

Windows 8 Drivers: Problems and Solutions

Windows 8 Drivers: Problems

There are a lot of people complaining on the Internet that Windows 8 is having driver issues. Similar to the problems Windows Vista had on launch compared to Windows XP, many manufacturers are not bothering to create certified Windows 8 drivers for their hardware, and Windows 7 drivers sometimes don't do the job. Microsoft's Windows Update often doesn't find newer drivers if they're not approved by Microsoft on time, so those drivers never update.

This is especially a problem with older laptops and video drivers. Rather than release video drivers themselves, NVIDIA and ATI rely on the laptop's manufacturer to release updates. Some manufacturers, such as Sony, eventually stop updating their older laptops, leaving the video drivers stuck on old versions. This leads to severe graphical issues when a new operating system, like Windows 8, is installed. This also causes problems when playing games.

Windows 8 Drivers: Solutions

Here are several solutions for finding the right Windows 8 drivers and getting your hardware up and running, if Windows Update isn't doing the trick.

1. Check the manufacturer's website for an update

Though, as we said, manufacturers eventually stop supporting their older machines, some of them are releasing special updates for Windows 8 drivers. You'll need the model number of your PC, which you can find on the machine itself or in System Properties (Windows Key + Pause). On the manufacturer's site, you'll be asked to select this model number, and you'll then see the latest updates.

2. Check the hardware's website for an update

Though some PCs require you to go through the manufacturer to update anything, often the hardware's website will have Windows 8 drivers. You might also try the very latest Windows 7 drivers, and see if they do the trick.

Sony doesn't have Windows 8 drivers at all for my laptop.

3. Install the driver in Compatibility Mode

One problem might be that the driver detects Windows 8 on launch and crashes. It's a perfectly good driver, but it can't handle seeing an operating system it doesn't recognize. The solution is to make the driver think it's running in Windows 7.

To run a driver in Compatibility Mode:

1. Right click on the driver's **Setup** icon and click **Properties**
2. In the **Compatibility** tab, select **Run This Program in Compatibility Mode For:**
3. Choose **Windows 7** in the dropdown menu
4. Click **OK**

Select this check box and choose Windows 7.

Try running the driver again, and it may install more smoothly.

4. Run Driver Reviver

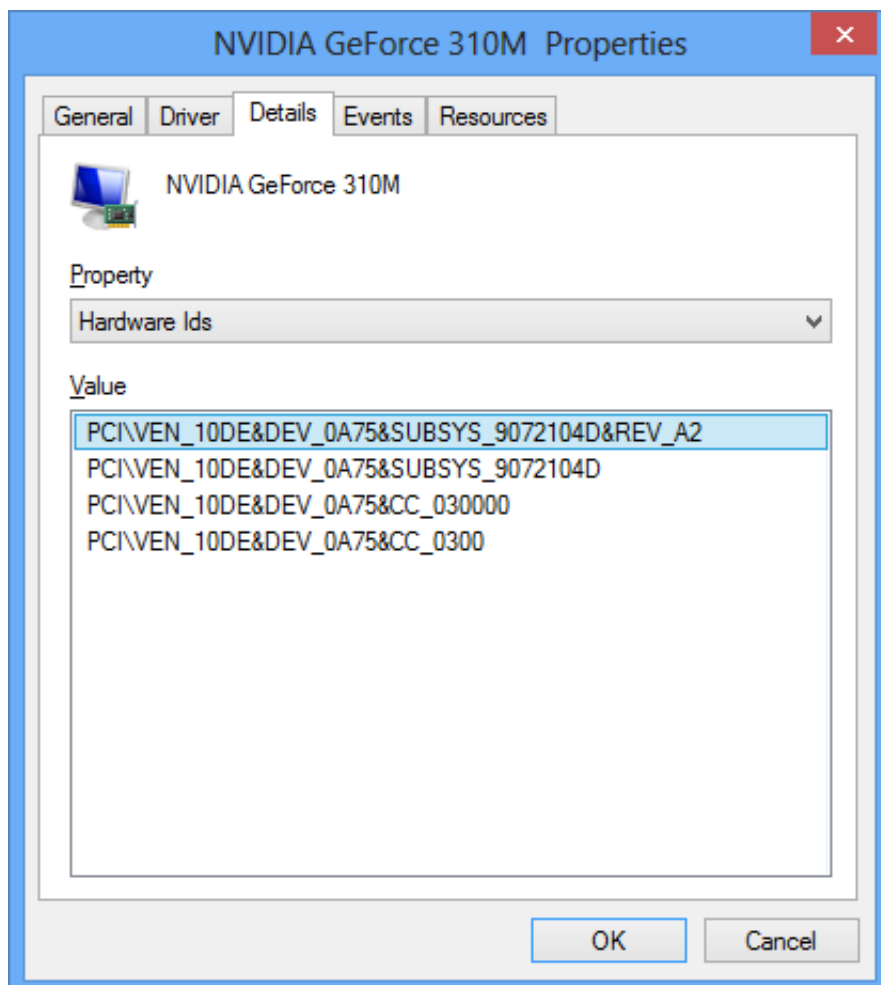
[Driver Reviver](#) is fantastic at finding the newest drivers that match your hardware with your operating system. It works like a charm in Windows 8, tracking down the right Windows 8 drivers

directly from trusted sources. It's worth running a free scan to see whether Driver Reviver locates that elusive driver where Windows Update couldn't.

5. Hack newer video drivers to work with your older laptop

This is kind of a last resort, but this is what I had to do in order to remove graphical artifacts from my screen in Windows 8. I have a three-year-old Sony Vaio laptop with integrated NVIDIA GeForce 310M graphics hardware. Unfortunately, Sony stopped updating the driver for it in 2010. If you try to download new drivers from NVIDIA, you'll get an error when it scans the hardware of your PC.

To fix this, download the latest drivers and unpack them. Then, copy the folder to a new location, as NVIDIA erases them when it can't detect your hardware. Find the hardware ID of your video card in Device Manager, and add those lines to the appropriate INF file, then run setup again. [The Experience Blog](#) explains how to do this in detail. It's for Windows 7, but it works like a charm in Windows 8 too. (This isn't the first time I've had to do this. Six years ago I had to hack video drivers on a Dell laptop to play City of Heroes. It's a fairly common problem with laptops, as video drivers are updated far too frequently for companies like Dell and Sony to keep up with.)



Find the hardware ID in Device Manager.

By following these steps, you should be able to get just about any hardware working in Windows 8. Still having hardware that just refuses to run in Windows 8? Leave a comment here and we'll see what we can do.