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PowerBook 500 Series: Frequently Asked Questions (5/96)

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TOPIC -----

This document contains the answers to the following frequently asked questions (FAQ) about PowerBook 500 series computers.

- 1) I recently purchased a new battery for my 500 series PowerBook. My PowerBook isn't charging/recognizing this battery. What should I do?
- 2) My PowerBook does not always eject floppy disks, what's the problem?
- 3) My PowerBook display is blurry or sometimes has shadowing and ghosting effects. What can I do to correct this?
- 4) My external monitor is not displaying an image when I start up my PowerBook.
- 5) I am trying to connect a SCSI device to my PowerBook. However, when I start up the PowerBook, a diamond icon with a number appears on my screen.
- 6) I'm trying to connect my PowerBook as an external hard drive (SCSI Disk Mode) to another Macintosh. When I turn on my PowerBook, I get a flashing question mark or a "Sad Mac" instead of the diamond icon with a SCSI ID number.
- 7) Sometimes I can't seem to use my internal modem and print at the same time. Why is this?
- 8) Sometimes I get errors when printing to my StyleWriter (or any serial printer). Why is this?
- 9) Sometimes when I try to use the Trackpad, the cursor jumps around uncontrollably. What causes this?
- 10) Will my RAM and internal modem still be compatible after I upgrade my PowerBook 500 series computer to the PowerPC 603e processor?

11) I want to use an external modem with my PowerBook 500 series. According to the manual that came with my PowerBook, I need to check Normal in my PowerBook Setup control panel. I open the control panel, and the setting is not there. What's wrong?

12) I have a PowerBook 500 series with a Global Village PowerPort Mercury modem. Can you tell me how to send and receive faxes?

13) I've hooked up an external CD-ROM drive to my PowerBook 500 series and I'm playing an audio CD. When I bring up the AppleCD Audio Player I can see the numbers moving but there is no sound coming through the speakers, although I can hear the sound of regular multimedia CD's fine. Can I play an Audio CD through the internal speakers?

14) Will the Apple PlainTalk microphone work with the PowerBook 500 series?

15) How can I use an external microphone?

16) I am trying to record a sample of an audio CD with the Sound control panel. The sound comes out non-existent or weak. The CD player is running through the audio input port on the back of the computer. What's the problem?

17) Where else can I go for answers?

DISCUSSION -----

1) Question: I recently purchased a new battery for my 500 series PowerBook. My PowerBook isn't charging/recognizing this battery. What should I do?

Answer: Try running the Intelligent Battery Update on your battery. This will update and fix the battery if needed, or let you know that the battery needs to be replaced. The Intelligent Battery Update can be found at the path

US -> Macintosh -> Powerbook -> Other PB SW.

If the Intelligent Battery Update does not alleviate the symptoms, try resetting the power manager on the PowerBook by following these steps:

Step 1

Shut down the PowerBook using the Special menu.

Step 2

Press the Command-Option-Control-Power On keys simultaneously and let go. Pressing the keys will not appear to do anything.

Step 3

Press the Power On key to start up the PowerBook. Your brightness and contrast settings may be reset and you may need to adjust them in order to see the screen.

If the symptom is still not resolved, the battery may need replacement. You can contact the Apple Assistance Center at 800-SOS-APPL (800-767-2775) or contact the Apple Referral Center at 800-538-9696 to

2) Question: My PowerBook does not always eject floppy disks, what's the problem?

Answer: The drive may not be properly aligned. If you can see the metal frame sticking up more than a couple of centimeters behind the floppy drive door, you should contact the Apple Assistance Center at 800-SOS-APPL (800-767-2775) to arrange for repair at our repair center or contact the Apple Referral Center at 800-538-9696 to obtain a phone number for an Apple-authorized service provider in your area.

3) Question: My PowerBook display is blurry or sometimes has shadowing and ghosting effects. What can I do to correct this?

Answer: The technology used on the passive-matrix displays is susceptible to shadowing and ghosting, since it does not individually address each pixel on the display. Gray-scale passive-matrix displays are particularly susceptible to the symptoms. The PowerBook 100, 140, 145, 145B, 150, 160, 165, 210, 230, 520, 190, and 5300/100 all use a gray-scale passive-matrix display.

Some suggestions to reduce the effects of the shadowing:

- * Adjust the brightness and contrast settings of the display. Usually a lighter contrast setting will look better.

- * Use a darker desktop pattern. The effects of the shadowing will not be as apparent with the darker background.

- * Open the Monitors control panel and select "Black & White" instead of 16 Shades of Gray.

Although these tips can help mitigate the effects of the shadowing, some amount of screen anomalies will always be present on gray-scale passive-matrix displays.

4) Question: My external monitor is not displaying an image when I start up my PowerBook.

Answer: Follow this procedure:

Step 1

Shut down the PowerBook.

Step 2

Make sure the video cable connected to both the PowerBook video port and the

Monitor video port is secure.

Step 3

Make sure the PowerBook is plugged into the AC adapter, which is required to use an external monitor.

Step 4

Start up the PowerBook and open the Monitors control panel. You should see images of two monitors, representing the PowerBook display and the external monitor. If you don't see the image of the external monitor, repeat steps 1 and 2.

Step 5

In the Monitors control panel, click (and hold) the "Identify" button. A large 2 should be displayed on the external monitor icon.*

*Tip: If you wish to use the external monitor as your primary monitor, open the Monitors control panel and drag the menu bar from the top of the internal display (labeled 1) to the top of the external monitor (labeled 2).

5) Question: I am trying to connect a SCSI device to my PowerBook. However, when I start up the PowerBook, a diamond icon with a number appears on my screen.

Answer: You are most likely using the wrong SCSI cable. You should be using the HDI-30 SCSI System Cable (M2538LL/A), which is a light gray color and only has 29 pins (there is a pin missing). You are most likely using the HDI-30 SCSI Disk Adapter cable (M2539LL/A) which is dark gray and has all 30 pins.

6) Question: I'm trying to connect my PowerBook as an external hard drive (SCSI Disk Mode) to another Macintosh. When I turn on my PowerBook, I get a flashing question mark or a "Sad Mac" instead of the diamond icon with a SCSI ID number.

Answer: You may have the wrong cable. Use the Apple HDI-30 SCSI disk adapter cable, part number M2539LL/A, in conjunction with an Apple SCSI System Cable appropriate to your other Macintosh along with proper SCSI termination.

7) Question: Sometimes I can't seem to use my internal modem and print at the same time. Why is this?

Answer: On most PowerBook models that have only one serial port (200's, 2300's, 190's, 5300's), the serial port is mapped as a modem port. Under normal conditions this isn't a problem - the internal modem can be used at the same time as a serial device such as a printer is being used.

The exception to this is if you are using a communications program that does not use the Apple Communications Toolbox (CTB). If this is the case, you will need to respectively set the PowerBook, PowerBook Setup, or Express Modem control

panel to Internal, Compatible, or "Use internal modem instead of modem port".

The location of this setting will depend on what version of the modem and system software you have. When the PowerBook is set like this, the serial port cannot be used with serial devices. However, it can be used with LocalTalk devices.

The vast majority of communications programs that are developed for Macintosh right now will use the CTB. If you find that you have an older communications program, contact the manufacturer to see if there's an update.

8) Question: Sometimes I get errors when printing to my StyleWriter (or any serial printer). Why is this?

Answer: As discussed in the previous question, a PowerBook with a single serial port (200's, 2300's, 190's, 5300's) introduces some variables to serial printing. Three things must be true to print to a serial printer with a single serial port PowerBook:

Step 1

AppleTalk must be set to inactive in the Chooser or something other than LocalTalk must be selected in the Network control panel.

Step 2

If you have an internal modem you will need to respectively set the PowerBook, PowerBook Setup, or Express Modem control panel to External, Normal, or uncheck "Use internal modem instead of modem port" (see above). The location of this setting will depend on what version of the modem and system software you have.

Step 3

When selecting the serial printer in the Chooser, you must select the modem port or the combined printer/modem port. Do not select the printer port.

9) Question: Sometimes when I try to use the Trackpad, the cursor jumps around uncontrollably. What causes this?

Answer: The Trackpad works on a principal called coupling capacitance. As your finger moves over the surface, the Trackpad evaluates the change in capacitance between two layers of measurement electrodes built into the surface of the Trackpad.

The most common cause of a jumping Trackpad cursor is moisture interference. If you have sweaty hands or if moisture collects on the pad, this may confuse the Trackpad. Wiping off the Trackpad with a cloth or tissue will usually fix this problem. If you find that it continues to get wet you may want to consider purchasing a teflon or mylar pad to fit over the pad to prevent the moisture from having direct contact with the pad. Before installing the pad, make sure the Trackpad is clean. You can use a mild glass cleaner sprayed onto the cloth, not onto the Trackpad itself.

Make sure only one part of your finger is touching the pad. You will not be able to use a pen or other object, it is designed to work with your finger. Also make sure that you are not resting your wrist on or very close to the pad. The Trackpad may interpret this as your wrist touching it and make the cursor move in that direction. If you suspect either of these is causing the cursor's behavior, try raising your wrist in the air and only touch the pad with the tip of your finger. If the symptom goes away then you know that one of the above is the cause and you should adjust the position of your wrist and or finger.

Oil or lotion can cause the same problem. Either do not use hand lotion, or consider purchasing a teflon or mylar pad to protect the pad. Before installing the teflon pad, make sure the Trackpad is clean.

Jewelry may also cause interference. Try removing rings or bracelets and see if the jumping or erratic behavior disappears.

10) Question: Will my RAM and internal modem still be compatible after I upgrade my PowerBook 500 series computer to the PowerPC 603e processor?

Answer: The existing RAM card and internal modem should be compatible with the PowerPC 603e upgrade. All Apple products are.

11) Question: I want to use an external modem with my PowerBook 500 series. According to the manual that came with my PowerBook, I need to check Normal in my PowerBook Setup control panel. I open the control panel, and the setting is not there. What's wrong?

Answer: If you do not have an internal modem, this setting will not appear in the PowerBook Setup control panel. If you want to use an external modem with your PowerBook 500 series, simply make certain AppleTalk is inactive in the Chooser and select the modem port in your communications software. You can leave AppleTalk active if you select something other than LocalTalk in the Network control panel.

12) Question: I have a PowerBook 500 series with a Global Village PowerPort Mercury modem. Can you tell me how to send and receive faxes?

Answer: Instructions for sending a fax are detailed on pp. 77-89 of your PowerPort 500 Series User's Guide.

Sending a fax is a lot like printing. You can follow these instructions to send your first fax:

Step 1

Open whatever document you would like to fax. You could fax from within the application SimpleText, for example.

Step 2

Hold down the Option key on your keyboard, and choose the command Fax from your File menu.

Step 3

The Send Fax Setup dialog box will appear. Here you can enter your Station Name and Station Fax Number. Click OK when you are done.

Step 4

The GlobalFax dialog will appear. Enter the number you wish to call in the Fax field, and enter the recipient's name in the To field. You can also choose a cover sheet at this window.

Step 5

Once you've entered the fax number and name of the recipient, click the Send... button. Your software should image and fax the document.

Instructions for receiving a fax are detailed on pp. 99-105 of your PowerPort 500 Series User's Guide.

You can configure your PowerBook to receive faxes automatically. Of course, it will have to be connected to an analog phone line. To set your PowerBook up to receive faxes automatically, follow these steps:

Step 1

Open the "Global Village Fax Center" under the Apple menu.

Step 2

Under the Fax menu, choose Setup and Receiving.

Step 3

In the Receive Fax Setup dialog box, put an X next to Receive Fax... Click OK when done.

After this, the Global Village Fax Center will answer incoming calls to receive faxes.

13) Question: I've hooked up an external CD-ROM drive to my PowerBook 500 series and I'm playing an audio CD. When I bring up the AppleCD Audio Player I can see the numbers moving but there is no sound coming through the speakers, although I can hear the sound of regular multimedia CD's fine. Can I play an Audio CD through the internal speakers?

Answer: There is not a direct connection between the SCSI port and the speakers,

so direct play-through of audio CD's is not readily possible. Typically, only Macintosh computers which have an internal CD-ROM drive can play-through audio CD sound to the internal speakers. You will need to connect external speakers to the external CD-ROM drive to hear the audio CD sound.

14) Question: Will the Apple PlainTalk microphone work with the PowerBook 500 series?

Answer: No, the PlainTalk microphone is only supported with most Power Macintosh computers and the Quadra 840AV and 660AV.

15) Question: How can I use an external microphone?

Answer: The audio input port on the PowerBook 500 series computer is a line-level input. This means that it requires an audio signal with a strength of at least 1 volt peak-to-peak. If you want to use an external microphone, you will need to run it through a stereo system or a pre-amp that outputs a line-level signal, and you must be using a program capable of using this type of signal (see the next question).

16) Question: I am trying to record a sample of an audio CD with the Sound control panel. The sound comes out non-existent or weak. The CD player is running through the audio input port on the back of the computer. What's the problem?

Answer: The PowerBook 500 series uses an audio input port that requires a line-level signal, which your CD player is most likely providing. The problem is that the Sound control panel does not read this type of signal, and will not record it correctly. The Sound control panel is only designed to record sounds from the internal microphone on the PowerBook 500 series computers. To record sound from any device running through the external audio input on a PowerBook 500 series computer, you will need to use an application program such as Opcode Audio Shop that has an "auto-gain" option or some similar feature.

17) Question: Where else can I go for answers?

Answer: If you haven't done so already, check the other PowerBook FAQ documents. Also, depending on where you found this FAQ, you should have access to Apple's Technical Information Library (TIL). This library contains thousands of technical articles which are easily searchable using boolean search strings.

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09 May 1996 - corrected software path

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