

ASK THE COMPUTER SURGEON

Which flavor is your DVD player?

Differing hardware types and burn speeds can leave you with a blank screen

Tom from Wadsworth is having trouble playing DVD's of family pictures created by a video company.

As we described in a previous column, DVD's are precise data storage media.

DVD's come in 3 flavors as we discussed a couple of weeks ago. DVD-R, DVD+R and DVD-Rom. The type of DVD must match the player. Tom, if you want to assist your family members in troubleshooting, find the make and model of their DVD players, go to the WEB and discover what types of DVD's they play. See if they match the DVD format you sent to them.

DVD players are very picky about burn speed as well. DVD's which are burned fast may not play back well. Some of the brand new, multi-format compatible burners available today do not play back DVD's which were burned fast.

Software glitches or computer hardware failures can cause DVD's to freeze up during playback. When you have inconsistencies in playback failure on a PC, I first suspect hardware and software problems. Be sure to do a full system backup before updating drivers and software on your PC! After you are sure you have a good backup, download firmware updates for your DVD player. Download software updates for your DVD software. Make sure you have applied all Windows updates. If all else fails, seek professional help.

A high quality, newer, stand alone player should work every time.

Finally, some people forget to "finalize" burned CD's and DVD's. This process is fairly simple and can be the cause of playback issues. Some players check to see if the disc is finalized before playing it.

If all else fails, ask the video company for assistance including recreating your DVD's until they work for you.

Darren asks, ***"We would like to read more on bots, worms, Trojan horses & spyware..."***

"Malware" is a new internet term that encompasses bots, worms, Trojan horses, spyware, adware, etc. "Mal" stands for Malicious. "Ware" is short for software.

I am going to try to recap some of the excellent information found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malware>. Check out this site for a vast amount of great information! I highly recommend the Wikipedia. It is a free Encyclopedia.

The definition found in the Wikipedia is: "Malware is software which is designed to infiltrate or damage a computer system, without the owner's informed consent... In the legal system, Malware is sometimes known as a computer contaminant... Malware is not to be confused with defective software, that is, software which has a legitimate purpose but contains harmful bugs."

Some of these questions were asked several weeks ago. Thank you for your patience. As we have 500 words in which to answer them, it may take a couple of weeks to get to your question. Unfortunately, some of your questions are too complex to answer in this column.

Do you have questions or comments? Please address questions, comments and suggestions to questions@compusurgeon.com or browse to <http://www.compusurgeon.com> and click on the submit button.