

Troubleshooting Slowness in Home Designer Plans

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The information in this article applies to:



QUESTION

After working in my plan for a while, it seems that it starts to become slower, more sluggish, or experiences more lag.

Why might this behavior be occurring, and is there anything I can do to try to address the issue?

ANSWER

In this article, we will discuss the most common reasons that you may be encountering slowness in working in your Home Designer plan file.

Before completing these steps, please check to make sure that any other software running on the computer or in the background is needed, and exit any other programs that you may not need to have open while working in Home Designer.

There may potentially be more than one cause to experiencing file slowness in your plan, so you should review all of the information listed below in order.

To troubleshoot slowness in a Home Designer plan

- Step 1 - Verify System Requirements
- Step 2 - Work on Files Locally
- Step 3 - Program Updates
- Step 4 - Video Hardware
- Step 5 - Imported Symbols
- Step 6 - Fill Styles
- Step 7 - Memory Check
- Step 8 - *Pro Only
- Step 9 - Advanced Troubleshooting

Step 1 - System Requirements

First, please review the System Requirements for your version of the program.

The current Home Designer System Requirements can be located on the website at: <https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/products/system-requirements.html>
(<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/products/system-requirements.html>)

Prior Home Designer versions System Requirements can be located on the website at: <https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01095/>
(<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01095/>)

- If your computer does not meet the minimum system requirements for your version, please uninstall the software, and reinstall it onto an alternate computer which does meet or exceed them.
- If you are trying to run the software on a newer operating system than your version of Home Designer was supported under, please see the Upgrade Information (<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/discounts/>) section of the website to upgrade to the most recent version of the software.
- If your computer does meet the minimum system requirements for your version of Home Designer, please continue on to the next step.

Step 2 - Work on Files Locally

If your computer meets the Home Designer System Requirements and you are still encountering extreme slowness in working with your files, it's important to double check where you files are being saved.

One of the most common reasons for encountering slowness in files is from working in an unsupported fashion, such as when the files are stored on a network server, external hard drive or usb flash drive device. Not only can this lead to slowness working in files, but it is also the greatest cause for encountering file corruption and data loss.

Make sure to always save files on your local machine's hard drive.

Never work on files saved on a network server, external hard drive, or usb flash drive device.

Always copy such files on to the local machine's hard drive first. Then launch the software, open the plan, make changes, save your work and then exit out of the program completely. Once you have done so, then copy the modified file back to the network server or other location for backup purposes.

Step 3 - Program Updates

The second step after verifying your computer does meet the System Requirements for running your license of Home Designer will be to make sure that your software and the computer have the most up-to-date version and drivers.

- To check for Home Designer program updates, within the software, select the **Help** menu, then click on **Download Program Updates**. If there is a newer update available, then you should download and install it, then restart the computer.
- Program updates can also be downloaded from the website directly at: <https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/updates.html> (<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/updates.html>)

Do not attempt to install a program update for a different program or version than the one installed on your system.

Step 4 - 3D Camera View Slowness

If your design seems particularly slow with regards to 3D camera views, bear in mind that Home Designer relies on the video card for 3D rendering and response times.

- Avoid working with multiple 3D camera views open at the same time.

You can see how many view windows are open by selecting the Window menu, which will show the open views at the bottom of the menu.

- If you have an integrated Intel chipset, which shares system memory instead of dedicated video memory of its own, then you can expect the camera views to generate and respond more slowly than on a system with an actual video card with dedicated video memory.
- If your computer has switchable graphics, please double check to see whether Home Designer is using the video card with dedicated video memory, or the integrated chipset which shares system memory. Contact your computer's manufacturer on what settings need to be changed so that the video card will be used for the Home Designer software.
- If you need to work in 3D views, turn off the display of any layers that are not needed for the task to improve redraw time. To learn more about working with layers, please see [Toggling the Display of Objects](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00264/) (<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00264/>).
- Download and install the most recent driver for your video card that is compatible with your operating system. Please see the information in this Knowledge Base article on [Updating the Video Card's driver](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00897/) (<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00897/>).
- If you are using multiple monitors, make sure that your system's video card fully supports this functionality.

You may experience slowness, particularly with 3D camera views as well as library and dialog previews if the video card is taxed by three or more monitors as well as

the rendering. You can test shutting the system down, disconnecting the extra monitors, restarting the system, and then attempt to run Chief Architect on a single screen to see if speed improves.

- If you are using an iMac with a 5K monitor, reduce Home Designer's window size so that it is not full screen. Then continue working to see if performance is improved.
- There are some settings in Preferences on the Render panel that may be adjusted. These may speed up generation and movement in 3D camera views, but will also lessen the clarity and quality of the images.

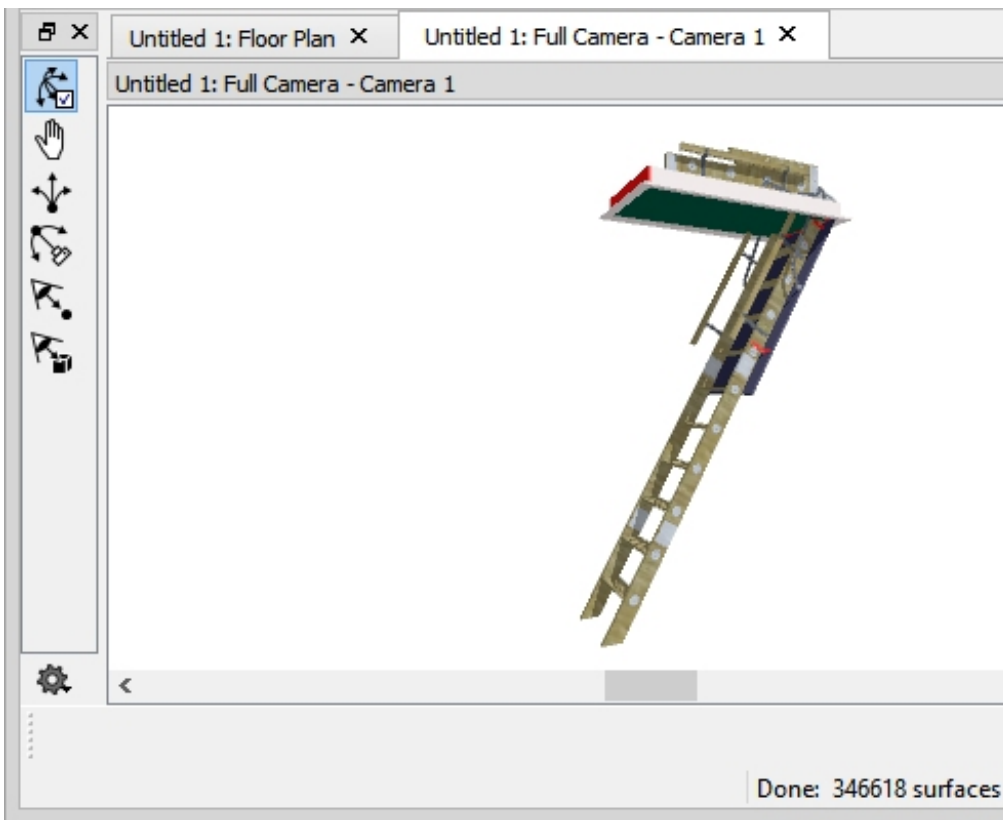
Step 5 - Imported Symbols

If your plan contains many third party imported object symbols, you may want to make note of ones which have a large number of complex surfaces, as these can greatly slow down camera views.

- To check the number of surfaces for an imported symbol, start a new, blank plan using the default style template.

Import the symbol into that plan by itself, then create a Camera view of the symbol.

The number of surfaces will be displayed on the Status Bar.



- Some third party symbol providers, such as Trimble's 3D Warehouse, will also list the number of surfaces, faces, or polygons at the same location as the symbol download for quick reference, which can help you decide in advance which symbols you want to import.

Step 6 - Fill Styles/Patterns

Depending on your version, you may have the ability to apply Fill Styles and Patterns to objects like Rooms, closed CAD polylines, wall types hatching, terrain objects, etc.

Avoid using complex fill styles and patterns extensively in your plan, as these can greatly slow down working in floor plan view for tasks such as zooming, moving and placing objects.

The same is true for views using the Vector rendering technique, such as Cross Section/Elevation views created in the Home Designer Architectural and Home Designer Pro versions of the software, where complex material patterns can slow down the generation and movement in these views.

Step 7 - Memory Check

You should run a diagnostic memory check to see if there are any detectable issues with your computer's memory. For more information, please select the appropriate link below based on your operating system.

- [Windows \(https://social.technet.microsoft.com/wiki/contents/articles/29343.running-windows-memory-diagnostics-tool-in-windows-10-technical-preview.aspx\)](https://social.technet.microsoft.com/wiki/contents/articles/29343.running-windows-memory-diagnostics-tool-in-windows-10-technical-preview.aspx)
- [Mac OS \(https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT202731\)](https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT202731)

Step 8 - Pro only settings

Home Designer Pro has several additional capabilities that can potentially cause slowness, including the following.

- Picture or PDF files saved in the plan.

By default, picture and PDF files imported in to your Home Designer Pro plan are referenced from outside of the file. You can, however, choose to "Save in Plan" in the Specification dialogs for both of these referenced file types to embed them in the file. If you choose this option, it can significantly slow down working in the plan or layout files.

- Home Designer Pro has automatic settings for regenerating framing, the foundation, terrain, and the roof. If rebuilding these elements slows down the plan, then you may want to turn them off until the plan is closer to completion.

ADVANCED TROUBLESHOOTING

If you have followed **ALL** of these guidelines, and still feel that the program is usually slow with your plan, please submit all the following information to our Technical Support department using the online Support Center.

1. When you notice the slowness, take a moment to write down what you were doing. Include what views you had open, what tools you were using, and what types of objects were being added, edited, or removed.

For example, joining two particular roof planes, modifying CAD lines, editing

doors/windows while a 3D camera view is open, rebuilding framing, etc.

2. Use the **Backup Entire Plan** tool to create a folder with a copy of the file in which the error occurs, along with all referenced files.

See Knowledge Base article [Using the Backup Entire Plan Tool](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00582/)
(<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00582/>).

3. If you are receiving an error or warning dialog box, make sure to first search this Knowledge Base for the exact wording of the error, or click on the **Check Knowledge Base** button in the message if one is present, as there may be specific information relevant to that error recorded in another article. If you are unable to locate any additional information on the error, make sure to attach a screen capture image of the message.

See Knowledge Base article [Creating a Screenshot](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00326/)
(<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-00326/>).

4. Locate the MESSAGE LOG.

See Knowledge Base article [Locating the Message Log](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-02908/)
(<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-02908/>).

5. Export your SYSTEM INFORMATION using the article below.

[Finding Information About your System](https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01867/)
(<https://www.homedesignersoftware.com/support/article/KB-01867/>)

6. Log in to the Online Support Center and create a new ticket to send to Technical Support.

Online Support Center - <https://support.chiefarchitect.com/>
(<https://support.chiefarchitect.com/>)

7. Give the ticket a short but descriptive title.

In the text of the ticket, type the detailed description of the problem, including the exact steps that caused the slowness to occur as described in Step 1 of this Advanced Troubleshooting section. The more detailed you are, the more likely we will be to reproduce the issue and identify the problem.

Click the **Browse** button and attach the **BACKUP OF THE ENTIRE PLAN, SCREENSHOT, MESSAGE LOG, and SYSTEM INFORMATION** files to your ticket, then **Submit** it.

8. It is possible that Technical Services may need additional information regarding the issue, which they will request via a reply in the Online Support Center.

Related Articles

- [📄 Finding Information About your System \(/support/article/KB-01867/finding-information-about-your-system.html\)](/support/article/KB-01867/finding-information-about-your-system.html)
- [📄 Home Designer Minimum System Requirements \(/support/article/KB-01095/home-designer-minimum-system-requirements.html\)](/support/article/KB-01095/home-designer-minimum-system-requirements.html)
- [📄 Locating the Message Log \(/support/article/KB-02908/locating-the-message-log.html\)](/support/article/KB-02908/locating-the-message-log.html)
- [📄 Troubleshooting Chief Architect Software Closing Unexpectedly on Windows \(/support/article/KB-03049/troubleshooting-chief-architect-software-closing-unexpectedly-on-windows.html\)](/support/article/KB-03049/troubleshooting-chief-architect-software-closing-unexpectedly-on-windows.html)
- [📄 Using the Online Support Center \(/support/article/KB-00717/using-the-online-support-center.html\)](/support/article/KB-00717/using-the-online-support-center.html)