



AmazonBasics Helpful Hints | CD-R, DVD-R and DVD+R

PROBLEM: I've inserted a new disk in the correct drive, but my computer does not recognise it.

SOLUTION 1: Make sure your drive is compatible with the disk type you are using.

New CD and DVD drives can read and write almost all disk formats, but older drives can be more particular. Here's a brief overview of current CD and DVD formats:

"R" indicates that a disk is a "Write Once" format. Once you save files to a DVD+R, DVD-R or CD-R disk, you can read the files as much as you like but you cannot record over them or edit them. These disks can be read by drives designated "R" and drives designated "RW"

"RW" indicates that a disk is rewritable, and that files can be erased or edited after the initial burning. These disks can only be read by drives designated "RW."

When dealing with DVDs instead of CDs, you need to be aware that there are two different formats available: the "plus" format (+) and the "dash" format (-). The two formats feature many technical differences, but most of them are not significant for the average user.

Most newer DVD players and drives are "hybrid," identified as "DVD±RW." These players can handle DVD-R, DVD-RW, DVD+R, and DVD+RW disks, as well as CDs.

Some older players can only write one DVD format. This means that if you have a DVD+RW drive, you may need to purchase only DVD+R or DVD+RW disks. If you have a DVD-RW drive, you may need to purchase only DVD-R or DVD-RW disks. Although the differences between a "plus" and "dash" format may be negligible to you, the differences may not be negligible to your disk drive. Consult your product manual if you are uncertain as to what type of drive you have.

Problem: I've finished burning a disk, but the burn failed and some (or all) of my data is unavailable.

Solution 1: Make sure you are not trying to write too much information onto a single disk.

The software you are using to burn disks should allow you to see how much space is available on your disk and how large the files you are trying to burn are. If your total file size exceeds your disk capacity, you will not be able to include every file on your disk.

Solution 2: Try burning at a different speed.

There is not a direct correlation between write speed and failed burns, but some people find writing at slower speeds to be more reliable. The quality of your burner and the software you are using impacts the ideal write speed for your setup.

Solution 3: Try using different burning software.

There are a wide range of programs available to help you burn CDs and DVDs, and some may work better with your system than others.

Solution 4: Make sure your hard disk is fast enough and has enough free space to handle your DVD files.

In order to be usable, data must be written to a DVD all at once at a specific, pre-determined speed. If your computer is unable to supply data to the DVD burner fast enough to keep up with a burn, then an underflow error will occur, and you won't be able to use the disk.

Solution 5: Insert a new disk and try burning your data again.

Even with high-quality media and a dependable burner, it's possible for a burn to fail because of something as simple as dust or fingerprints on the disk.

Problem: My recently burned DVD+R or DVD-R works on my computer but not in my DVD player.

Solution 1: Check to see if your DVD player is compatible with the disk format that you are using.

If you have an older DVD player, it is possible that it cannot read the DVD+R format. It is also possible, but less likely, that your old player will have difficulty reading even DVD-R format disks. If you plan to play burned disks regularly, you may want to invest in a newer DVD player, which should have no trouble with either format.

Problem: My recently burned CD-R works on my computer but not in another CD player.

Solution 1: Check to see if your CD player is compatible with the CD-R format you are using.

Some older CD players have difficulty reading CD-R disks. If you plan to play burned disks regularly, you may want to invest in a newer CD player, which should have no trouble playing burned disks.

Solution 2: Check to see if the files on your disk are in the correct format.

While many newer CD players are able to play .mp3 and other audio files, you may need to burn your disk in "Audio CD" mode and not in "Data CD" mode in order for your CD player to read the data properly. Check to see if your CD player can read .mp3 files. If not, you will need to burn your disks in "Audio CD" mode or get a CD player with .mp3 playback capability.

PROBLEM: My DVDs are labelled 16X and my CDs are labelled 52X, but it takes much longer than it should to burn a disk.

Solution 1: Check to see what the maximum speed of your CD or DVD burning drive is.

If you have an older or slower drive, you may not be able to take advantage of the top speed your disk is rated for. For example, to take full advantage of a DVD or CD that offers write times of 52X, you will need to have a burner that offers write times of 52X.

Solution 2: Check the settings in your burning software.

You should be able to easily select a desired burn speed based on the limits of your drive and disk.

Solution 3: Try using different burning software.

There are a wide range of programs available to help you burn CDs and DVDs, and some work faster than others.

Solution 4: Keep in mind that burning a disk at 52X is not actually twice as fast as burning it at 26X, or 52 times faster than burning at 1X.

Many factors determine your write speed, including the capacity of your disk, the amount of data you are copying, the processing power of your computer, etc.

Solution 5: Turn off all unnecessary applications on your computer while burning.

Your computer may be slowing down your write times by spending processing power on other applications.