

# GENERAL TROUBLESHOOTING ADVICE

Some users have had problems saving data in Win. XP. The problem is that the folder has been set to not accept changes. Right click on the MTG folder and select properties, then the security tab to adjust it.

When installing Making the Grade be sure to shut down all other programs before you start the process (by running setup.exe).

Whenever you update any program be sure to Power Down (shut off) the computer for a few seconds before you try the program. The reason is that Cache Memory may have some of the old libraries your program is using and they need to be cleared and reloaded. If you don't do so, you will have a combination of new and old parts to a program... and anything goes!

(From Ron: Not really. Simply rebooting will clear cache memory. The advantage of a complete power cycle is the release of the devices on the slots on the motherboard. Some of these require loss of voltage to reset. A good example of this is a modem/fax board. Programs that update DLL's often require a reboot ... why is this? It is because the DLL they are intended to replace is "in-use" by some programs, or even in the operating system itself, and cannot be overwritten except at startup.)

If your program throws out some illegal action, freezes up, or refuses to do something, you may have a damaged copy. In general, you should try the following:

>**Power down and try again** (Yes. The reason for this is really quite simple. All operating systems, including IBM, Sun, Silicon Graphics, Apple, PC, etc. have "memory leaks". In addition, some applications such as Microsoft Office products have "memory leaks" too. All these memory leaks pile on and grab memory that is not returned to the OS. After awhile, the available memory ratchets down until such point that the OS and applications begin to drool and act like a crazy relative. Re-booting cleanses the genealogy pool and makes all that memory available once again.)

>**Check the Num Lock key.** This seems to be common and causes all sorts of strange things.

>**Delete and reinstall** (use the add/remove programs) Delete the old Making the Grade desktop icon. Be sure to keep any classes separately saved.

>**Update** from the web or by disk.

>**Get the tailored version** if you are using the "authorization" version. (Email me for a key file-send your name to print on reports and school name.) Authorization versions say "Lab" or the number of installs on the back of disk one.

>**Change the folder** to a name with a maximum of 8 characters, no spaces.

>**Send me an offending class** with (step by step) what is wrong with it. Make it an attachment to your e-mail.

If these don't help, ask yourself, "Are any other applications acting strange on this computer?" If so, try the program on a different unit. If it exhibits the same symptoms on the second platform, there may be some problem in the program. If you can cause a problem to occur, we can fix it! You may need to send me (attach to your e-mail) the offending class and very detailed step-by-step instructions on what you did to get the problem. Please be sure you are using the latest version (check

<http://www.gradebusters.com>) as the problem may very well be already fixed. No sense in beating on a dead bug!

We are starting to hear some strange things, like grades entered changing to an Inc. I am wondering if there is a new virus that may be affecting our program. Please be sure to update your virus definitions and run the virus check. Also, this could be a font size selection, so try checking to make sure your **font is set to small** (In Display, Settings). Have you installed a flag that waves on the monitor desktop continuously? Delete that and the problem will be gone. Also, check on the **Num Lock** key to make sure you are able to enter data from the keypad.

## **No Summary Grade being displayed:**

There are four places to look for a fix on this problem. First go to Special, Reset the Display Range. It should be set to 1 to 320 for both unless you have some specific need (such as second quarter).

Click on a student's name and go down to the grading scale. It should be 1 unless you have a second scale that you wish to use for some students.

Perhaps you have set all your assignments to the check mark, which is no credit.

Finally, if this is no help go to Edit, Setup Info and Class Info. Look at the grading system. If you are using weighted percentage categories there may be a category you have set up that has no value at all.

If all this is correct, send me the class file attached to an e-mail and tell me exactly what is expected and what you are seeing.

## **PRINTER PROBLEMS**

In general the problem is that when a new printer is created it comes with rather poor software--the **PRINTER DRIVERS**. After about 9 months the printer companies seem to be able to get all the bug fixes into their latest version. But by then they are selling new printers! So the cycle continues...

Anyway, just download **new drivers** for your correct printer from the web, or just load a mature driver (**older version** in the same series) from your Win CD. Either should work fine. You may wish to delete the old drivers and let Windows find the new ones. I have had certain applications that my HP4M drivers wouldn't handle. I added the old drivers for the IIIP and they worked just fine... These problems often look like a programming problem with Making the Grade, and can be very strange. This fall I had a class that I couldn't print unless I deleted one student. I spent hours working with the programmer to try to get this fixed, but he could never see the problem. It also would not show up on my printer at home. So, one change of the printer driver and the problem is history! The most demanding printing we have is in the seating chart, and an older or a newer printer driver always fixes it (or even a refreshed one often does the job). I have had printer drivers go bad twice in one week and then be stable for over a year...

If you contact the printer manufacture, they will probably ask you if other applications

work properly. They normally do, but they do not attempt the complexity of our printouts. That is much like asking if your car still goes forward properly when the problem is it won't go into reverse. If you get a technician who is truly interested in solving the problem, have him or her download the program and print using the sample class provided ([www.gradebusters.com](http://www.gradebusters.com)). Give them specific instructions on which printout is failing and how to get to that printout.

Printer Drivers are located in the My Computer, Printers area. You can add a printer that you do not really have. Try to find one in the same series, but a lower number. Then use that printer to test the particular problem area. If it works, you can make that old printer the default printer and forget about it. Only if there is some other advanced feature on your printer will you notice the difference.

One other area of concern is a computer with very limited memory (8, 16 or 32 meg.) will not always print the correct files as requested. The first page will be fine, then unrequested forms will be printed, especially when using macros. The simple fix for that is to close the program and print after reopening it. Usually more memory (not disk space) will solve the problem for good. Also, Win 98 seems far better than 95 and NT is even better. I have tried to show the programmer this problem, but I have never been able to duplicate it on a decent computer. The school provided Win 95 computer does do it to me, but it seems to be a memory and operating system problem, not Making the Grade.

Dots in front of data seem to occur just after printing certain (Outlook) e-mail messages. We don't know how to clear the printer of the previous setting, but just turning the printer off will fix the problem. In severe cases you may need to reboot to clear the printer card as well. We are actively working to clear this problem in our code!

If a class will not print, but seems fine otherwise you can try sending that class to yourself as an attachment. Sometimes the trip cures whatever the problem was.

With all Printers you must go to MtG "File" tab, select "Printing", and select the "Preferences" tab, then select "Ports". Make sure your printer is listed and there is a check mark in the box.

"Printing is a destructive process." Be sure to save your data before printing.

## **Record Breaker (DOS) and NEW PRINTERS.**

Most new printers simply don't have the code in them to print Record Breaker reports. Record Breaker users can download the non-saving demo from the web site and use the Windows version to print reports on the new printer. No charge to use it, but you will need to e-mail me to have me send you a "key" file. It is half price (\$55.00 including shipping) to update to the Windows program.

### **ERRORS READING YOUR CLASS FILES**

If the class file is in Windows, I suggest using ScanDisk to fix the class file. (Programs,

Accessories, System Tools)

If that doesn't work use Norton's diskfix. I don't see how anyone can get along without the Norton Utilities...

If that doesn't work use your latest back-up and rebuild from there.

Remember to use several back up diskettes, you could back up bad data onto your good backup file!

### **PREFS WILL NOT SAVE**

If you find that you must enter the teacher information or the classes don't save you need to look at the security of the folder. In Win XP it can be set to not allow you to save data. Right click on the folder and go to properties and security to check. It also could be a network problem that the administrator would need to fix.

## **Back up your data!**

(I have lost my original data 4 times in three years due to hard drive deaths, but never retyped any data!)

To easily back up your data on a daily (or more often) basis do the following:

Open My Computer and right click on the C drive. Select make a shortcut with a left click. That will place it on the desktop.

Make a shortcut for the A drive as well.

Open the C drive and right click to make a New Folder. Change the title to something like MtG BU DATA.

Open the MtG program and go to files, Set MtG preferences, back up class files. Change the save location to the new folder and then save. Each time you save your data (Ctrl + S) it will save in two places, the MtG folder with the program and the new folder you just made.

Now, to make a back-up of all your recent data all you need do is open the C drive shortcut, and drag the icon of your MtG BU DATA folder to the icon of the A drive.

Haiku error message...

Three things are certain:  
Death, taxes, and lost data.  
Guess which has occurred.

Please help other MtG users with this process...

It is a good idea to restart your computer at least once a day.

## Viewing difficulties

Font size can't be change, but there are some things you can do to help see the data. In Display, Settings--adjust the resolution to 600 X 800 for larger text. Setting the font to large will cause a lot of words to be excluded. Be sure to use **Small Fonts**. There are some laptops that just can't display the text correctly...

Try right mouse clicking in the Windows desktop, select Properties, select the Appearance tab, and set the Scheme to Windows Standard and see if this helps.

## OS X help

1. Run "Disk Utility 10.4.3" to repair permissions on your hard drive. We do this at least once per week on ALL our OS X machines, and more frequently if we install ANY new software. (Might MTG be the most recent application package installed on your Mac?)

2. Restart your computer after repairing permissions (not just Log Out).

3. Delete the MTG Preference file AND .plist document to get a completely fresh start on the problem. You'll find these two resources along these pathways:

Mac HD > Users > Your Name > Library > Preferences > Making the Grade Prefs

Mac HD > Users > Your Name > Library > Preferences > Making the Grade X 1.0j.plist (If you see OTHER MTG .plist files here, delete them TOO, of course.)

TRASH THEM BOTH. Be sure to EMPTY THE TRASH now (very important) and RESTART YOUR MAC.

4. Once 10.3.5 has reloaded, launch the program, set up your tailoring information once again, open a class or two, and see if the problem persists. If it DOES, install a clean version of MTG X on your computer, and trash the previous copy. (EMPTY THE TRASH AGAIN, of course.) The tests I performed earlier this morning used a freshly downloaded copy of Version from our website, so I strongly recommend beginning anew with such a download.

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