



Southern Maryland  
**Mac User Group**

20058-D Point Lookout Road  
Great Mills, Maryland 20634  
Meetings second  
Monday of the month from 7pm to 9pm  
at the SMARTCO warehouse.

December 2004

## NASA

**NASA @your library is an extraordinary educational exhibit which will be installed at the Lexington Park branch of the St. Mary's County Library from December 18, 2004 through January 15, 2005. St. Mary's County Library is one of the few libraries across this country which was selected for this honor. The exhibit was developed by NASA and the American Library Association, with funding from NASA and Apple, to take the excitement and potential of space research to communities across the country.**

**The exhibit consists of two major parts:**

- **A plasma screen display with double audio domes, pictured above on the right. The themes will include: health, home, transportation, environment, agriculture, and commerce.**
- **An interactive center with six state-of-the-art Macintosh workstations, pictured above on the left. In the center of the exhibit is a rotating display. The themes include: shuttling to space, living in space, science in space, laboratories in space, business in space, and the future in space.**

**In conjunction with the exhibit, the library will be offering free programs and other events for the public. Begin checking the library's website, [www.stmalib.org](http://www.stmalib.org), in September for the schedule of programs and activities. Visit [www.ala.org/nasa](http://www.ala.org/nasa) for more information on living in space.**

## iPod

**It's funny, Karen was complaining today about the iPod. She said that it won't let you delete songs 'just from the ipod' or just from your HD and yet leave still on your ipod. And if you lost your entire music collection because of a HD crash and the only backup is on your iPod..well.... Tonight I**

**was looking at MacHome magazine (my first copy just arrived today) and it talked about this utility app called iPodRip. I ran back to Karen's room to show it to her I was so excited. Check it out since it might be something you need in the future, or someone you know might need it.**  
<http://www.thelittleappfactory.com/application.php?app=iPodRip>  
**It's free for ten uses then it costs, but the cost is so cheap (\$10.00) I'm going to buy it for her.**

**Thursday, December 09 2004 @ 08:23 AM PST**

## **PowerBook/iBook stays unresponsive after attempted wake-from-sleep (#2): Potential causes; Workarounds**

We've received an overwhelming response to a report yesterday of problems waking various PowerBook and iBook models from sleep. The problem, when manifest, causes a PowerBook/iBook to remain with a blank screen, or deliver a kernel panic immediately after it is triggered to wake up.

Dozens of readers corroborated in the issue in varying forms. The majority report that it is a sporadically occurring problem not specific to any incremental Mac OS X update. In modal cases, the following traits are present:

- The PowerBook/iBook seems awake, yet screen is black. It is at least partially powered: there is a faint noise that may come from the disk drive. Screen brightness cannot be adjusted.
- The keyboard is not responsive. However, the caps lock and num lock lights can be switched on and off
- The afflicted machine does not react to a network ping.
- The CD works normally and will accept media, but the system does not react appropriately.

- The battery continues to drain
- The machine does not "Wake for network administrator access"

### **Potential causes**

**Closing the lid vs. manually sleeping** For some readers, the issue occurs only when the PowerBook/iBook is put to sleep via losing of the lid. If the machine is manually put to sleep via the Apple menu or otherwise, it awakens properly.

MacFixIt reader Andreas writes "Opening the lid wakes the machine, sleep light goes out, hard drive makes noise, screen is blank. Always seems to happen when opening the lid - sleeping manually and waking the system up by a key-press never exhibited this problem."

**External devices** For others, the issue only occurs when external devices, such as displays, USB/FireWire devices, etc., are connected during sleep.

MacFixIt reader Liz beck writes "I also have had this wake from sleep problem. It appears to be related to HOW I wake up my 12" PowerBook. If I have just put it to sleep and then wake it up it does well. But when I hook it up to an external monitor, keyboard and mouse, I get the black screen and it is totally unresponsive. To the point where I have to unplug it and pull the battery sometimes."

**How long the PowerBook/iBook has been sleeping** In some cases the issue seems related to how long a PowerBook/iBook has been sleeping. Extended sleep periods trigger the problem, while shorter nap sessions do not.

Dave Leary writes "I have two Powerbooks, and 800 MHz and a 1 GHz . Both have the problem, but the 1 GHz model has it to a greater extent. For me, the issue is related to how long the Powerbook has been asleep. If I sign off and leave it asleep overnight, getting it to wake up is a major issue. I have tried opening and closing the lid several times (sometimes works), starting to type my password (sometimes works) and holding the power button down for 10 seconds and re-starting (always works, but not the way it should be.) If I leave it sleeping for only a few minutes it almost always wakes up."

**Problematic RAM?** Some users say they started experiencing this

problem after adding third party RAM to their PowerBook/iBook. Reader Alex writes:

"I too suffer from the inability to wake from sleep as mentioned on your site today and which you asked readers to report. Powerbook G4 17" 1.33mhz - currently running 10.3.6. Pretty sure the problem is down to the extra (non Apple) RAM I installed as it did not happen before then Since introducing this RAM also started getting the odd kernel panic which I never had before."

Other users, however, are experiencing the problem regardless which RAM (Apple-supplied or after-market) is installed. Rob Hill writes:

"I have much the same issue as reported by Latker with my Titanium PB 500. I had two memory modules both supplied by Apple when I bought the PB. Later I replaced the 128MB module with a 512MB module with no noticeable difference in the problem. I even experimented with various combinations of modules/slots - again no noticeable difference. "

### **Workarounds**

**Energy Saver settings** For some readers, including Pierre Bernard, setting processor performance to "Highest" in the Energy Saver pane of System Preferences seems to prevent the wake-from-sleep "coma". With "Automatic" or "Reduced" settings the problem occurs more frequently.

**Disconnecting external devices** As noted above, in some cases this issue only occurs when external devices are present at the time of wake-up. As such disconnecting all external hard drives, displays, and other devices prior to sleep has proved successful in eliminating the issue for a few readers.

James Stead writes "I had that problem frequently with my 15 inch Titanium until I realized it was related to my USB mouse. If I put the PB to sleep with the mouse connected and then disconnected it, the PB would then have trouble waking up. The solution for me is to disconnect the mouse before sleep."

**Ending network sessions, turning AirPort off** For some readers, ending network sessions by disconnecting any attached Ethernet cables, ending dial-up sessions, or turning off an AirPort card before putting the

machine to sleep limits the problem.

MacFixIt reader Paul Conway writes "The wake from sleep does seem to work better if my network settings are turned off - especially Airport connections - before I close the screen to put it to sleep."

**Avoid plugging in/unplugging power adapter during sleep** Some have been able to avoid this issue by never plugging in or unplugging a power adapter while the PowerBook/iBook is asleep.

Roey Horns writes "I am working around this problem by making sure to never plug or unplug the power supply while the PowerBook is asleep. So far I have only seen this happening when I didn't follow this procedure."

**Quitting all applications before sleeping** MacFixIt reader Franco Furger reports that this problem only occurs when certain applications are running while the machine is put to sleep. He writes:

"Regarding the sleep problem with PBs, I had a somewhat similar experience. I used to have a Titanium PB, I now have an Aluminum PB. I experienced the sleep problem on both systems and with different versions of OS X. In my experience, the problem seems to correlate with what applications are open when the PB is put to sleep. Unfortunately I haven't been able to figure out which ones [...] What I can say is that my system always wakes up if no application is running when I put it to sleep."

**Temporarily removing the battery** In some cases, removing the battery for a period of time then re-inserting it will allow proper wake-up, though the process is more time-consuming than simply restarting.

Bob Guy writes "The only remedy that I have found workable is to remove the power supply and battery for about 60 seconds (shorter does not work) and then re-insert the battery. It may be necessary to do this twice.

"After re-insertion of the battery, there may still be no response to attempts to restart (using the power button) until the 5th or 6th attempt when the screen will light. There are frequently sounds of a mechanism engaging inside the computer for about 2 second and then silence or the machine will simply start up and the end of this sound sometimes 4 or 5

seconds after the start button is pressed."

**Waiting it out** I occasionally (more on the rare side) have a wake-from-sleep issue on my G4 15" 1Ghz PowerBook. I would open the lid, the sleep light would go out and I would be stuck with a black screen.

I would press keys, click the mouse and press the power button thinking that would do something. If I am patient and just wait it out, I would be prompted with my password login screen. Once I get back in, the "Are you sure you want to shutdown?" dialog box is waiting (obviously from when I hit the power button). I would assume this is a sign that the PowerBook is alive even though the screen isn't.

Other times I grow impatient and I just power down by holding the power button and restart the machine.

**Apple repair centers not recognizing the problem** Some readers have submitted their machines for repair after experiencing this problem, either through a standard Apple warranty or AppleCare. However, many are having problems getting repair centers to recognize the problem because it is not easily reproduced on a consistent basis.

MacFixIt reader Paul writes:

"I bought a 15" Aluminum Powerbook with an Apple RAM upgrade the first week they were introduced. No weird OS add on's, no other peripherals.

"About 2-3 times a week I get a black screen on wake up and the computer is completely unresponsive. I have to do a forced restart to get my computer back. I returned it to Apple and of course, they couldn't reproduce it, so I got the computer back. It still does it! I've reset the power manager and tried a few other things, all to no avail.

"I used to be an Apple Engineer, so I'm doubting operator error here."

Matthew Lee corroborates:

"I also have a 17" 1.3 Powerbook that does the same thing. You put the unit into deep sleep and will not come back. I have formatted the drive,

tried different RAM to no avail. The unit was sent to Apple right before the warranty expired and they found nothing wrong with it -- even though when I got it home it would not wake from sleep!"

If you have any additional data regarding this issue, please drop us a line at [late-breakers@macfixit.com](mailto:late-breakers@macfixit.com).

**Links:** [Late-breakers@macfixit.com](mailto:late-breakers@macfixit.com)

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**Today's Featured Article**

Late-Breakers

Friday, December 10 2004 @ 01:45 AM PST

## **PowerBooks/iBooks unresponsive after sleep (#3): Possible causes; workarounds; reinstalling OS X**

On Wednesday we covered a report of a PowerBook that appears unresponsive when the owner attempts to wake it from sleep mode; specifically, the screen remains black or, in some cases, the laptop experiences a kernel panic. Yesterday we noted that dozens of MacFixIt readers had corroborated that report, and the flood of confirming responses has continued since, with scores of additional reports in the past 24 hours. Today we expand on theories as to the cause of this issue and possible workarounds and solutions.

**More theories on causes** We've seen a good number of theories as to why this issue occurs. Several new ones were suggested by readers in the past day, including bad RAM, Bluetooth activity, and a bad AirPort card connection.

**Bad RAM** Reader Daniel Eran notes that in his case bad RAM appears

to be the culprit:

"I have a PowerBook G4 15" 1.25Ghz and attempted to add house-brand RAM from CompUSA. I got two 512MB SODIMMs marked "PC-2100/2700." The RAM caused an initial crash on boot and then a kernel panic, but after that I was able to restart and use the new RAM fine, as long as I didn't put the machine to sleep. Doing some research, I saw Kingston recommends PowerBook users turn off processor cycling ('highest performance' rather than 'automatic') for their RAM, and this seemed to help. With 'performance' on highest, I was able sleep the PowerBook and wake normally, but only if it had a power supply connected. If it was forced to run off battery power while asleep, it would not wake up. Apparently, for RAM to work in recent PowerBooks, it needs to support a low power sleep state. Most cheap/generic RAM brands don't do this, even though they claim PC2700 status and list the same specifications. Kingston, for example, has at least three different models of 'PC2700 SODIMM RAM,' all of which have the same specs but are designed for different models...A client had a similar problem with 3rd party RAM in a 17" PowerBook using PC2100 RAM. Appeared to work but always died in sleep. After biting the bullet and buying a Samsung 1 GB RAM SODIMM, I've had no problems with sleep."

**Bad AirPort card connection** Reader Glenn Austin reports that since re-seating his AirPort card the problem hasn't occurred:

"I noticed another place on the Web where another person had the [Apple representative at the Apple Store Genius Bar] replace their Airport card. I simply shut my machine down, removed the battery and the Airport card, re-inserted the card, and put the machine back together. So far, so good -- no 'black screen' on wake-up."

**Related to Bluetooth?** One reader suggests that, at least in his case, Bluetooth may be the culprit. (We doubt this is a universal cause, as out of all the reports we've received of this issue, only one person has even mentioned Bluetooth, and in fact a number of people explicitly noted that Bluetooth is not enabled.) Roy Rhodes writes:

"I too have experienced this seemingly intermittent wake from sleep issue with my PowerBook G4 1.25GHz. I have talked to AppleCare about it and they had me repair permissions from the startup CD and I then ran

Disk Warrior and Optimizer. These things seemed to help, but one day I stumbled on what I think is the main issue. When the computer sleeps with the lid open, the keyboard and mouse are supposed to wake it up. When the lid is closed, the keyboard and mouse are not supposed to wake it up. A few days ago, I closed the lid and watched the sleep light begin to pulsate. I then moved my Bluetooth mouse out of the way and watched the sleep light go dark. When I opened the lid, the computer was on, but the screen was dark and wouldn't come on...I can't say for sure that other things have or haven't caused this problem, but I can make it happen every time I move or click my Bluetooth mouse while the lid is shut and the computer is asleep. There have been times when I opened the lid and the screen was blank but the computer was hot. Once I figured out the Bluetooth issue, I have been able to avoid that problem. All Apple has to do is disable Bluetooth when the lid is closed. I am also certain that this did not happen before the 10.3.5 Update."

**Workarounds** Yesterday we covered a number of workarounds for avoiding this issue or, at the very least, reviving a "comatose" laptop after the problem occurs. We follow up on some of those suggestions and cover some new ones.

**Opening/closing the lid again** Yesterday we covered a number of reader reports that when this issue occurs, often simply closing the lid, waiting for the "sleep" indicator to begin to pulse, and then opening the lid again will wake the computer properly. We've received many confirming reports from users that this workaround indeed works. Here are a few examples of such reports:

James Ng: I too have seen it happen with my 17" 1.5GHz PowerBook. You open the lid, and the screen may blink on for a fraction of a second, then go out. Nothing will turn it back on. However, for me, I find closing the lid (and getting the PowerBook to sleep and wake up again) and reopening it will get it going again.

Kori Lessing: I sometimes have this problem on my AL PowerBook 15"...Sometimes when I open the lid it starts up but the screen remains black. Solution: close the lid again, and re-open it. It's always worked then.

Ross Carothers: I have had this problem [on a 15" PowerBook G4 1.25GHz] many times in the past...and have tried many different ways to

regain a visual display without success, usually resorting to rebooting...by holding the power button in momentarily. However, one day I simply decided to wake the computer up again. I put the computer to sleep once again by simply closing the lid and then attempted to wake the computer after 10 secs or so by opening the lid, and that worked! This method has worked every time since.

Doug Knowles: I've observed this problem on my 400MHz Pismo for quite a while now; I have stumbled on a frighteningly simple workaround that seems to work on most occasions: if the PB gets into its non-responsive state after opening the lid, I close the lid for about 20-30 seconds and open it again, and make sure I wait long enough (60 seconds) to see if it wakes up again. It may take a couple of attempts before the thing really wakes up, but I haven't had to resort to a hard restart for quite a while.

Glenn Fawcett: 95% of the time if I just close the lid and wait two minutes, the Mac goes back to sleep, as indicated by the external LED. Opening the lid then wakes it up correctly. I would heartily recommend trying this before doing anything drastic such as holding down the power button or removing the battery!

And so on... In fact, at least one MacFixIt staff member has experienced this issue on his 1.5GHz 15" PowerBook G4, and the above procedure does indeed "rescue" the PowerBook every time.

**Unplugging/replugging the AC adapter** Reader Jeff Goldman explains a similar workaround involving the PowerBook's AC adapter:

"I was seeing this behavior frequently and have found that the best thing to do is to unplug the power connector at the side of the machine and plug it right back in. Invariably, this handles the problem. On several occasions, when the screen came back up, the warning about low battery window was present. On several others, the power indicator in the menu bar showed 0% and then changed immediately to 99 or 100. Mind you, in all cases, the power cord appeared to be properly connected. Go figure."

**Screen saver avoids problem?** Tom Daly has had odd success in letting OS X's screen saver activate:

"I have a year-old [17" PowerBook] that has exhibited all the wake-from-sleep problems everyone else has been suffering through. [I've] tried some of the proposed remedies to no avail. Over time [the issue] became so common, I just got used to hard-starting after any sleep session, whether the lid had been closed or not. Nevertheless, a month ago, I noticed that if I activate the screensaver -- in my case, by mousing the cursor into the lower right-hand corner of the screen -- and then walked away for a while or closed the lid and allowed the machine to fall asleep, it always woke up properly and promptly. So far, I haven't seen a recurrence of the issue. In addition to not allowing my PB to doze off on its own sans screensaver, I also avoid using the Sleep command at any time."

**Disconnecting peripherals** Yesterday we covered a reader report that disconnecting external peripherals helped avoid sleep problems for one user. Several other users have since recommended similar precautions. Marv Abe writes:

"I have a Ti PowerBook 500MHz w/1GB memory (I usually use an external monitor and USB kb and mouse) and have noticed this problem since from way back to the latest 10.3.x Beta seed. After too many power reboots with some disk rebuilds along the way, I finally found a solution that works for me: (1) disconnect the USB; (2) put the PowerBook into sleep mode; and (3) disconnect all the rest (external monitor, Ethernet, power). When I'm waking the PowerBook away from my desk, just awake the PowerBook by raising the monitor lid. When returning to my desk, [I then] (1) reconnect (external monitor, Ethernet, power); (2) wake the PowerBook; and (3) reconnect the USB devices."

However, this procedure hasn't worked for everyone. Stephen Macklin writes, "I have a 17 inch PowerBook and have all of the problems described and have tried most of the solutions. I know external devices are not the issue as I rarely connect any at home at night, and still get the black screen of a kernel panic in the morning. The only consistent factor from one place to another is a network connection. Plugged in at the office/AirPort at home. I am going to try turning AirPort off and activating it when I need it."

**Not putting the laptop to sleep by closing the lid** A number of MacFixIt readers have reported that the issue only occurs when putting the laptop to sleep by closing the lid, and thus suggest that people use software

sleep commands. Kee Hinckley writes:

"I *never* put my Powerbook to sleep by closing the lid. When I do that, I've seen both the failure to wake, and the hard crashes. Both seem to occur when network and/or USB devices have changed."

(You can put the laptop to sleep by pressing the power button and then clicking the Sleep button in the resulting dialog, or by using the Sleep command in the Apple menu.)

On the other hand, some users have had the opposite experience, suggesting that *how* the computer went to sleep may be unrelated to this issue. For example, Richard Widdicombe writes:

"I have two Aluminum G4's and one Titanium G4. The problem of unresponsive behavior appears only on the newest Aluminum G-4. It is very frustrating...I find in my case that the machine always wakes up after closing the lid (even over night). It does not wake up if it has gone to sleep by itself [via Energy Saver settings] or if I choose Sleep [from the Apple Menu]. But this occurs only after a longer period of time (an hour or more usually). The problematic thing about this is that when the machine decides to black out and lock up it must be doing something because the case stays warm or gets hot. I have to try to remember to close the lid each time I am about to walk away."

**Reinstalling OS X fixes the problem?** Although a number of readers have claimed that they still experienced this issue after reinstalling Mac OS X (often at the behest of Apple's support representatives), other readers found success with this approach. Jeff Gayton writes:

"I have a 12" Aluminum PB and suffered frequently from the sleep problem. Like most readers, the problem occurred when the lid was down. If I put the PB to sleep and didn't close the lid, I had no problems. Also, the PB gave every indication that it was awake, except for the display. The duration of sleep was often only a couple of minutes and the problem still manifested itself...The problem has persisted through several OS upgrades, so doesn't appear to be related to that. The problem appeared whether I had an external device or not, and regardless of whether it was plugged in before or after sleep/wake. You may note that I described the problems in the past tense. After erasing my HD and reinstalling the OS and all my

software, the problem is no more."

And Russell Sheptak writes:

"Rebooting into OS 9 and then back into OS X would fix the problem for about a week, as would resetting the PMU, but they were only quick fixes and the problem kept happening. The problem continued as I continued to do updates via the Software Update application. Fortuitously a lousy driver install of an Orange Micro USB /Firewire PCMCIA card rendered my system unbootable...When I did an archive/install and went from 10.2.0 to 10.2.8 via the Combo updater the problem ceased, permanently."

Do any of these fixes/workarounds work for you? Have you been able to narrow down a cause? Drop us an email at [Late-breakers@macfixit.com](mailto:Late-breakers@macfixit.com).