

Windows Remote Assistance Frequently Asked Questions

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What is Windows Remote Assistance?

When you're having a computer problem, sometimes you might want help from someone else. You can use Windows Remote Assistance to invite someone to connect to your computer and help you, even if that person isn't nearby. (Make sure you only ask someone whom you trust, because the other person will have access to your files and personal information.) After connecting, the other person can view your computer screen and chat with you about what you both see. With your permission, your helper can use his or her mouse and keyboard to control your computer and show you how to fix a problem. You can also help someone else the same way.

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How Does Remote Assistance Work?

First you invite a person to help you, using e-mail or an instant message. You can also reuse an invitation that you have sent before. After the person accepts

the invitation, Windows Remote Assistance creates an encrypted connection between the two computers over the Internet or the network that both computers are connected to. You give the other person a password so that he or she can connect. To find out how to use Windows Remote Assistance, see [Get help with your computer using Windows Remote Assistance](#).

You can also offer assistance to someone else, and when that person accepts your offer, Windows Remote Assistance creates an encrypted connection between the two computers. To find out how to use Windows Remote Assistance to help someone else, see [Help someone with a computer problem using Windows Remote Assistance](#).

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When someone connects to or takes control of my computer, how are my privacy and computer security affected?

When someone uses Windows Remote Assistance to connect to your computer, that person can see your desktop, any open documents, and any visible private information. In addition, if you allow your helper to control your computer with his or her mouse and keyboard, that person can do things like delete files or change settings. So only allow people you trust to access or share control of your computer.

Warning

- Before you allow someone to connect to your computer, close any open programs or documents that you don't want your helper to see. Watch what your helper is doing. If at any time you feel uncomfortable about what that person is seeing or doing on your computer, click Cancel, click Stop sharing, or press ESC to end the session.

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What happens if I select the "Allow <helper> to respond to User Account Control prompts" check box?

This check box appears on the message that you see when your helper asks to share control of your desktop. If you select this check box, your helper can respond to requests from the computer for administrator consent or administrator credentials, such as a user name or password. Then your helper can run administrator-level programs without needing your participation.

You can allow your helper to run administrator-level programs only if you can run them yourself. You will be asked for consent or credentials before giving your helper these abilities.

Note

- Your helper won't be able to see your desktop while you provide consent or credentials.

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How do I resend a Windows Remote Assistance invitation?

On the first page of the Windows Remote Assistance wizard, under Or use a previous invitation again, click the invitation you want to resend, type and confirm a password, and then click Finish.

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Can I connect to a computer running Windows XP or Windows Server 2003 from a computer running a later version of Windows?

Yes, you can, but there are a few compatibility issues to be aware of:

- In Windows XP and Windows Server 2003, you can't pause a Windows Remote Assistance session. So if the person being helped is using a later version of Windows and decides to pause a session while connected to a remote computer running Windows XP, the helper using Windows XP will not be notified that the session is paused.
- In Windows XP and Windows Server 2003, Remote Assistance supported voice capability. Voice capability is not supported in later versions of Windows. So if a person using Windows XP or Windows Server 2003 clicks the Start Talk button, nothing will happen.
- You cannot offer Windows Remote Assistance from later versions of Windows to either Windows XP or Windows Server 2003.

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How do I set the maximum amount of time that Windows Remote Assistance invitations can remain open?

On the computer that you want someone to connect to, follow these steps:

1. Click icon to open System from control panel.
2. Click Remote Settings. If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.
3. Select the Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer check box.
4. Click Advanced, and then, under Invitations, select the time from the two lists.

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Why can't I change some Windows Remote Assistance settings?

If your computer is connected to a domain, your system administrator might be controlling those settings through Group Policy.

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I have an open Windows Remote Assistance invitation and I want to make it expire. Can I do that?

Yes. By default, an invitation automatically expires after six hours. To cancel an invitation sooner than that, close the Windows Remote Assistance session that is waiting for an incoming connection.

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How can I stop someone from sharing control of my computer?

For someone to share control of your computer, you must give the person permission. If you want to stop someone from sharing control, click Cancel, click Stop sharing, or press ESC.

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Can someone using Windows Remote Assistance share control of my computer without my permission?

No. You must give someone permission to share control. If you have an administrator account, you can prevent non-administrators from giving permission. To do so, on the computer that you want someone to connect to, follow these steps:

1. Click icon open System from control panel.
2. Click Remote Settings. If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.
3. Select the Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer check box.
4. Click Advanced, and then clear the Allow this computer to be controlled remotely check box.

You can also clear the Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer check box.

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