

## THE COMPUTER CORNER

# No. 171: Script Error, Reboot to Clear

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Ed Rate (AA9W) has come up with another question. He says he receives the error message shown above in the title just when he has opened a website he was looking for. Rebooting and going back to the website results in the same message again. He says, "I know the solution is going to be long and arduous so I go back to reading my email." So, what is going on? What are scripts? Why are there errors? How can it be fixed? There are two parts to this issue.

**WHAT ARE SCRIPTS?** Scripts are actually JavaScript, a programming language originally developed by Netscape back in 1995 (remember Netscape Navigator?), and it was included in Internet Explorer in 1996. Today, it is a trademark of Oracle Corporation and is used in IE, Firefox and Google to name the three most popular browsers, where it depends on the browser to interact with the outside world. It can also be used in PDF documents, desktop widgets and other places, as well. For example, much of the user-interface programming for Gmail is written in JavaScript. In browsers, it can be used to animate page elements, play audio or video on the page, transmit data about your reading habits and browsing activities, load new page content and other functions, **all without reloading the original page from the Internet server**. So, it works right inside your computer as opposed to needing to get a lot of stuff from the Internet.

There is no doubt that JavaScript makes your web experience richer and faster. On the other hand, there are security issues, and the potential for malicious authors to deliver scripts to run on your computer. JavaScript writers have addressed this successfully where they can, but it depends on YOU to make sure you have the latest versions installed so that you are safe. By the way, JavaScript is not the same as Java, another programming language (which you should also keep up to date on your machine if it is installed). It is also separate and distinct from Adobe Flash Player (one version for IE, another for Firefox), which you also MUST keep up to date on your machine, for security. Don't fail to update everything with Adobe in its name! And be completely certain that all previous versions have been uninstalled (Adobe is not good at removing old versions ... it is up to you).

So, one solution is to make sure your computer has the latest and greatest. Easily done! Go to [www.patchmypc.net/download.html](http://www.patchmypc.net/download.html) and download the latest free **Patch My PC** program. Run it and make sure all your stuff is up to date. It is easy enough to figure out how to work it.

**USE THE LATEST INTERNET EXPLORER.** IE 8 is the latest version, though version 9 is on the horizon. Go to <http://www.windows.microsoft.com/en-US/internet-explorer/downloads/ie-8> to get and install it. Unless you have a very new computer, make sure to download the 32-bit version. IE8 was released in March 2009, so it has been around for some time. Don't forget to also run Windows Update after you install it, to make sure it has all of the latest functional and security patches.

If you already have IE8 and the script errors still come up, you may have turned on script error debugging by accident (it is off by default). Turn it back off to cure the problem.

1. Open IE. Click the Tools button and click Internet Options.
2. Click the Advanced tab, select the check boxes by **Disable script debugging (Internet Explorer)** and also **Disable script debugging (Other)**.
3. Clear the **Display a notification about every script error** check box, and then click **OK**.

Ed, you should probably try this last gambit (turn off script error debugging) first. Happy Computing!

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This month's classic quote: "But what is it good for?" (Engineer at Advanced Computing Systems at IBM, 1968, commenting on the microchip).