

UNIT - VI

General troubleshooting tips for printers

By completing this module you will be able to understand and learn how to manage general printer problems, that we normally face.

It is not possible to describe all of the steps one might take to fix every make, model, and type of printer. However in many cases, following these simple set of procedures, and a logical approach may save your time or money.

1. Refer the User Manual

- Read the manual thoroughly and follow the steps to connect the printer to PC
 - In general, the printers are having connectivity with parallel port of PC and nowadays the USB connectivity is also available with the printer.
 - Also we can connect the printers in the network if they are coming with RJ 45 connectors.

2. Check the manufacturer's web site

- Suppose if you have missed somewhere the user manual of printer, you may access the concerned manufacturer's web site for the details of the printer.

3. Check the plug at Power outlet

- Ensure the printer is plugged into a live outlet. If it is plugged into a surge protector, make sure it is on.

4. What if the power is on but there is no print out?

- Make sure that the power is on and there is no error lights (LEDs) lit.
- If there are error lights, refer to the **user manual/manufacturer's web site**.
- You should hear the print mechanism initialize when power is applied and most printers have at least one light which will be illuminated when it is on.

5. Check whether it is online or not.

- Online means, most of the printers are connected directly to the PC. Please check whether the connectivity between PC and printer as per user manual or not.

6. In case it is beeping , try to find out the reason for it.

- Most printers will beep once or twice during or after initialization. If it beeps more than that or beeps constantly, it is an indication that something is wrong. Most of the printers will beep when out of paper or out of ink.

7. Check whether you are able to give a test-print.

- Most printers have a built-in diagnostics program which can be very useful for troubleshooting problems and test-printing without a computer. They are usually initiated by pressing a button or two while turning on the printer. Check your user manual.
- If the printer test-prints OK, you don't have any problem with print mechanism of the printer. Then you may check the connectivity of the printer.

8. Check whether it has ink or toner

- Check whether the ink or toner of the printer is there .
- In case it is there check if it is properly filled or not.
- Check if the heads of the toners are clean or not. One must have to clean them periodically.

9. Check whether it has enough paper for printing purpose

- Be sure the paper is installed correctly and there is enough of it. Most printers have a paper-out detector. On most dot matrix printers it is a photo diode. If form-fed paper is not aligned correctly (usually on the left side) the diode won't see it.

10. Check whether the printer is jammed?

- Paper jams are frequently the reason for malfunction in many printers. Always read the manual on how to clear a jam.
 - Don't be in a rush with your printer as you can easily damage a printer or even get hurt, if you do not follow instructions in the user manual.
 - Don't move a print head unless the instructions direct it. You can damage the belt, etc.
- Turn the power off & unplug it, before you start doing something .
 - Laser printers have some very fine wires to remove static charges from the paper near the fuser mechanism which will break if you are not very careful. Also, the fuser itself can be very hot (it fuses/melts toner to the paper).

11. Check whether the RAM is sufficient

- The printer memory could be full and not getting prints and prints may be stuck in print queue. Turn-off the printer, wait a few seconds and turn it back on.

12. Check whether the software (print drivers) installed or not

- We have to check the correct device drivers (software) of the printer installed in OS.

- Refer installation steps in windows, DOS, Linux in to user manual or vendors web site

13. Check the printer connectivity with right port in BIOS settings

- Check Cable connectivity with printers Check the following points -
 - a) The pins of DB25 connector are properly connected or not
 - b) Check the various connectivity's of either side (e.g USB, DB25 etc)
 - c) Many printers now require an IEEE 1284 and Bi-Directional. USB cables shouldn't be longer than 15 feet.
 - d) Check for bent pins. Try another cable.
- **Is there something else connected to the printer port?**

Disconnect it and uninstall the device drivers for it.