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By Ryan Maxwell With the wide variety of computer games available, the requirements can vary widely from game to game. Each computer game also has a wide range of settings available from within the game that can affect the performance. Poor performance can be caused by several issues. If your computer is not set correctly, games will run slow. Several solutions are available to improve gaming performance. Adjust the in-game settings. Settings such as anti-aliasing and higher screen resolution settings can cause a computer game to run slow. Adjusting these settings down can improve gaming performance. The adjustable settings in a game vary widely from game to game and the settings you would have to adjust depend on the age and specifications of your computer. Experiment with it and see if you can find the settings that best fit. Close other programs while playing the game. If you have other programs running in the background, this can use up memory and processor resources that may make your game run slow. Upgrade your RAM. Insufficient RAM can cause drastic slowdowns in a computer game. RAM is probably the most inexpensive way to improve the speed of not only your computer games, but your other computer operations as well. To play most hardware-intensive computer games, it is recommended that you have at least 1 to 2 GB of RAM. Update your graphics card. New graphics cards can greatly improve game performance. Graphics cards contain their own memory as well as a GPU (Graphics Processing Unit). Be sure to check which ports are available on your motherboard so you don't get a graphics card that doesn't fit in any of your ports. Upgrade your processor. A faster processor makes a faster computer. Upgrading to a current processor may require you to purchase a new motherboard. Older motherboards may not be able to accept any of the newest processors. By Lynn Burbeck Unblocking cookies on your computer is necessary for some websites--particularly those with shopping carts or log-in portals. Cookies are tracking devices that save bits of information regarding the websites you visit onto your computer. This allows your Web preferences, shopping cart contents and other personal information to be saved when you reopen the site at a later date. All Web browsers give users the opportunity to block or enable cookies as part of their privacy settings. Open your Internet Explorer browser and select the "Tools" option in the top menu bar. Click on "Internet Options" and choose the "Privacy" tab. This is where you can alter your privacy settings and choose whether or not to allow pop-up windows from appearing. Change the privacy settings by moving the slider and choosing a setting that suits your Internet privacy needs. You can choose to accept all cookies, only first person cookies or only first-person cookies with compact privacy policies. Open your Firefox web browser and click on "Tools" in the upper toolbar. Scroll down to "Options" and select the "Privacy" tab. Change the settings under the History heading so that Firefox uses custom settings for history. You will then have the ability to unblock all cookies or to accept only first-person cookies. Open your Safari web browser and click on the Action Menu which is located in the upper right-hand side of the screen and looks like a gear. Click on "Preferences" and then on the "Security" icon on the top of the screen. Select whether you want to accept all cookies or only accept cookies from websites that you personally visit. This will block cookies from third-party sites and advertisers. By ExtremeTech Staff on November 1, 2001 at 11:26 am This site may earn affiliate commissions from the links on this page. Terms of use. Computer Game Online, the Web counterpart to the print magazine, is one of those game-review sites that doesn't dawdle over detail. Its brief (one- or two-page) reviews make their point, highlight a few screen shots, and they're done. It's a good way for you to keep up to date with a raft of new games, and the brevity of the reviews means that CGO can keep up with new releases too. A Features section includes interviews and editorials, and a smallish Cheats section hosts game codes. If you've ever tried to get a vintage computer game up and running on a modern system, you've likely been shocked at how fast the game ran. Why do old games run out of control on modern hardware? Earlier today we showed you how to run oldersoftware on modern computers; today's question and answer session is a nice compliment that digs into why some older software (specifically games) never seem to work right when you try to run them on modern hardware. Today's Question & Answer session comes to us courtesy of SuperUser—a subdivision of Stack Exchange, a community-driven grouping of Q&A websites. The Question SuperUser reader TreyK wants to know why old computer games run crazy fast on new hardware: I've got a few old programs I pulled off an early 90s-era Windows computer and tried to run them on a relatively modern computer. Interestingly enough, they ran at a blazing fast speed - no, not the 60 frames per second kind of fast, rather the oh-my-god-the-character-is-walking-at-the-speed-of-sound kind of fast. I would press an arrow key and the character's sprite would zip across the screen much faster than normal. Time progression in the game was happening much faster than it should. There are even programs made to slow down your CPU so that these games are actually playable. I've heard that this is related to the game depending on CPU cycles, or something like that. My questions are: Why do older games do this, and how did they get away with it? How do newer games not do this and run independently of the CPU frequency? So what's the story? Why exactly do these games blaze across the screen so fast the game becomes unplayable? The Answer SuperUser contributor JourneymanGeek breaks it down: I believe they assumed the system clock would run at a specific rate, and tied in their internal timers to that clock rate. Most of these games probably ran on DOS, and were real mode (with complete, direct hardware access) and assumed you were running a iirc 4.77 MHz system for PCs and whatever standard processor that model ran for other systems like the Amiga. They also took clever shortcuts based on those assumptions including saving a tiny bit of resources by not writing internal timing loops inside the program. They also took up as much processor power as they could - which was a decent idea in the days of slow, often passively cooled chips! Initially one way to get around differing processor speed was the good old Turbo button (which slowed your system down). Modern applications are in protected mode and the OS tends to manage resources - they wouldn't allow a DOS application (which is running in NT/Windows 2000/XP/Vista/7/8/10) to use up all of the processor in many cases. In short, OSes have gotten smarter, as have APIs. Heavily based off this guide on Oldskool PC where logic and memory failed me - it's a great read, and probably goes more in depth into the "why". Stuff like CPUkiller use up as many resources as possible to "slow" down your system, which is inefficient. You'd be better off using DOSBox to manage the clock speed your application sees. If you're curious about how the actual code was implemented in early computer games (and why they adapt so poorly to modern systems without being sandboxed in some sort of emulation program), we'd also suggest checking out this lengthy but interesting breakdown of process in another SuperUser answer. Have something to add to the explanation? Sound off in the comments. Want to read more answers from other tech-savvy Stack Exchange users? Check out the full discussion thread here.

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