

Device Manager does not display devices that are not connected to the Windows XP-based computer

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SYMPTOMS

Device Manager displays only non-Plug and Play devices, drivers, and printers when you click **Show hidden devices** on the **View** menu. Devices that you install that are not connected to the computer (such as a Universal Serial Bus [USB] device or "ghosted" devices) are not displayed in Device Manager, even when you click **Show hidden devices**.

WORKAROUND

To work around this behavior and display devices when you click **Show hidden devices**:

1. Click **Start**, point to **All Programs**, point to **Accessories**, and then click **Command Prompt**.
2. At a command prompt, type the following command , and then press ENTER:

```
set devmgr_show_nonpresent_devices=1
```

3. Type the following command a command prompt, and then press ENTER:

```
start devmgmt.msc
```

4. Troubleshoot the devices and drivers in Device Manager.

NOTE: Click **Show hidden devices** on the **View** menu in Device Managers before you can see devices that are not connected to the computer.

5. When you finish troubleshooting, close Device Manager.
6. Type **exit** at the command prompt.

Note that when you close the command prompt window, Window clears the **devmgr_show_nonpresent_devices=1** variable that you set in step 2 and prevents ghosted devices from being displayed when you click **Show hidden devices**.

If you are a developer or power user and you want to be able to view devices that are not connected to your computer, set this environment variable globally:

1. Right-click **My Computer**.
2. Click **Properties**.
3. Click the **Advanced** tab.
4. Click the **Environment Variables** tab.
5. Set the variables in the **System Variables** box.

NOTE: Use this method only for troubleshooting or development purposes, or to prevent users from accidentally uninstalling a required device that is not connected to the computer (such as a USB device or docking station that is not connected to a laptop computer).

STATUS

This behavior is by design.

MORE INFORMATION

In Device Manager, there are two types of hidden devices in addition to the devices that are displayed:

- Typical, hidden devices that are not displayed (non-Plug and Play drivers, printers, and so on)
- and-
- Phantom devices that are not connected to the computer

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional

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