



Tech Info Library

PowerBook 3400 Series: General Usage Tips (2/97)

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TOPIC -----

The following article contains some general tips for using your PowerBook 3400 series computer. Topics covered include the following:

- * Infrared Related Information
- * Media Bay-Related Information
- * PC Card-Related Information
- * Serial Port Related Information
- * Video/Graphics Related Information

DISCUSSION -----

Infrared Related Information =====

* For best performance when using the infrared networking capabilities (IrDA) of the PowerBook 3400 series computers turn ON Virtual Memory.

* GeoPort modems and IrTalk do not work together. In other words, you should not attempt to transfer files over IrTalk while using a GeoPort modem.

Media Bay-Related Information =====

Hot Swapping Devices -----

It is critical for PowerBook 3400 series computer owners to understand that they should NEVER remove the media bay device when it is in use. Any time that the light is on or flashing, the media bay device should not be removed. Failure to heed this warning can result in a system crash and/or data loss.

Problem

The computer freezes/hangs when a CD is placed into the CD tray.

Resolution

If you put a CD into the CD-ROM drive tray and only partially close it, the CD-ROM drive attempts to scan the CD, but it cannot, so the system may hang.

If the CD remains in this position, after restarting you will see a blank gray screen instead of "Welcome to Macintosh" dialog because the CD is interfering with the startup process. To get out of this situation, the CD must either be removed, or completely inserted. Then you can restart the computer in the regular fashion.

Problem

Vibration of the CD-ROM drive

Resolution

All higher speed CD-ROM drives are sensitive to unbalanced CDs. The reason is that the speed at which the CD is rotating is fast enough that even the slightest bit of extra weight (like excessive silkscreen ink on one half of the CD or an address-type label on one side of the CD) will cause the CD to make a rattling sound.

Because of this sensitivity of these high speed CD-ROM drives it is very important for you to refrain from placing labels onto your CDs.

* Note: This is not a PowerBook 3400 computer-specific issue. This information applies to all high-speed CD-ROM drives.

PC Card-Related Information

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Existing multi-function cards (for example, combined modem and networking cards) may not work in PowerBook 3400 computers if you do not install a new/updated software driver from the developer of the that specific third party PC card.

Network-Related Information

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Problem

User cannot see zones when connected to a network using Ethernet.*

Resolution

One reason this may happen is that the user's Node ID is no longer valid. If this is the case, you can perform the following steps to make the network zones accessible:

1. Open the AppleTalk Control Panel.
2. Select User Mode from the Edit menu.
3. Click the Advanced radio button (to get into the advanced user mode) and click OK.
4. Click the User defined check box.
5. Find out from your network administrator what the network range numbers are.
6. Select a Network number within the network range that is displayed.
7. Select a different Node ID (between 1 and 256)
8. Close the control panel and Save changes.
9. Sometimes you may get a dialog box at this point stating that the Node ID is in use by someone else. In this case, you need to select a different Node ID. Repeat steps 7 and 8 until a valid number is selected (usually once or twice).

* Note: This is not a PowerBook 3400 specific issue. This situation could occur on any Macintosh or Power Macintosh computer.

Serial Port Related Information =====

The PowerBook 3400 series of computers has the same serial chip as Power Macintosh 5400 and 6400 series computers, hence they may encounter some of the same serial port related issues.

If you have a serial device that does not function properly with your PowerBook 3400 series computer, you should contact the vendor of that device for more information. It is possible that the manufacturer of your serial device may have written a new software driver for Mac OS 7.6 or the specifically for the PowerBook 3400 computer.

Video/Graphics Related Information =====

Question: When I start up with an AppleVision monitor* connected to my PowerBook 3400 series computer, the display on the external monitor is not centered at first. Then, during the startup process, the image on the screen jumps and is correctly centered. Is my PowerBook computer or my AppleVision display defective? What is going on?

Answer: No, your PowerBook computer and your display are working fine. What you are seeing is a correction to the timing that is being driven from your PowerBook computer to your external display.

At startup, the timing that is driven to a display when it is in simulscan mode is not exactly what the monitor expects. Once the system starts to load, the timing adjusts so that it is centered correctly on your screen.

There is nothing wrong with your PowerBook computer or monitor. This anomaly will not damage your PowerBook computer or monitor. You could use the horizontal and vertical controls on the monitor to adjust the initial screen so that it is centered, but it is not necessary.

* Note: This could happen with other VGA or Apple displays as well, but only in the 800x600, 60Hz (Simulscan) timing.

Problem

An external VGA device is not working properly with a PowerBook 3400 series computer.

Information

PowerBook 3400 series computers sense external multi-sync VGA displays by detecting whether or not pin 11 on the video connector is grounded. Most VGA monitor manufacturers are compliant with the VESA specification and they do ground this pin. However, some devices do not have this pin grounded.

By using a VGA->Macintosh adapter along with the Macintosh->VGA adapter (supplied with your PowerBook 3400 series computer) it is possible to get the 640x480x67hz mode to work, but you will not be able to access the VGA modes (800x600 and 1024x768).

NOTE: For more information about using a third-party VGA display with your PowerBook 3400 series computer, you should contact the vendor who manufactures and supports that display.

The Tech Info Library article titled "Locating Vendor Information" can help you search for a particular vendor's address and phone number.

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