

Windows laptops & PCs | Advanced | 2 min read

Windows Update error codes: what to try safely

When an update fails, Windows shows a code beginning with 0x, such as **0x80070002** or **0x800f0922**. The numbers look scary, but the first fixes are similar for most of them, and none of them need you to touch the registry or anything risky.

What the codes often mean

- **0x80070002** or **0x80070003**: update files are missing or damaged.
- **0x80070005**: access denied, sometimes caused by security software.
- **0x800f0922**: often a lack of space on a small system area, or a VPN connection interfering.
- **0x8024...** codes: Windows could not talk to the update service, often an internet problem.
- **0x80070070**: the drive is full.

These are general guides and not guarantees.

Safe steps in order

1. Restart the PC and try again, plugged in to the mains.
2. Check you have at least 20 GB free on the **C:** drive. See our guide on freeing up space.
3. Unplug USB drives, docks and extra devices.
4. Disconnect any VPN, and make sure your date and time are correct.
5. Run the troubleshooter. Windows 11: **Settings, System, Troubleshoot, Other troubleshooters, Windows Update**. Windows 10: **Settings, Update & Security, Troubleshoot, Additional troubleshooters**.
6. Go to **Settings, Windows Update** and click **Check for updates**. Look at **Update history** to see what failed.

Do not

- Do not download "update fixer" programs from adverts.
- Do not turn off your security software.
- Do not interrupt an update that is installing.

Waiting can help

A fault at Microsoft's end sometimes clears in a day or two, so try again later.

Back up before more serious fixes

If the problem persists, repairs may involve system file checks or an in-place repair. Back up your files first.

When to get more help

Get in touch if the same code appears after the steps above, if the PC loops at start-up, or if the failing update is a security update on a PC that handles customer information. Send us a photo of the code and the name of the update.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.