

Description of the Dr. Watson for Windows (Drwtsn32.exe) Tool

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SUMMARYThis article describes the Dr. Watson for Windows program error debugger tool included in Windows XP.

MORE INFORMATION

Dr. Watson for Windows is a program error debugger that gathers information about your computer when an error (or user-mode fault) occurs with a program. Technical support groups can use the information that Dr. Watson obtains and logs to diagnose a program error. When an error is detected, Dr. Watson creates a text file (Drwtsn32.log) that can be delivered to support personnel by the method they prefer. You also have the option of creating a crash dump file, which is a binary file that a programmer can load into a debugger.

Note Windows XP also provides an Error Reporting service that monitors your computer for both user-mode and kernel-mode faults ("stop" error messages or error messages that are displayed on a blue screen, as well as improper shutdown events) that affect both the operating system and any programs. This service allows you to send error reports to Microsoft when an error occurs. Because all error reports are confidential and anonymous, Microsoft Support Professionals do not have access to any error report that you have sent to Microsoft over the Internet using the Error Reporting service. As a result, you may need to send a Dr. Watson for Windows log file to a support professional. For additional information about Error Reporting Service in Windows XP, click the article number below to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[310414](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310414/EN-US/) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310414/EN-US/>) HOW TO: Configure and Use Error Reporting in Windows XP

If a program error occurs, Dr. Watson for Windows starts automatically. To configure Dr. Watson, follow these steps:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **Run**.
2. Type drwtsn32, and then click **OK**.

By default, the log file created by Dr. Watson is named Drwtsn32.log and is saved in the following location:

drive:\Documents and Settings\All Users\WINNT\Application Data\Microsoft\Dr Watson

Note Drwatson.exe is an older program error debugger that was included with earlier versions of Windows NT. Microsoft recommends that you use Drwtsn32.exe instead of Drwatson.exe in Windows XP.

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