

WINDOWS FIX

(If you're running XP, this one is not for you)

Q: When my daughter boots up her laptop, the Windows screen comes on and then disappears with the message: No HIMEM available. She deleted some personal files before this. How can she recover from this mess? She did not make a startup disk.

A: HIMEM (high memory) is memory above a megabyte. In computer's olden days, nobody thought anyone would ever want more than 640KBs of memory. It just didn't seem possible at the time because memory was so expensive. Now it's common to see 64 MB or more of memory in modern machines. The himem.sys is a memory manager that allows the OS to see more memory.

W98 and W95 loads himem.sys automatically at startup, but W3.1 has to be explicitly loaded in config.sys-- the startup configuration file. In most cases, himem.sys is not needed, unless a DOS program requires it.

The guaranteed fix is to reinstall Windows over your existing Windows installation. It is the least risky solution. This will restore any damaged files without deleting anything. This is the most common suggestion given by Microsoft tech support when it is difficult to find out what is wrong. It is almost always fixed by a Windows reinstall.

The trickier solution is to rename autoexec.bat and config.sys to something.old and see if Windows works fine. That will work in most cases, unless the himem.sys is deleted or damaged.

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