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Can't delete softwaredistribution folder access denied

I returned from vacation and found that Windows Update will not download any of the 90 available updates (although sat for many hours saying downloading nothing is coming). Finally I used a windows readiness program and was able to get 15 or so to download and install, but trying the next group again, it's nothing to download. There is no error message, just no action at all. Although it works well most of the time, problems with Windows Update can be very, very frustrating. There is often no specific fix for any particular situation you face, other than keep trying or let it run...... neither of them helps in many cases. Fortunately, Microsoft has added a troubleshooter, and also outlined what I'll call the nuclear option: resetting Windows Update completely. Regardless of the problem, if this is a Windows Update they give you a try. Windows 10: Start with the Windows 10 Troubleshooter, click the Start menu and enter the troubleshooter to find available troubleshooters. Click troubleshooting settings when it appears. In the resulting window, locate Windows Update in the right pane. (You may need to scroll down to find it.) Click Run the troubleshooter to allow Windows to try to diagnose and fix any problems it detects. If it solves your problem, beautiful. But with the software being as complex as it is, I don't expect the troubleshooter to work in 100% of all cases. If the problem isn't resolved or the edition of Windows 10 doesn't yet have a troubleshooter, it's time to reset it. A few notes before we continue #1: Following the instructions below incorrectly - heck, maybe even after them correctly - can damage your Windows installation. I strongly recommend that you make a complete backup of the image before you follow these steps, and be prepared to restore that image backup should something go wrong. Something shouldn't go wrong, but backing up your picture will protect you if I'm wrong when something goes wrong. #2: Subject to the instructions below, or by downloading and using scripts provided by Microsoft or me, you assume full responsibility for the results. For all I know, there's something special about your machine I can't predict or account for. While this is certainly not the intention, instructions and/or scripts could make your computer unbotageable. Again, your best defense is the previous note #1. #3: Don't just click and run any of the scripts listed below. Instead, download the file by right-clicking and saving it to a location on your computer. You run these scripts in powershell or command-line manager. Because they're text files, you can review their contents by a way. Please note that as they are considered to be files, your security software software be told to allow downloading. #4: Line Wrap: Because text can sometimes be wrapped to fit the width of the view, if the command is listed without between lines: A command for other items to be typed in a single line with a space between the text. In the example above, you would type: Command multiple things followed by enter. If the commands have a blank line between them: Command 1 Command 2 is two different commands, each of which is typed separately and each followed by Enter. Next: Microsoft script for Windows 10 Microsoft has an article knowledge base, Windows Update – additional resources that contains a section called How to restore windows update components? This section starts with a PowerShell script that you can download and run. Unfortunately, it is not stated that the script seems to need administrator privileges. Just right click on the downloaded file and click on Run in PowerShell will briefly flash the window in which the script runs but fails due to lack of privilege. As a result, the steps to run the script after downloading it is actually: Open PowerShell as administrator. On the Start menu, scroll down to find Windows PowerShell, click it to expand it, then right click on the newly exposed Windows PowerShell in the submenu, and click Run as Administrator. Get-ExecutionPolicy is followed by enter. Windows prints a one-word policy— most often Limited. Note this because you will need to specify it later. Set-ExecutionPolicy -ExecutionPolicy Bypass followed by Enter. Respond with Y when prompted for confirmation. Change the directory to the folder that contains the script you downloaded. This will probably be your Download folder. Do this by typing: CD \Users\<login name=>\Downloads followed by Enter, and where <login name=> is replaced by the Windows login name. Type .\ immediately the name of the downloaded script, followed by Enter: .\Reset-WindowsUpdate.ps1 After the script runs, type the following: Set-ExecutionPolicy -ExecutionPolicy is followed by Enter, and where the policy is <policy><policy>displayed returned in step 2, above. Hopefully this will fix your problems with Windows Update. In theory, this script contains the steps below. If you don't come together with Windows 10, or just want to follow the steps yourself, you can do so. Finally: Repair Windows Update manually The steps and scripts listed below support Windows 7, 8.1, and 10. If you are running Windows XP or Vista, the Microsoft article contains several additional steps that are interspersed. Run command prompt as administrator All steps that follow require administrator privileges. It's not enough that your account is an administrator. you must run the Windows command prompt as an administrator in order to have these privileges</policy> </policy> </login> </login>On the Start menu, find and click the Windows title. Then right-click the command line. Click more if the resulting sub-menu contains it, and then click Run as Administrator. Run the command prompt as an administrator in Windows 10 (click for a larger image). A command-line instance opens with the administrative access required for the following procedure. Stop Services First, we stop several Windows services. Type the following at the command line, each line followed by Enter: net stop bits net stop wuauserv (or download and run stop-services.cmd). Do not worry if some services report an error that they are not running. Delete Files Download Manager Next, we will delete a set of files related to Download Manager. Del %ALLUSERSPROFILE%\Application Data\Microsoft\Network\Downloader\qmgr*.dat (or download and run delete-qmgr-files.cmd). Restoring software distribution and restoring services Microsoft recommends that you do this only if running through these instructions does not resolve the issue without this step. Ren %systemroot%\SoftwareDistribution\DataStore *.bak Ren %systemroot%\SoftwareDistribution\Download *.bak Ren %systemroot%\system32\catroot2 *.bak sc.exe sdset of D:(A;; CCLCSWRPWPDTLOCRRC;; SY)(A;; CCDCLCSWRPWPDTLOCRSDRCWDWO;; BA)(A;; CCLCSWLOCRRC;; AU)(A;; CCLCSWRPWPDTLOCRRC;; PU) sc.exe sdset wuauserv D:(A;; CCLCSWRPWPDTLOCRRC;; SY)(A;; CCDCLCSWRPWPDTLOCRSDRCWDWO;; BA)(A;; CCLCSWLOCRRC;; AU)(A;; CCLCSWRPWPDTLOCRRC;; PU) What Microsoft does not mention is that the first two commands fail if you were running earlier, which means that if the backup folder %systemroot%\SoftwareDistribution.bak already exists, or the backup folder %systemroot%\system32\catroot2.bak exists, renaming fails. If this happens, do not move on until you manually delete existing folders .bak. Because %systemroot% is usually C:\Windows, locate C:\Windows\SoftwareDistribution.bak and C:\Windows\system32\catroot2.bak and either rename them to something else or delete them. (You made that image backup, right? :-)). Here is a batch file that contains these commands, but also pauses after renaming to give you the opportunity to interrupt: reset-software-distribution.cmd. Re-register DLL Type exactly the following commands: cd /d %windir%\system32 regsvr32.exe atl.dll regsvr32.exe urlmon.dll regsvr32.exe mshtml.dll regsvr32.exe shdocvw.dll regsvr32.exe browseui.dll .dll regsvr32.exe jscript.dll regsvr32.exe vbscript.dll regsvr32.exe scrrun.dll regsvr32.exe msxml.dll regsvr32.exe msxml3.dll regsvr32.exe <3> msxml6.dll regsvr32.exe actxprxy.dll regsvr32.exe softpub.dll regsvr32.exe wintrust.dll regsvr32.exe dssenh.dll regsvr32.exe rsaenh.dll reg .exe gpkcsp.dll regsvr32.exe sccbase.dll regsvr32.exe slbcsp.dll regsvr32.exe cryptdlg.dll regsvr32.exe oleaut32.dll regsvr32.exe regsvr32.exe.dll.exe shell32.dll.exe .dll .dll .exe wuaueng.exe .dll .exe .exe wuaueng1.exe.dll.exe.dll .exe.dll .dll .exe <8> wups2.dll regsvr32.exe wuweb.dll regsvr32.exe qmgr.dll regsvr32.exe qmgrpr .dll regs wucltux.exe regsvr32.dll muweb.exe regsvr32.dll.exe wuwebv.dll – or download and run register-dlls.cmd. You will need to click OK for each one. Additionally, several fail. As unnerving as it may seem, it's OK. Not every system is configured in the same way, and therefore not every DLL will be present. Restore network Restore network components with the following commands: netsh winsock reset (or download and run reset-network.cmd). Restart services Now we restart services that we stopped earlier. net start bits net start wuauserv (or download and run start-services.cmd). Managing this ad Finally Reboot Naturally, much of what we've done will require a reboot to take ultimate effect. What did we just do? After all the mumbo-jumbo, you're probably wondering what you've just done, either manually or using the script. The best analogy I can come up with is clearing the browser cache. Just as your web browser tries to avoid multiple downloads and generally speed up browsing by leaving a lot of things cached on your computer's hard disk, Windows Update does something similar. Instead of re-analyzing, slowing down your system, and possibly downloading information repeatedly, it caches most of what it learns about your system on disk. And like a browser, sometimes the cache can get confused. We've simply cleared the cache and restored a few things to familiar states so Windows Update can start with a clean slate. (To be clear, the browser cache and windows update cache are completely unrelated to each other; only the terms are similar.) If you found this article useful, I'm sure you'll also love Confident Computing! My weekly email newsletter is full of articles to help you solve problems, stay safe, and give you more confidence with technology. Sign up now and see you there soon, soon,

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