

How to troubleshoot damaged projects in Microsoft Project

This article was previously published under Q318438

Article ID : 318438
Last Review : November 30, 2004
Revision : 5.0

IN THIS TASK

- [INTRODUCTION](#)
 - [How to determine whether project is damaged](#)
 - [Projects that behave in unexpected ways](#)
 - [Projects that do not open](#)
 - [Method 1: Move the projects](#)
 - [Method 2: Insert the project to a new project](#)
 - [Method 3: Examine the file properties](#)
 - [Determine whether the behavior is task-specific, file-specific, or view-specific](#)
 - [Determine whether the behavior is task-specific](#)
 - [Determine whether the behavior is file-specific](#)
 - [Determine whether the behavior is view-specific](#)
 - [How to repair a damaged project](#)
 - [If you are running Microsoft Project 2002 or later versions, save the project in XML format \(.xml file\)](#)
 - [If you are running Microsoft Project 2000 or later versions, save the project as a project database \(.mpd file\)](#)
 - [If you are running Microsoft Project 98 or earlier, save the project in Microsoft Project Export format \(.mpx\)](#)
 - [If you are running Microsoft Project 98 or later versions, save the project as a Microsoft Excel workbook \(.xls file\)](#)
 - [Map selective data from the project](#)
- [MORE INFORMATION](#)

SUMMARY

This article discusses methods that you can use to help you determine whether a project in Microsoft Project is damaged. This article also contains information about methods that you can use try to repair the damaged project or to recover data from the damaged project. To help you determine whether a project is damaged, you can turn off calculations, move the project, or insert the project to another project. You can also try to determine whether the issue is specific to a particular task, to a particular file, or to a particular view. To repair the project or to recover data from the project, you can try to

save the project in a different file format.

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses how to determine whether a project in Microsoft Project is damaged, and it contains information about how to repair a damaged project.

[back to the top](#)

How to determine whether a project is damaged

If an existing project stops responding or behaves differently from a new project, determine whether the project is actually damaged before you use any one of the troubleshooting methods that are discussed in this article.

For example, you start Microsoft Project 2002, and then you try to save a project in Microsoft Project 98 format. During the save operation, Microsoft Project 2002 stops responding, and you receive an error message. You experience the same symptoms every time that you try to save a project in Microsoft Project 98 format. Is the project damaged?

Search the Microsoft Knowledge Base for information that may help you troubleshoot the issue. For example, after you investigate the issue that you are experiencing, you may determine that the error message that you are receiving is a known issue that is documented in an article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base. To search for articles in the Microsoft Knowledge Base, visit the following Microsoft Web site:

<http://support.microsoft.com/search>

[back to the top](#)

Projects that behave in unexpected ways

A project that contains tasks that are scheduled in an illogical way may be damaged, or a project that contains tasks are not scheduled at all may be damaged. Make sure that you troubleshoot the project before you assume that the project is damaged. For additional information, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[175457](#) Troubleshooting why tasks are not scheduled as expected

[back to the top](#)

Projects that do not open

Microsoft Project stops responding, and you receive an error message when you open one particular project. However, you can open other projects correctly. In this situation, the one particular project that you cannot open may be damaged. Use the following methods to try to open the project.

[back to the top](#)

Method 1: Insert the project to a new project

Sometimes, the default view or the view that is active during the last save operation may be damaged. When this behavior occurs, Microsoft Project cannot open the project correctly. To open the project in a new view, follow these steps:

1. Start Microsoft Project, and then open a new, blank project.

2. On the **Insert** menu, click **Project**.
3. Locate the damaged project that you want to insert, click it, and then click to clear the **Link to project** check box.
4. Click **Insert**.

Microsoft Project inserts the project as new data to the new project.

Although Microsoft Project recovers all data from the project, all formatting is lost. A copy of the summary tasks from the damaged project is displayed in row 1.

[back to the top](#)

Method 2: Turn off calculations

Sometimes, an incorrect calculation may cause the project to stop responding. To turn off calculations, follow these steps:

1. Start Microsoft Project, and then open a new project.
2. On the **Tools** menu, click **Options**.
3. Click the **Calculation** tab. Under **Calculation options for Microsoft Project**, click **Manual**, and then click **OK**.
4. On the **File** menu, click **Open**. Locate, the project that you want to open, click it, and then click **Open**.

[back to the top](#)

Method 3: Move the project

If the project is stored on a network server or on a floppy disk, use Windows Explorer to copy the project to the desktop on your local computer. If the project is already stored on your local computer, copy the project to another computer.

If you can open the project successfully from the new location, you can repair any remaining damage in the project by using the steps in the [How to repair a damaged project](#) section.

Determine whether the behavior is task specific, file-specific, or view-specific

Determine whether the behavior is limited to a single task, a single project, or a single view in a project.

[back to the top](#)

Determine whether the behavior is task-specific

To determine whether the behavior is specific to one task, use one of the following methods:

- If the task is a child task to a summary task, outdent the task, and then indent the task. After you do this, test to see if the issue is resolved.
- Insert a new task below the task that demonstrates incorrect behavior, and then re-create the task. After you do this, test to see if the issue is resolved. If the issue persists after you create a new task, investigate issues with the project file. If the issue is resolved after you create the new task, keep the new task, and then delete the task where you experienced the incorrect behavior.

[back to the top](#)

Determine whether the behavior is file-specific

To determine whether the behavior is specific to one file, use one of the following methods:

- Open an existing project , and then try to reproduce the behavior.
- Create a new project, and then try to reproduce the behavior.

[back to the top](#)

Determine whether the behavior is view-specific

To determine whether the behavior is specific to one view:

1. On the **View** menu, click **More Views**. In the **More Views** dialog box, click a view that is similar to the one that you are using, and then click **Apply**. For example, if you experience a problem in the Gantt Chart, click **Tracking Gantt** in the **More Views** dialog box.

Test to see whether the issue is resolved. If the issue is resolved, go to step 2:

2. Replace the view with a new copy of the Gantt Chart view from the Global.mpt file. To do this:

Note This example assumes that you are replacing the Gantt Chart view.

- a. On the **Tools** menu, click **Organizer**.
- b. Click the **Views** tab in the **Organizer** dialog box, and then in the **ProjectName** box, click **Gantt Chart**, and then click **Rename**.
- c. In the **Rename** dialog box, type **Old Gantt Chart**, and then click **OK**.
- d. Close the **Organizer** dialog box.
- e. On the **View** menu, click **Gantt Chart** to apply a new copy of the Gantt Chart view from the Global.mpt file.

If you determine that the symptoms that you experience only occurs in one project, and in all views, follow the steps in the [How to repair a damaged project](#) section.

[back to the top](#)

How to repair a damaged project

There are several methods that you can use to repair and recover the data in a damaged project. Use the following methods in the order that they are presented, depending on the version of Microsoft Project that you are running. Note that each method subsequently removes more attributes from the project. After you follow the steps in each method, test to see whether the issue persists. If the issue is resolved, you do not have to follow the remaining steps in this article. If the issue persists, go to the next method.

Note We do not guarantee that the following methods can recover all usable data from a damaged project. If you can recover data or repair the project, some information in the project may be missing or may not be displayed as expected.

[back to the top](#)

If you are running Microsoft Project 2002 or later versions, save the project in XML format (.xml file)

If you are using Microsoft Project 2002 or later versions, save the project in XML format. To do this:

1. Start Microsoft Project, and then open your project.
2. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
3. In the **Save as type** box, click **XML Format (*.xml)**.
4. Specify a location where you want to save the project, specify a file name in the **File name** box, and then click **Save**.
5. On the **File** menu, click **Close**.
6. On the **File** menu, click **Open**.
7. Locate, and then click the .xml file that you saved in step 4, and then click **Open**.

Note Depending on the size of your project, it may take longer than expected to open the XML file that you saved.

[back to the top](#)

If you are running Microsoft Project 2000 or later versions, save the project as a project database (.mpd file)

If you are running Microsoft Project 2000 or later versions, save the project as a project database (.mpd file). This method preserves timephased data and formatting, where it is possible.

1. Start Microsoft Project, and then open your project.
2. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
3. In the **Save as type** box, click **Project Database (*.mpd)**.
4. Specify a location where you want to save the project, specify a file name in the **File name** box, and then click **Save**.
5. On the **File** menu, click **Close**.
6. On the **File** menu, click **Open**.
7. Locate, and then click select the project that you saved in step 4, and then click **Open**.

Note the following scenario:

1. You open the .mpd file in Microsoft Access, change the value of the PROJ_EXT_EDITED field in the MSP_PROJECTS table in the database, and then save the .mpd file.
2. You open the .mpd file in Microsoft Project.

In this situation, Microsoft Project examines the integrity of the data in the database. Microsoft Project examines the data in the tables and tries to determine whether the data is valid.

[back to the top](#)

If you are running Microsoft Project 98 or earlier, save the project in Microsoft Project Export format (.mpx)

When you save a project in Microsoft Project Export (.mpx) format, Microsoft Project only saves the fields that are included in the Export tables of the Task Sheet view and Resource Sheet view. Additionally, all formatting, customization, and timephased data is lost.

1. Start Microsoft Project, and then open your project
2. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
3. In the **Save As** dialog box, click **MPX 4.0 (*.mpx)** in the **Save as type** box, and then click **Save**.
4. On the **File** menu, click **Close**.
5. On the **File** menu, click **Open**.
6. In the **Open** dialog box, click **MPX (*.mpx)** in the **Files of type** list, and then click **Open**.

[back to the top](#)

If you are running Microsoft Project 98 or later versions, save the project as a Microsoft Excel workbook (.xls file)

If you are running Microsoft Project 98 or later versions, save the project as an Excel workbook (.xls file). When you save the project as an Excel workbook, you can specify whether you want to save tasks, resources, and assignments. If you select all three options, four worksheets are created.

Open the Excel workbook file, and then map the three worksheets, Task_table, Resource_table, and Assignment_table, to a new project. If the issue persists after you map the three tables to a new project, open the Excel workbook, and then map only the Task_table and the Resource_table to a new project. Test to see whether the issue is resolved. If the issue is resolved, manually enter the assignment information. If the issue persists, open the Excel workbook, map only the Task_table to a new project, and then test to see whether the issue is resolved. If the issue is resolved, manually enter the resource and assignment information.

1. Start Microsoft Project, and then open your project.
2. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
3. In the **Save as type** box, click **Microsoft Excel Workbook (*.xls)**.
4. Specify a location where you want to save the project, specify a file name in the **File name** box, and then click **Save**. The Export Wizard starts.
5. Click **Next**, click **A full project**, and then click **Next**.
6. Click **Finish**.
7. Test the project to see whether the issue persists. If the issue is resolved, you do not have to follow the remaining steps in this article. If the issue persists, go to step 8.
8. Locate, and then select the Excel workbook that you saved in step 4, and then click **Open**. The Export Wizard starts.
9. Click **Next**, click **Only selected data**, and then click **Next**.
10. Click **New map**, and then click **Next**.
11. Click **As a new project**, and then click **Next**.
12. Click to select the **Tasks** check box and the **Resources** check box, and then click **Next**.
13. Click **Next**, click **Next**, and then click **Finish**.
14. Test to see whether the issue persists. If the issue is resolved, you do not have to follow the remaining steps in this article. If the issue persists, go to step 15.
15. Repeat step 8 through step 11.
- 16.

Click to select the **Tasks** check box, and then click **Next**.

17. Click **Next**, click **Next**, and then click **Finish**.

[back to the top](#)

Map selective data from the project

The process of mapping data from Microsoft Project preserves only raw data from Microsoft Project tables. All formatting, customization and timephased data is lost. For example, resource usage data and task usage data is not retained

Note Although the following steps specify mapping to a Microsoft Access database format, you can also map to a Microsoft Excel workbook format.

1. Start Microsoft Project, open your project , and then click **Save As** on the **File** menu.
2. In the **Save As** dialog box, click **Microsoft Access Database (*.mdb)** in the **Save as type** box, and then click **Save**.
3. In the **Save to Database** dialog box, click the **Selective Data** tab, and then click **New Map**. Note the name of the map that is displayed in the **Import/Export map name** box. You will use this name in later steps.
4. In the **Define Import/Export Map** dialog box, click to select the **Tasks** check box, the **Resources** check box, and the **Assignments** check box.
5. On the **Task Mapping** tab, click **Add All**.
6. Repeat step 5 on the **Resource Mapping** tab and the **Assignment Mapping** tab.
7. In the **Define Import/Export Map** dialog box, click **OK**. In the **Save to Database** dialog box, click **Save**.
8. On the **File** menu, click **Close**.
9. On the **File** menu, click **Open**.
10. In the **Open** dialog box, click **Microsoft Access Database (*.mdb)** in the **Files of type** list. Locate, and then click the database that you saved in step 3. Click **Open**.
11. In the **Open From Database** dialog box, under **Import/export map**, click the map that you created in step 3, and then click **Open**.

[back to the top](#)

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Microsoft Project, visit the following Microsoft Web site:

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-ca/assistance/CH790018101033.aspx>

[back to the top](#)

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Office Project Professional 2003
- Microsoft Office Project Standard 2003

- Microsoft Project 2002 Professional Edition
- Microsoft Project 2002 Standard Edition
- Microsoft Project 2000 Standard Edition
- Microsoft Project 98 Standard Edition

Keywords: kbtshoot kbinfo KB318438

©2005 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.