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"16-bit MS-DOS Subsystem" error message when you run an MS-DOS or 16-Bit Windows program in Windows Server 2003 or Windows 2000 Server

This article was previously published under Q305521 For a Microsoft Windows XP version of this article, see [324767](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/324767) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/324767/>).

SYMPTOMS

If you try to run an MS-DOS-based or a 16-bit Windows-based command on a Microsoft Windows Server 2003-based or a Microsoft Windows 2000 Server-based computer, you may receive one of the following error messages: 16-bit MS-DOS Subsystem

path to the program you are trying to start or install

C:\WINNT\system32\config.nt The system file is not suitable for running MS-DOS and Microsoft Windows applications.

Choose 'Close' to terminate the application. 16-bit MS-DOS Subsystem

path to the program you are trying to run

config.nt The system file is not suitable for running MS-DOS and Microsoft Windows applications. Choose 'Close' to terminate the application. 16-bit MS-DOS Subsystem

path to the program you are trying to run

C:\WINNT\system32\autoexec.nt The system file is not suitable for running MS-DOS and Microsoft Windows applications.

Choose 'Close' to terminate the application. You may be prompted either to quit the program or to ignore the error message, but the program quits after either option.

CAUSE

This issue can occur if any one of the following files are missing, damaged, or not located in the %systemroot%\System32 folder:

- Autoexec.nt
- Command.com
- Config.nt

RESOLUTION

To resolve this issue, follow these steps:

1. Insert the Windows Server 2003 CD or the Windows 2000 Server CD into the CD drive.
2. Click **Start**, click **Run**, type **cmd**, and then click **OK**.
3. Type the following commands, and press ENTER after each command: **expand D:\i386\config.nt_ %systemroot%\system32\config.nt**

```
expand D:\i386\autoexec.nt_ %systemroot%\system32\autoexec.nt
```

```
expand D:\i386\command.co_ %systemroot%\system32\command.com
```

exit **Note** The description of this procedure assumes that your CD drive letter is D. If your CD drive letter is not D, substitute the correct drive letter.

4. Start or install the program. If the issue is resolved, do not complete the remaining steps. If the issue is not resolved, go to the next step.
5. Start Notepad, and then type the following commands.

Note The Command.com file is not edited or created in the following process. Because of this, you may have to expand the file from your CD-ROM. See step 16 for instructions on how to do this.

```
dos=high, umb device=%SYSTEMROOT%\system32\himem.sys files=40
```

6. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
7. In the **File Name** box, type **Config.nt**, and then click **Save**. Close the Config.nt file.
8. On the **File** menu, click **New**.
9. In the new blank document, type the following entries.

```
@echo off lh %SYSTEMROOT%\system32\mscdexnt.exe lh %SYSTEMROOT%\system32\redir lh
%SYSTEMROOT%\system32\dosx SET BLASTER=A220 I5 D1 P330 T3
```

10. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
11. In the **File Name** box, type **Autoexec.nt**, and then click **Save**. Close the Autoexec.nt file.
12. Start Windows Explorer. Locate the **Config.nt** file, right-click the Config.nt file, and then click **Copy**.
13. Right-click the %systemroot%\System32 folder, and then click **Paste**.
14. Locate the Autoexec.nt file, right-click the **Autoexec.nt** file, and then click **Copy**.
15. Right-click the %systemroot%\System32 folder, and then click **Paste**.
16. Expand the Command.com file from the Windows Server 2003 or the Windows 2000 Server CD-ROM. To do this, follow these steps:
 - a. Click **Start**, click **Run**, type **cmd**, and then click **OK**.
 - b.

```
expand cd-rom:\i386\command.co_ drive_letter:\system_root\system32\command.com exit
```
17. Verify the existence of the folder to which the TEMP and TMP user environment variables are mapped. To do this, follow these steps:
 - a. Click **Start**, click **Run**, type **sysdm.cpl** in the **Open** box, and then click **OK**.
 - b. In the **System Properties** dialog box, click the **Advanced** tab, and then click **Environment Variables**.
 - c. In the **User variables for *UserName*** section, locate the TEMP and TMP variables. They are listed in the **Variable** column.
 - d. For the TEMP and TMP variables, note the corresponding folder that is listed in the **Value** column.
 - e. Start Windows Explorer. To do this, click **Start**, click **Run**, type **explorer** in the **Open** box, and then click **OK**.
 - f. Locate the folder that is specified for the TEMP and TMP variables. Make sure that this folder exists.

Note To locate the folder, you may have to turn on the feature that shows hidden files and folders. To do this, follow these steps:

 1. On the **Tools** menu, click **Folder Options**, and then click the **View** tab.
 2. Under **Hidden files and folders**, click **Show hidden files and folders**, and then click **OK**.
18. Restart your computer.

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Standard Edition (32-bit x86)
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Enterprise Edition (32-bit x86)
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Datacenter Edition (32-bit x86)
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Server
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Advanced Server
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Professional Edition
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Datacenter Server
- Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 Premium Edition
- Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 Standard Edition

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