

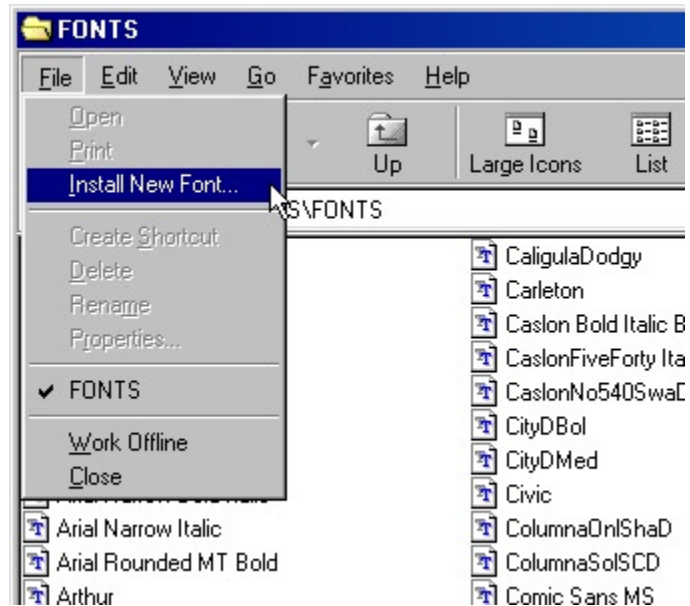
# Fixing font related problems *by Chuck Davis*

Installing new fonts is usually a very simple task. Occasionally however, there are problems that can develop, making it difficult or even impossible to install a new font. If you've ever had trouble installing a font, fonts not showing up in Gerber's True Type Converter or fonts mysteriously appearing and disappearing, the culprit is likely a corrupt Fonts folder. In this article we'll address some reasons for a corrupt Fonts folder and other related bugs and how to fix them. The following information applies to Windows operating systems: 3.1, 95, 98, ME, NT and 2000. The newer Windows XP has self-repairing features that make these steps unnecessary.

## You may have a corrupt Fonts folder if:

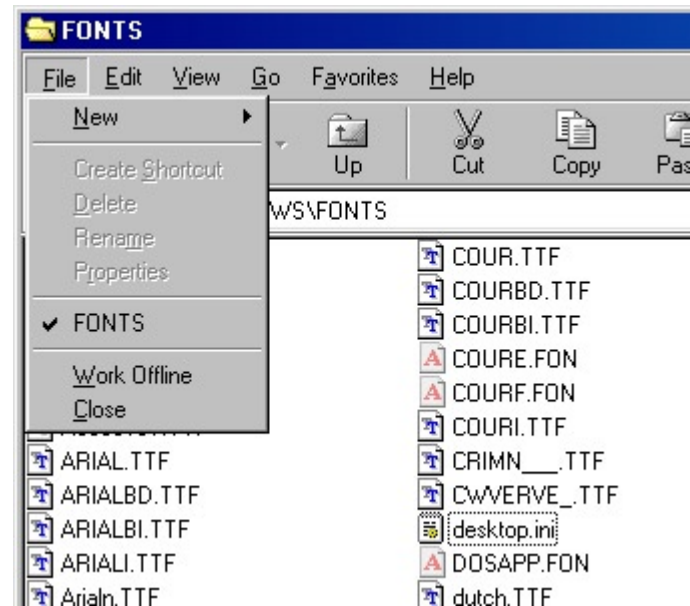
- "Install New Font" option is not available from "File" menu on Fonts folder.
- *Open* and *Print* options are available from "File" menu of Fonts folder
- Installed fonts are not available in font lists of certain programs (Gerber's "True Type Converter" especially vulnerable)
- Incorrect names or cryptic abbreviations (truncated) are used for names of fonts in Fonts folder
- Dragging and dropping a font into the Fonts folder window results in moving the font instead of copying
- Programs are hanging up or crashing
- Desktop.ini file is visible in Fonts folder
- File extensions of fonts (.tff, .fon) are visible

Check your own folder against these symptoms by going to your *Control Panel* and opening the *Fonts* folder. If any two of the above are true -- you have a corrupt Fonts folder. But don't panic, we're going to fix that.



## Good Fonts Folder

"Install New Font" option available. No Cut and Paste options. Desktop.ini file not visible. Font names are correct. No hidden system fonts visible.



## Corrupt Fonts Folder

"Install New Font" option not available. Cut and Paste options available. Desktop.ini file visible. Font names are truncated. Hidden system fonts (shown in red) are visible.

### Fixing a corrupt Fonts folder

The Fonts folder isn't like any other folder in the Windows system. It's a special "System" folder with *System* and *Read Only* attributes. There are two key files that the Fonts folder uses that often become corrupt:

**Fonttext.dll** and **Desktop.ini**. The Desktop.ini file is located within the Fonts folder itself. (you can only see it when your Fonts folder is corrupt) The Fonttext.dll file is located in the Windows *System* folder. The Fonttext.dll file contains all the menu commands, icons, dialog boxes and coding essential to the operation of the Fonts folder. The Desktop.ini file passes individual font information from the folder to the Fonttext.dll file.

Microsoft suggests two solutions for repairing a corrupted Fonts folder. The first being a MS-DOS command which restores the System and Read Only attributes to the Fonts folder. And the second being to replace the Desktop.ini and Fonttext.dll files with clean copies for your Windows CD. We will be performing both of these solutions here.

#### Step1

Here is how we open the window where we will be typing in the necessary MS-DOS commands.

#### Step2

Type in the commands to reset the "Read Only" and "System" attributes of the Fonts folder.

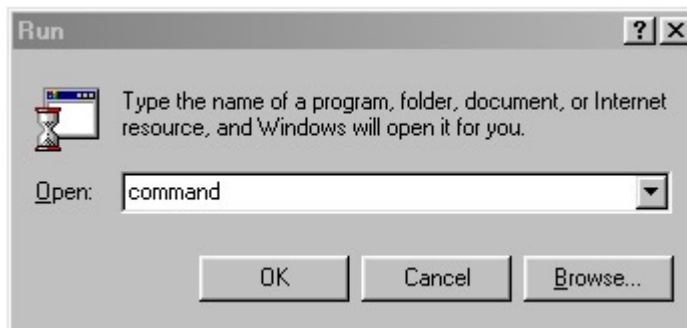
#### Step3

Opening the "System File Checker" window

#### Step4

Here is where we tell Windows what file we want to extract.

### Step 1 Open the MS-DOS window



Go to **Start > Run**

In the "Open" box type: **command**

### Step 2 Reset Fonts folder attributes

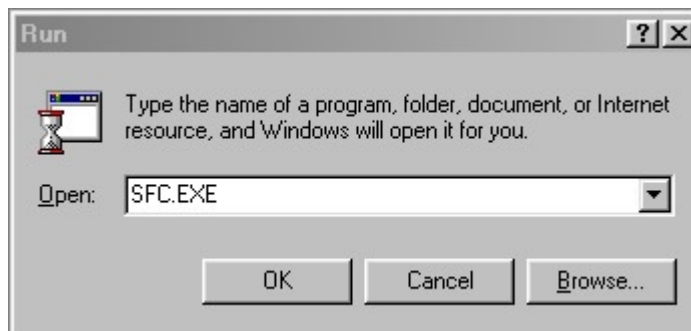


The MS-DOS window pops up with a blinking cursor, waiting for your input. Type: **cd\windows**

Hit Enter. On the next line type: **attrib +s +r fonts**

Close the MS-DOS window.

### Step 3 Open the System File Checker



Go to **Start > Run**

In the "Open" box type: **SFC.exe**

The System File Checker window pops up. Type **fonttext.dll** in the box and click the Start button

## Step 5

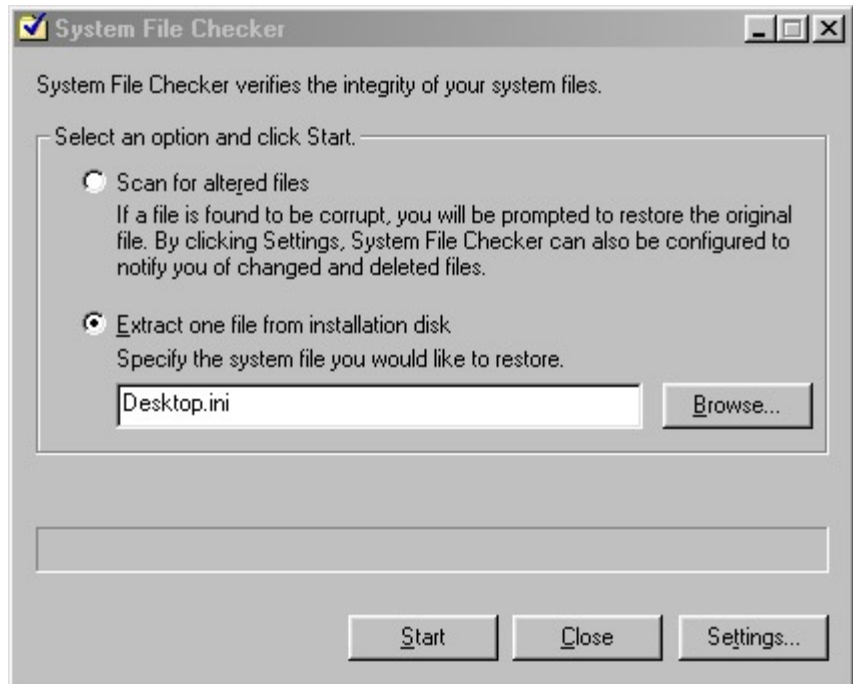
Here we tell Windows to replace the existing corrupt Desktop.ini and Font.dll files with new clean copies from the Windows CD. Each file must be extracted and replaced separately. The Desktop.ini file goes into the Fonts folder while the Font.dll file goes into the System folder.

Once you've completed all the steps and restarted your computer, recheck your fonts folder and go to: "File" to ensure "Install New Font" option is available once again. Why does the Fonts folder become corrupt at all? There seems to be a few different things that cause it including: installing too many fonts, adding or removing large quantities of fonts, attempting to move the fonts folder, attempting to hack into the fonts folder and access the desktop.ini file. In addition, a poorly-made font may also be to blame. Some fonts contain too many points, spacing problems or other errors which may result in a corrupt fonts folder or program crashes. Corrupt fonts folders are especially common among Gerber Graphix Advantage, Gerber Omega, and Signlab users. If you have compared your fonts folder and to the examples shown here and it doesn't look like the corrupt fonts folder shown, the problems you are experiencing may be simply a matter of having too many fonts installed.

### Too many fonts installed

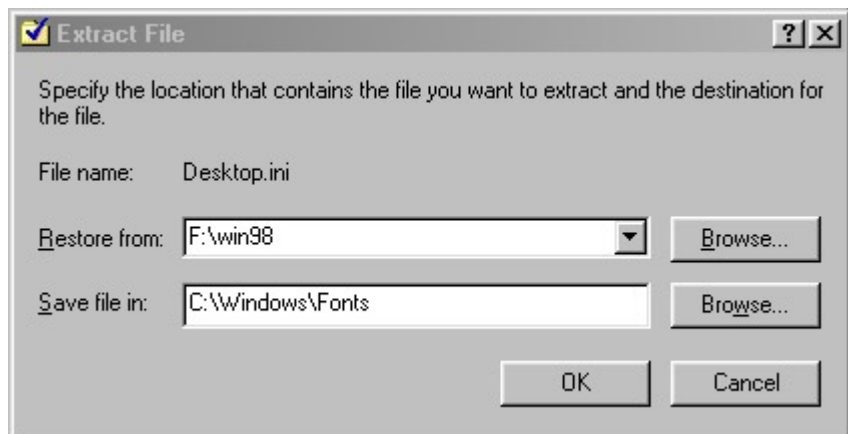
I've had many customers call reporting that they could have sworn they installed a certain font, but it isn't appearing in the programs. Windows does have limitations on how many fonts can be installed. Figures vary, but about 800-1,000 seems to be the consensus (although Windows XP has been rumored to be able to

## Step 4 Tell Windows what file to replace



The System File Checker window pops up. Type **desktop.ini** in the box and click the Start button.

## Step 5 Tell Windows where to find the new file and where to put it



A new *Extract File* window pops up. In the "Restore from" box, choose your CD drive with the Windows disk (you may have to specify the Win98 folder also). In the "Save file in" box, type: **C:\Windows\Fonts** (Be sure to specify the correct drive letter if your copy of Windows has been installed in a different drive letter other than "C".)

Click the OK button.

Repeat the process above for the Font.dll file, except in the "Save file in" box, type: **C:\Windows\System**

Restart the computer.

accept more). Every font contains two names: the font name (which is embedded within the font file and only visible to the user when placed in the Fonts folder or in the actual programs-- this can not be changed) and the file name (which can be changed by the user). Every time a font is installed, both the font name and the file name are added to a registry key. According to Microsoft, this registry key cannot exceed 64 KB. This means that if font names average 20 characters in length and file names average 10 characters in length, the maximum number of TrueType fonts you can install falls between 1,000 and 1,500. Additionally, if the path to a particular font is located inside another folder (as many sign programs do) the full path to the font is included in the registry, using up more space in the registry key and reducing the number of fonts you can install. Since many sign programs create a separate font folder and even have their own proprietary fonts, sign people are especially vulnerable.

Common problems with too many fonts installed include:

- Fonts not available in font lists of some programs
- Fonts intermittently appearing and disappearing
- Installed fonts not showing up in Fonts folder or increasing the number of fonts available.
- Programs crashing or freezing upon starting

### **The Solution**

Remove some fonts. Get it down to 800 if you can. As painful as that may sound, it really is the only solution. Keep your Fonts folder lean with a selection of good quality fonts. Your Fonts folder will be less susceptible to corruption and your programs will open and run faster. To remove fonts, install a program that will allow you to preview each font (The Font Thing available at the Letterhead Fonts website is one such program) and delete them from the fonts folder easily. Otherwise just open your Fonts folder and manually double-click on each, to see a preview and decide if it's something you really need. Remember to keep a backup folder elsewhere on your hard drive of all fonts. Keeping a shortcut of the Fonts folder on your desktop makes it easy to remove that awful font you temporarily installed in order to reproduce someone's "Nephew Art".

There may be hope for the "Fontaholic" who insists on wading through fonts such as "Halloween Dingbats" or 15 variations of "Helvetica" in his font list. In addition to allowing you to organize your fonts into folders (of any name you choose), Adobe Type Manager Deluxe ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)) allows you to turn on and off fonts as you need them by simply checking or unchecking them. The drawback is that you must open the Adobe Type Manager program to do this. The solution I use is to keep a folder on my hard drive of every font I've ever encountered, organized alphabetically. I then setup my system so that I can right-click on any font and choose "Send To" > "Fonts" thereby installing it quickly (see *May/June 2002 SignCraft*).

If you have reached your limitation on the number of fonts you can install, you may notice that removing fonts doesn't seem to bring the number of fonts down (shown in the bottom left of the Fonts folder window). This is because the fonts that you attempted to install after you reached your limit have been in a state of "limbo" -- waiting for the room to move in. As you delete fonts, (and then restart the computer) these fonts that have siitting in wait finally install themselves. I've had cases where a person attempted to install thousands of fonts after he'd already reached is 64 kb limit and they did not install. Two hours were spent deleting fonts from the Fonts folder and rebooting until we were able to get it down to 800.

Be careful about installing programs that also install fonts. CorelDraw is infamous for installing hundreds of fonts by default. And if you are already at your limit, this can cause problems. So if you have the option to choose advanced or manual install for programs you suspect may install fonts automatically -- by all means do so. You can always find the fonts on the CD again later. You may even want to drag all the fonts from the CD to your "backup" fonts folder to install later.

### Fonts that should never be removed

Before removing any fonts from your Fonts folder, you should make a backup copy of the folder. That way if you should make a mistake and remove a required system font, you will be able to replace it. The following is a list of fonts that should never be removed. They are used by the Windows system and other programs. In addition to these, you may have others that are used by certain programs and should not be removed. Visit: <http://channels.microsoft.com/typography/fonts/default.asp> for a list of Microsoft programs and their respective fonts.

Windows 3.1	Windows 95	Windows 98	Windows NT
Arial Arial Bold Arial Bold Italic Arial Italic Courier New Courier New Bold Courier New Bold Italic Courier New Italic Symbol Times New Roman Times New Roman Bold Times New Roman Bold Italic Times New Roman Italic Wingdings	Arial Arial Bold Arial Bold Italic Arial Italic Comic Sans MS Comic Sans MS Bold Courier New Courier New Bold Courier New Bold Italic Courier New Italic Marlett Symbol Times New Roman Times New Roman Bold Times New Roman Bold Italic Times New Roman Italic Wingdings	Abadi MT Cond Light Arial Arial Black Arial Bold Arial Bold Italic Arial Italic Book Antiqua Book Antiqua Bold Book Antiqua Bold Italic Book Antiqua Italic Calisto MT Century Gothic Century Gothic Bold Century Gothic Bold Italic Century Gothic Italic Comic Sans MS Comic Sans MS Bold Copperplate Gothic Bold Copperplate Gothic Light Courier New Courier New Bold Courier New Bold Italic Courier New Italic Impact Lucida Console Lucida Handwriting Italic Lucida Sans Italic Lucida Sans Unicode Marlett News Gothic MT News Gothic MT Bold News Gothic MT Italic OCR A Extended Symbol Tahoma Tahoma Bold Times New Roman Times New Roman Bold Times New Roman Italic Verdana Verdana Bold Verdana Bold Italic Verdana Italic Webdings Westminster Wingdings	Arial Arial Bold Arial Bold Italic Arial Italic Courier New Courier New Bold Courier New Bold Italic Courier New Italic Lucida Console Lucida Sans Unicode Marlett Symbol Times New Roman Times New Roman Bold Times New Roman Bold Italic Times New Roman Italic Verdana Verdana Bold Verdana Bold Italic Verdana Italic Wingdings

## Default System Fonts *(continued)*

Windows 2000/XP	
Aharoni Bold	Impact
Andalus	IrisUPC
Angsana New	IrisUPC Bold
Angsana New Bold	IrisUPC Bold Italic
Angsana New Bold Italic	IrisUPC Italic
Angsana New Italic	JasmineUPC
AngsanaUPC	JasmineUPC Bold
AngsanaUPC Bold	JasmineUPC Bold Italic
AngsanaUPC Bold Italic	JasmineUPC Italic
AngsanaUPC Italic	KaiTi_GB2312 (XP)
Arabic Transparent	KodchiangUPC
Arabic Transparent Bold	KodchiangUPC Bold
Arial	KodchiangUPC Bold Italic
Arial Black	KodchiangUPC Italic
Arial Bold	Latha
Arial Bold Italic	Levenim MT
Arial Italic	Levenim MT Bold
Batang	LilyUPC
Browallia New	LilyUPC Bold
Browallia New Bold	LilyUPC Bold Italic
Browallia New Bold Italic	LilyUPC Italic
Browallia New Italic	Lucida Console
BrowalliaUPC	Lucida Sans Unicode
BrowalliaUPC Bold	Mangal
BrowalliaUPC Bold Italic	Marlett
BrowalliaUPC Italic	Microsoft Sans Serif
Comic Sans MS	MingLiu
Comic Sans MS Bold	Miriam
Cordia New	Miriam Fixed
Cordia New Bold	Miriam Transparent
Cordia New Bold Italic	MS Gothic
Cordia New Italic	MS Mincho
CordiaUPC	MV Boli (XP)
CordiaUPC Bold	Narkisim
CordiaUPC Bold Italic	Palatino Linotype
CordiaUPC Italic	Palatino Linotype Bold
Courier New	Palatino Linotype Bold Italic
Courier New Bold	Palatino Linotype Italic
Courier New Bold Italic	Raavi (XP)
Courier New Italic	Rod
DFKai-SB (XP)	Rod Transparent
David	Shruti (XP)
David Bold	SimHei
David Transparent	Simplified Arabic
DilleniaUPC	Simplified Arabic Bold
DilleniaUPC Bold	Simplified Arabic Fixed
DilleniaUPC Bold Italic	SimSun
DilleniaUPC Italic	Sylfaen
Estrangelo Edessa (XP)	Symbol
EucrosiaUPC	Tahoma
EucrosiaUPC Bold	Tahoma Bold
EucrosiaUPC Bold Italic	Times New Roman
EucrosiaUPC Italic	Times New Roman Bold
FangSong_GB2312 (XP)	Times New Roman Bold Italic
Fixed Miriam Transparent	Times New Roman Italic
Franklin Gothic Medium (XP)	Traditional Arabic
Franklin Gothic Medium (XP)	Traditional Arabic Bold
FrankRuehl	Trebuchet MS
FreesiaUPC	Trebuchet MS Bold
FreesiaUPC Bold	Trebuchet MS Bold Italic
FreesiaUPC Bold Italic	Trebuchet MS Italic
FreesiaUPC Italic	Tunga (XP)
Gautami (XP)	Verdana
Georgia	Verdana Bold
Georgia Bold	Verdana Bold Italic
Georgia Bold Italic	Verdana Italic
Georgia Italic	Webdings
Gulim	Wingdings

## Font Folder Fixer program

To save yourself time and potential frustration, I've created a program that will perform all the above steps necessary to automatically and repair your fonts folder. It's available for free download at our website: [www.letterheadfonts.com](http://www.letterheadfonts.com)

Hopefully this has helped shed some light on the subject of fonts and removed some of the mystery surrounding those bugs and quirks. If you have a situation that wasn't addressed here or have a question, feel free to contact me. Be sure to include important information such as the Windows version, programs and fonts.

Chuck Davis  
 Letterhead Fonts  
[www.letterheadfonts.com](http://www.letterheadfonts.com)  
[chuck@letterheadfonts.com](mailto:chuck@letterheadfonts.com)  
 661-274-2765