

How to reinstall a deleted printer in Windows

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QUESTION: Is it possible to configure a Windows Vista computer to run a printer that was on the list of available printers but has been removed from the list? A Vista type driver for this printer has been downloaded.

PC CLUB: I take it from your question that a printer was deleted and is no longer on the list of available printers. There are several ways to add a printer back to the list of available printers in Vista or XP.

The basic procedure for most printers is as follows:

1. If you have a Vista compatible printer, the instructions may ask you to install the software from the included CD and wait for on-screen instructions before plugging in your printer. Other times, the instructions may ask you to plug in the printer first. It is safest to install the software first unless the instructions say otherwise.
2. If you purchased an XP compatible printer and downloaded a newer Vista driver, install the driver by double-clicking the file, and then wait for on-screen instructions. If you do not receive any instructions, you should be able to just plug in the printer and go from there.

After the installation, you should always open the Windows Control Panel and check that the printer is listed (see image below). Be sure to right-click the printer that you want to be the default printer and select the option to make it the default. In most cases, the most recently installed printer becomes the default.

▾ Devices (6)

Windows 7 Devices and Printers



PTZ-631W



Silicon Media
R/W



SyncMaster



USB Receiver



USB Storage



WINDOWS7PC

▾ Printers and Faxes (6)



Adobe PDF



EPSON Stylus
Photo R1800



Fax



HP Officejet 6300
series



Microsoft XPS
Document Writer



Snagit 9

▾ Unspecified (5)



Logitech HID
Device



Logitech HID
Device



Logitech Music
Anywhere USB
Transmitter



Logitech
Pointing Device



USB Composite
Device

The many printers of Ed Schwartz (Yes, I have a lot!)

Now with Windows 7 upon us, many printers exist without a Windows 7 driver. In most cases, the Vista drivers will work fine. Also, many printers will be recognized by Windows 7 without installing any drivers. There may always be exceptions for printers with special functions, such as scanning, but the basic printing function should be supported.

I just downloaded the updated Windows 7 driver for my HP 6310 All-in-One and it worked superbly. The best way to do this is to install the new driver first, then plug in the printer.

To obtain drivers for any printer if you don't have disc, go to the manufacturer's web site. Alternatively, you can search Google with the name and model of your printer followed by the word "driver." You will usually be given a choice of XP, Vista or Windows 7 and perhaps 32-bit versus 64-bit.

To examine your installed printers, proceed as follows:

- Windows XP - open the Control Panel, open Printers and Faxes
- Windows Vista - open the Control Panel, open Printer
- Windows 7 - open the Control Panel, open Devices and Printers.

To remove a printer, just right-click the printer and select “Remove Device” or “Delete,” depending on what Windows version you have. There are subtle differences but the steps are very similar.

Once a printer is installed, if you have a home network, you can share the printer. Search Google for “XP share printer” or “Vista share printer”, etc for more details.

More from Microsoft’s site:

- [Find and Install print drivers for Windows Vista](#)
- [Install a printer on a home network](#)
- [Add or remove a printer in Windows](#)

~ Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his Web site at www.edwardns.com