can also use third-party tools. People trust Drivers Cloud for thorough driver analysis:

1. Navigate to the Drivers Cloud website and select **Scanning and drivers download** .
2. Scroll down and click **Start Detection** .
3. Allow the agent to install on your computer (required for hardware detection).
4. After installing the agent, click **Link my computer** on the browser page.
5. Click **Start detection** and review the scan results showing outdated drivers.
6. Download official drivers directly from the manufacturer links provided.


DRIVERS CLOUD
Your daily toolbox
Make a donation
Design, code and iterate
Android Developers
Download
Scanning and drivers download
Scanning and drivers download
Components and software detection
Analysis of system crashes (BSOD)
Hardware monitoring service
Scanning and drivers download
We will detect for you the drivers compatible with your Windows computer. You will also be able to backup and restore your drivers.
CONFIGURATION HISTORY
You do not have any configuration available in base at the moment, you must first perform a detection of your computer components, for this, please go to the section below.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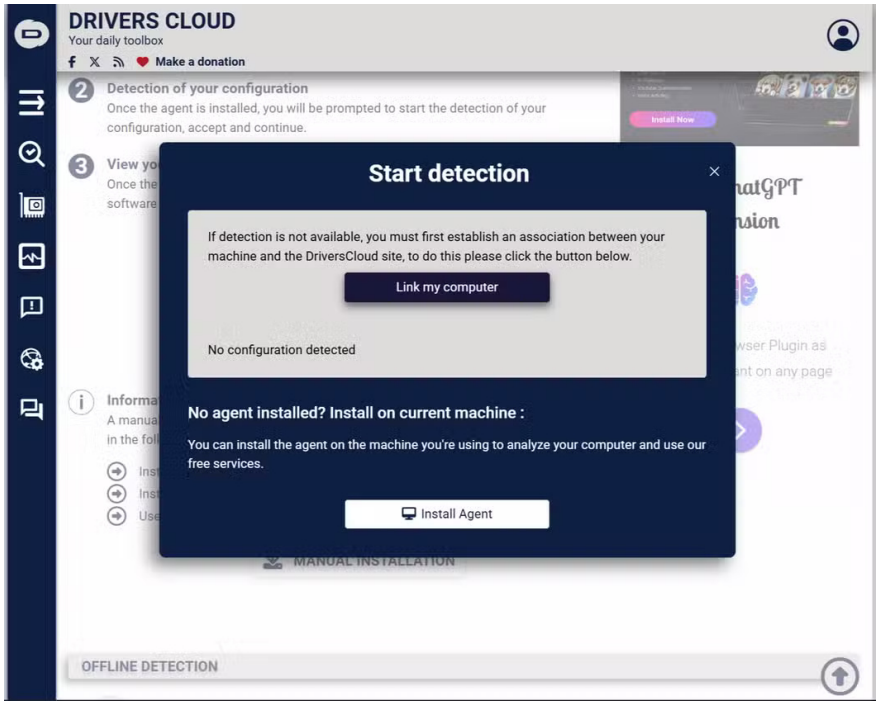
DETECTION OF YOUR HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE CONFIGURATION
Install our detection agent to display your configuration in detail, here are the 3 steps.
1 Installation of the detection agent
Click on the "Start Detection" button below and follow the instructions.
2 Detection of your configuration
Once the agent is installed, you will be prompted to start the detection of your configuration, accept and continue.
3 View your configuration
Once the detection is complete, a web page will open to list all the components and software on your Windows PC.
Android Developers
Design, code and iterate
Android Developers
Get AI insights to debug crashes, build errors, and Logcat issues.
START DETECTION
The detection will update your currently installed version
Current agent version: 12.0.27
boost
to boost your productivity
Information about the installation of the agent
A manual installation is sometimes necessary, this action is optional, and will be useful in the following cases:
Download
Installation failure during automatic detection
Installation on a machine other than this one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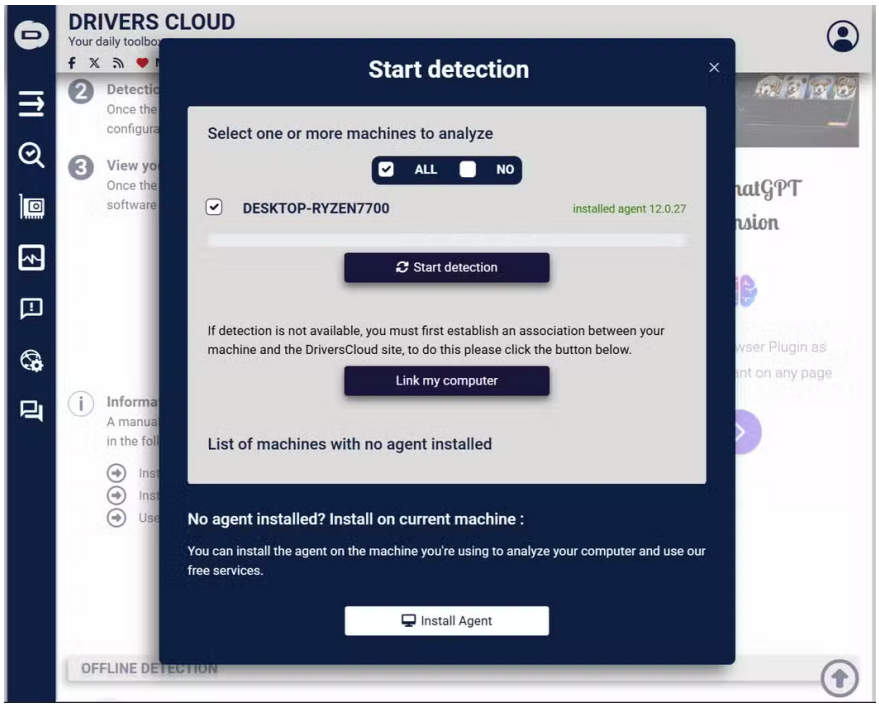
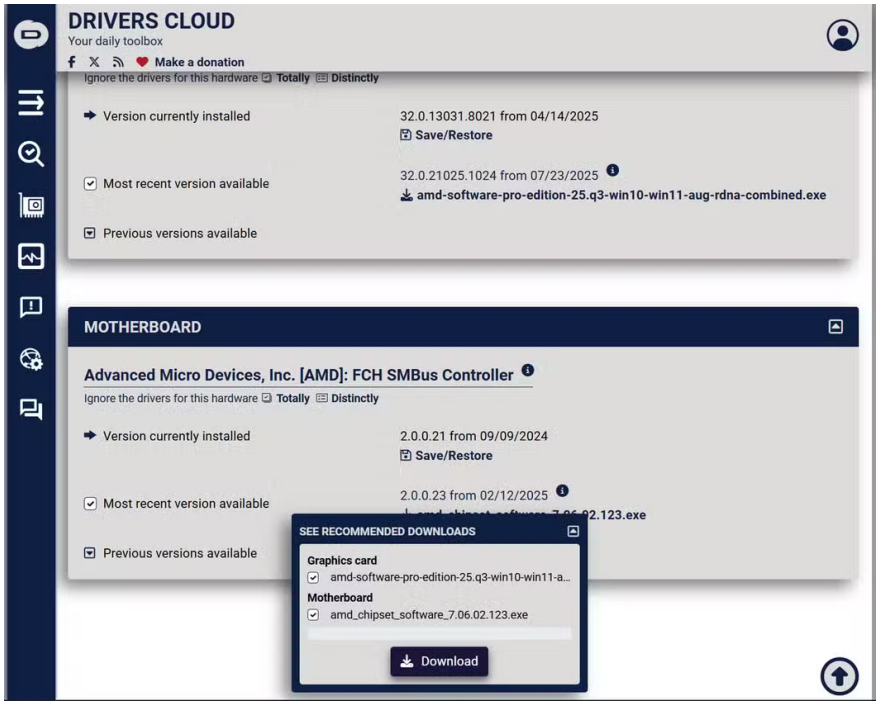
Make a donation
Detection of your configuration
Once the agent is installed, you will be prompted to start the detection of your configuration, accept and continue.
Start detection
If detection is not available, you must first establish an association between your machine and the DriversCloud site, to do this please click the button below.
Link my computer
No configuration detected
No agent installed? Install on current machine :
You can install the agent on the machine you're using to analyze your computer and use our free services.
Install Agent
MANUAL INSTALLATION
OFFLINE DETECTION


DRIVERS CLOUD
Start detection
Select one or more machines to analyze
ALL
NO
DESKTOP-RYZEN7700
installed agent 12.0.27
Start detection
If detection is not available, you must first establish an association between your machine and the DriversCloud site, to do this please click the button below.
Link my computer
List of machines with no agent installed
No agent installed? Install on current machine :
You can install the agent on the machine you're using to analyze your computer and use our free services.
Install Agent
OFFLINE DETECTION



Drivers Cloud scans your entire system and compares installed drivers against a huge database of manufacturer releases. It takes a manufacturer-specific approach – instead of generic driver packages, it provides official drivers directly from hardware manufacturers like NVIDIA, AMD, Intel, and Realtek.

The tool also includes hardware monitoring services and crash analysis features, which are useful for diagnosing whether a driver issue is causing system instability or blue screen errors.

Manufacturer's utilities work best

Brand-specific tools often provide the most reliable driver updates. NVIDIA GeForce Experience , AMD Adrenalin , and Intel Driver & Support Assistant automatically detect compatible hardware and install drivers optimized for performance profiles.

These utilities often offer additional features like automatic update scheduling, restore options, and performance monitoring that regular scanners, of course, can't match.

The Safe Way to Update a Problematic Driver

Before updating your drivers, create a system restore point or make sure you have a recent backup. This single step can save you from having to troubleshoot if something goes wrong. Name your system restore point descriptively, including the driver version, so you can easily identify it later. This backup will record your driver configuration and current system state.

If possible, always try to download drivers exclusively from the manufacturer's website, as some untrusted third-party driver websites may bundle malware with legitimate files or provide outdated versions.

Manufacturer websites often offer multiple versions of drivers. Choose the latest stable release over a beta version unless you really need the new features. Beta drivers can cause instability that isn't worth the performance improvement.

Updating multiple drivers at once makes troubleshooting nearly impossible when problems arise, so it's best to install drivers one at a time and reboot after each installation to isolate potential conflicts.