

DeskScapes Troubleshooting Guide

The purpose of this guide is to walk DeskScapes users through steps to diagnose why animated wallpaper will not apply. There are key pieces that DeskScapes requires must be working in order for animated wallpaper to apply.

1. MPEG-2 Video Codec (for video dreams to work)
2. DirectX9 (D3D) must be installed (for dynamic dreams to work)
3. Desktop Window Manager (DWM) must be running (for any dream to work)

This guide will outline what do to in order to check that all of these pieces are working.

MPEG-2 Video Codec

If you are reading this document and are not familiar with the concept of a Video Codec a quick visit to this page is in order to familiarize yourself with codec software.

To display video dreams with DeskScapes, an MPEG-2 Video Decoder must be installed on your computer. Certain versions of Windows Vista (Home Premium and Ultimate) include a codec provided by Microsoft (the Microsoft MPEG-2 Video Decoder). DeskScapes has been fully tested with the Microsoft MPEG-2 Video Decoder.

In order to determine if you have a proper video codec utilizing a third party utility usually works best. We usually like to use this utility called NirSoft InstalledCodec. You can download NirSoft's InstalledCodec from [here](#).

Once you have this utility it install it and fire it up. If you are working with our support team, it is helpful if you redirect the output of InstalledCodec to a file and send it to us. You can do that by typing:

```
InstalledCodec /stext MyCodecs.txt
```

There are **many** codecs available on the market. If you are a Windows Vista Ultimate user Microsoft includes a MPEG-2 Video Decoder with the operating system. In the InstalledCodec output the Microsoft supplied codec looks like this:

```
=====  
Display Name : Microsoft MPEG-2 Video Decoder  
Type : DirectShow Filter  
Disabled : No  
Installed/Modified Time: N/A  
File Description : Microsoft MPEG-2 Video Decoder  
File Version : 11.0.5840.6324 (VISTA_RTM_CLIENT_akaDMD.061022-1800)  
Company : Microsoft Corporation  
Product Name : Microsoft. Windows. Operating System  
File Size : 558,080  
Filename : C:\Windows\System32\msmpeg2vdec.dll  
CLSID : {212690FB-83E5-4526-8FD7-74478B7939CD}  
Driver Key :  
Filter Merit : 0x005fffff  
=====
```

A common issue that people see when a codec that is not compatible with DeskScapes is installed and overrides the supported MPEG-2 Video Decoder. An easy way to test if this is your problem is by loading up InstalledCodec, selecting all of the list and hitting F7 to disable all of them. Then sort the list by the Microsoft "Company", select all of the Microsoft codecs (or just the Microsoft MPEG-2 Video Decoder listed above) and hit F8 to reenable just the Microsoft video codecs.

If this resolves any issues with dream files applying on your computer, you can slowly add back (re-enable) codecs until you discover which one is giving you problems. Once you decide which codec(s) are giving you problems you

should remove the culprit by disabling or uninstall the program that it installed with and if necessary find a replacement codec that does the same thing, but is compatible with DeskScapes.

For those who don't have a Microsoft codec included with their operating system (pretty much everyone except for Home Premium and Ultimate) users, there are third party codecs available. In our testing, the codecs included with Cyberlink PowerDVD Ultra and PowerDVD DX for Windows Vista appear to be compatible with video dreams. Currently there are known compatibility issues with some of the video codecs bundled with Nero's 7.x product; we recommend users upgrade to version 8.x to avoid issues. As a workaround users can utilize one of the following pieces of software to disable problematic video codecs on their systems: Microsoft provides a codec manager. A codec manager will allow users to view what codecs are installed and enable/disable those codecs as well as set defaults for preference.

DirectX

In order for DeskScapes to run all of the files necessary for DirectX9 must be installed and functional. DirectX9 comes with Windows Vista so this should not be an issue. However sometimes files are corrupted or deleted which would break DirectX. So validating that DirectX is functioning is a necessary step in troubleshooting DeskScapes.

The easiest way to check to ensure DirectX is working is to run dxdiag. This program can be found on all installations of Windows Vista. Again, if you are working with our support team to troubleshoot DeskScapes, please redirect the dxdiag output to a file like this:

```
dxdiag /t MyDirectXInformation.txt
```

This output is especially helpful for us because it also includes video hardware and driver information. We have found issues with some hardware / driver combinations so including this output in emails to support is very helpful.

When you run dxdiag in GUI mode (just click on the Start button and type "dxdiag" without the quotes in the search field then press enter), click on the Display tab and make sure there are "No problems found" (listed in the Notes section at the bottom of the dialog).

Desktop Windows Manager (DWM)

In order for DeskScapes to run, the Desktop Windows Manager needs to be running. Most computers capable of running Windows Vista in all its glory (with all of the cool glass effects) will, by default, also be running the Desktop Windows Manager. Sometimes DWM may crash, you can re-launch the DWM from an administrative command prompt (right click on the CMD shortcut from Start/Programs/Accessories/Command Prompt and select Run as Administrator) by typing the following:

```
net stop uxsms (makes sure it is stopped, just in case it is running but not responding)net start uxsms ()
```

If this solves the problem, but when you reboot DeskScapes stops working again, the most likely cause is that for some reason Windows has shut off the DWM. Without the DWM DeskScapes will not apply dream files. The most common cause of the DWM being disabled is because the Windows Experience Score for the Graphics is below 2.0.

To learn more about the Windows Experience Score visit[this web site](#).

The reason Windows scores below 2.0 on graphics is due to an underpowered video card. Most modern video cards will score over 2.0 on the Windows experience score. However, one issue that might arise if Windows Vista was installed BEFORE installing a new graphics card. Once Vista records the WEI score, the benchmark needs to be run again to update the score for the new card. So if you have recently replaced your graphics card and your WEI score is still below 2.0 Update your score on the Control Panel, Performance Information and Tools dialog.

DeskScapes Installation

Ensuring that all of the files for DeskScapes are present and installed correctly is crucial to the successful operation. If you check all of the other things above and DeskScapes is still not working try uninstalling and reinstalling DeskScapes. That that point if themes still do not apply, please contact our support at the following email.

When sending an email to support for DeskScapes, please attach output from dxdiag and InstalledCodec (process listed above to obtain output from those programs into a file).