Flame v 1.1 by 6 Sense Web Productions

Sandi's Home Page

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Many problems with IE (and to a lesser extent OE) are caused by a common denominator - other programmes. When dealing with shareware and freeware, proceed with caution and remember the following:

1.   Read the fine print before installing *anything*. The agreement we all click ok on and never read may tell us that something extra is going to be installed by our freeware/shareware (spyware).

2.   Web sites may not be telling the whole truth.

3.   Be very careful when following instructions to run a program from its current location'. If in doubt - DON'T DO IT.   **(Note: Microsoft uses this option for many installs/upgrades on its site - it is quite ok to select 'run this program from its current location' at the Microsoft web site)**

Basic Troubleshooting

First and most important - **update to Internet Explorer 6**. Most sites that try to hijack your home page will now trigger a 'do you want to do this' warning message that lets you stop the hijacking. The sneaky background activex downloads that are often used by hijack sites to install spyware will also trigger a 'do you want to do this' install window.

Next, go to www.microsoft.com/security and get up-to-date with security patches for IE and OE. It can get quite confusing, so stick to the latest cumulative update if you are unsure.

Now, to fix your problems.......

Check your startup folder and MSCONFIG, and/or you can check the following registry keys and edit as appropriate (if you have experience with same).

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Runonce

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Runonce

This link will lead you to some Microsoft KB articles about the basics of the Registry and working with it.

You can also see my advice specific to home page hijackings, pop-up ads and search engine hijackings.

For diagnosis purposes **I REALLY** like BHODemon, available at http://www.definitivesolutions.com/bhodemon.htm. It does not need installing - simply unzip

and run the EXE programme. It is very easy to use.

Also, you may like to use a programme called BHOCop available here:
http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,4149,2023,00.asp

It is possible to turn off third party extensions (Enable third-party browser extensions (requires restart) at IE tools, internet options, advanced) to disable *all* plug-ins but troubleshooting will be difficult.

Many people like AdAware, available at www.lavasoft.de. Make sure you keep the signature files up to date and remember, AdAware only removes the current install; it can't do anything about software that reinstalls itself (unless you want to get stuck in an endless loop of hijack/cleanout/hijack/cleanout). Sometimes you will have to track down and remove the software that keeps putting the hijackware back - hence this advice section.

If you are still having trouble please post to the microsoft.public newsgroups for further advice.

Spyware, Browser Hijackings and other Antisocial Tricks

"Hijackware" has become very common nowadays. Malicious web sites will try to reset your home page and then disable your ability to change things back, add themselves to your list of favorites, even hijack your browser's search engine options and download little programmes that trigger pop-up advertisements. Microsoft is constantly hitting back, updating their browser and devising patches to lock out new tricks that the idiots may find. I strongly recommend you visit http://www.microsoft.com/security/ on a regular basis to check for new security patches relevant to your operating system. You can either download individually, or wait for a cumulative path to be released, which happens every few months.

Patches particularly relevant to the problem we are discussing here are listed under Home Page Hijackings:

Some examples include:

Huntbar Searchbar and Link Toolbar
Automatically installed on system swith insecure copies of Internet Explorer when visiting www.huntbar.com. To remove, you will need to go to this link for the removal instructions (at the bottom of the page):

http://www.huntbar.com/Help/Help.asp

How to disable manually:

The file used is called MSIETS.DLL. You need to find and rename that file, and then run

the following command at start/run:

regsvr32.exe /u C:\Program Files\Common Files\msiets.dll

Make sure the path to msiets.dll is correct for your machine.

If you are nervous....

Download and install BHODemon. Run the programme and use it to disable MSIETS.DLL. BHODemon is available here - bhodemon.htm

It does not need installing - simply unzip and run the EXE programme. It is very easy to use.

If the software reappears, follow the troubleshooting advice at the top of this page to track down the culprit.

Xupiter Bar

An automatic uninstall is available here:
http://www.xupiter.com/uninstall/

Manually you can rename XTUPDATE.DLL (or disable it using my all-favorite BHODemon available at bhodemon.htm

If the software reappears, follow the troubleshooting advice at the top of this page to track down the culprit.

Radlight 3.03
This programme UNINSTALLS AdAware (a highly recommended and popular anti-spyware programme). Radlight also includes as part of its software two known spyware programmes - the SaveNow browser shopping "companion" and New.net's Web navigation plug-in - both are mentioned elsewhere on this page here and here.

Browser.Secondpower.Com

You may discover that browser.secondpower.com is being added to your homepage URL. This link has an Uninstaller:
http://www.secondpower.com/customer.html

The changes are made when you install the SecondPower Multimedia Speedbar

Netscape
They snoop on your searches:
http://www.newsbytes.com/news/02/175035.html

The Netscape/AOL download demon is just as bad:
http://grc.com/downloaders.htm

Escorcher
This is a free antivirus programme with a few *extras*
http://www.escorcher.com/privacy.htm

The files involved are scorcher5 and escorcher - scorcher5 is known to cause crashes in IE. Escorcher is the actual spyware according to the site, scorcher5 being responsible for the updates. I have not worked with the programme yet so my suggestion would be to:

Firstly disable any automatic update facility to try and stop the scorcher5 crashes. It seems that you cannot disable the spyware (escorcher) without also disabling the ability to scan for viruses so I would suggest that you remove the programme and find something else to use.

Ezcybersearch
The culprits have provided uninstall advice here:
http://www.ezcybersearch.com/uninstall.html

The files involved seem to be sp.dll and br.dll as well as tinybar.html

Netsearch
Uninstall instructions are available here:
http://ww2.ieplugin.com/uninstall.html

Just in case it disappears, the manual install instructions from the site are reproduced HERE:

Advert.dll
Installed by Aureate - spyware - caused invalid page faults in module <unknown> - rename.

Jethomepage
This horrid page hijacks your search engine options. To fix, shut down IE and then search out and rename **sp.dll**

Next you have to clean up your computer's registry. Search for references to Jethomepage which you will most likely find here:

[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Main]
"Search Page"="http://www.jethomepage.com/search.htm"
"Search Bar"="http://www.jethomepage.com/search.htm"

[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Search]
"SearchAssistant"="http://www.jethomepage.com/search.htm"

Now go here for advice on how to get your system back to its original defaults.

Lop.com
Lop.com have provided a couple of programmes to undo the settings changed via clicking various options at their web site. Have a look at this URL for further information http://lop.com/help.html - right down the bottom - they address search engine changes and an accessory toolbar.

After you have run the uninstaller available at lop.com, reboot and then rename the following files - desktop.swf, desktop.html (in ..\windows\web\wallpaper) and plg_ie0.dll (in ..\windows\application data)

Real Networks Realdownload
Netscape/AOL's Smart Download
Netzip's Download Demon
http://grc.com/downloaders.htm

Netzip causes the following crash in IE:

Internet Explorer Error Message If NetZip Is Installed [Q258594]
http://support.microsoft.com/?id=kb;en-us;Q258594

newdotnet.dll
This site is an excellent source of spyware information; the information about newdotnet is very comprehensive - http://www.cexx.org/newnet.htm

Uninstall information is available here:
http://www.new.net/help_faq.tp#p4

spacesea.net
May hijack your advanced search engine options.
Advice on how to reverse the damage can be found here: search_engine

iehelper.dll
Not a standard Windows file. Can be renamed.

Tracker Class (with thanks to Terry Pritchard)
Close all IE windows.
Open windows explorer and browse to:

\winnt\downloaded program files (win NT or 2000)

or
\windows\downloaded program files (win 9x or me)

Right-click the object named 'Tracker Class' and select Remove.

Transponder spyware
http://home.cfl.rr.com/dualsmp/

adshow.exe
Implicated in browsers being set to www.loveadot.com or www.krankin.com. The programme should be renamed. Also check win.ini and the RUN keys in the registry or if you are not confident accessing these facilities, disable via MSCONFIG, startup tab.

american.exe
Supplied by the now defunct American Greetingz. Your browser settings were changed when you followed their advice to 'update' your browser so you can see their greetings.

idcide
Can cause 'fail to get DOM' errors - uninstall it if the latest version doesn't fix the problem and don't forget to run the IE repair tool at control panel, add/remove programmes, highlight IE, select add/remove. (ICQ has been noted once as causing the same error).

Also see....
passthison
sureseeker
gohip

AdAware is an excellent programme for tracking down spyware, but certainly not infalliable. If AdAware says your system is clean, yet you are having problems, check out my troubleshooting advice and have a closer look.

AD-aware
http://www.lavasoft.de

Kazaa Software

I think this must be one of the WORST programmes around for spyware and hijackware... Here's just a small sample.

DIder.exe (Advertising)

Noted as a trojan by some antivirus programmes (W32.DIDer.Trojan), this little nasty tracks your web surfing *and* uploads this information to a website (now apparently shut down). It can also download *and activate* exe files (programmes). You can expect to

find a file called explorer.exe in your ..\windows\system or ..\windows\explorer file (note that a legitimate Windows file is also called explorer.exe, but that is in ..\windows

Cydoor (Advertising)

Fastseeker toolbar

Dw.exe (DiskWare)

Causes invalid page faults…. removable via Control Panel, Add/Remove Programmes.

(Updated 14 July 2002). Thanks to Robert Aldwinckle who referred me to the following URL about dw.exe - what a NASTY piece of work the software is:

http://and.doxdesk.com/parasite/DownloadWare.html

Some choice quotes:

"…The EULA, when found, claims that it may clash with various other software and so **if it finds any it will remove it. (!)**…"

"…As well as removing DownloadWare you should check your system for other things it has installed and get rid of them too…"

Hot Text, Top Text, Ezula, ContextPro
…Yellow underlining on web pages…

This is caused by a programme installed with Kazaa Media Desktop called .

It can be removed via Control Panel, add/remove programmes. Search for "eZula-README.html" on your computer. This file contains information from Kazaa about the …service.

Bdeview.exe (Advertising)

Ctbclick.exe (information here)

CommonName toolbar plug-in (information here)

The error noted below is known to be caused by the toolbar plug-in. Uninstall it.

Microsoft Visual C++ Runtime Library
runtime error
Program C:\Program Files\Internet Explorer\
IExplorer.Exe

Abnormal Program Termination

It seems the CommonName browser bar can be installed independently of Kazaa (thanks Jon Kennedy and Ian Phillips). Advice on how to get rid of the toolbar can be found here:

http://www.commonname.com/english/ug/toolbar/default.asp?idx=10#4

(April 2002). Have a look at these links:

Brilliant Digital software installed with Kazaa
http://news.com.com/2100-1023-875016.html

"...Two days after disclosures that file-swappers using Kazaa were unwittingly downloading software that could turn their computers into part of a new network, Kazaa's owner spoke up to defend the company's actions.

As previously reported, Kazaa quietly has been bundled for two months with software that contains the core of a new peer-to-peer network. This software, from a California company called Brilliant Digital Entertainment, has been installed on potentially tens of millions of computers. Brilliant Digital plans to "turn on" this software in four to six weeks, tapping the resources of potentially tens of millions of ordinary PCs **to distribute content or advertising** or to run complicated computer tasks...."

http://news.com.com/2100-1023-873181.html

"...Brilliant Digital Entertainment, a California-based digital advertising technology company, has been distributing its 3D ad technology along with the Kazaa software since late last fall. But in a federal securities filing Monday, the company revealed it also has been installing more ambitious technology that could turn every computer running Kazaa into a node in a new network controlled by Brilliant Digital.

The company plans to wake up the millions of computers that have installed its software in as soon as four weeks. It plans to use the machines--with their owners' permission--to host and distribute other companies' content, such as **advertising** or music. Alternatively, it might borrow people's unused processing power to help with other companies' complicated computing tasks...."

and

http://news.com.com/2102-1023-875274.html

A treatise on the potential uses of the Brilliant Software:
http://www.cs.berkeley.edu/~nweaver/0wn2.html

Uninstall instructions for the Brilliant Digital Entertainment software
http://news.com.com/2100-1023-875274.html

Just in case the page is removed, I have preserved the text of the instructions at this link

Pop Up Advertisements

Pop up windows when browsing are generated by the web page you visit, or they can be caused by hijacking software. For the former, you have a few options. Disable active scripting at IE tools, internet options, security or use a third party programme such as Proximitron (http://www.flaaten.dk/prox/) or Pop-Up Stopper (http://www.panicware.com/) to name just two of those available. For the latter, you will need to do some troubleshooting. I strongly prefer Proximitron. In my experience Pop-Up Stopper also caused problems when you wanted to open a new window in IE, or open IE from a hyperlink in OE.

As I just pointed out, **Pop up window (ad) removers** can cause problems, especially when shutting down the browser so be careful when choosing and always disable them to test if you experience problems with your browser - whether it be crashes, or windows not opening (links not working in browser or emails) or other problems.

IMPORTANT

Before you start using a programme to stop pop-up advertising, please make sure your system has not been hijacked - otherwise you will have two programmes fighting against each other - not good for any computer system.

The following examples are not an exhaustive list of pop-up software - the number of advert generating programmes is getting larger by the day. If none of the following appear on your system, you should still give your computer a check-up, following the advice at troubleshooting.

msbb.exe
Apparently related to software called **Songspy** - causes IE to pop up advertising Windows every hour or so. Deleting it solved pop-up window problems for some - I would recommend renaming.

wnad.exe
Also comes with wnad.dat, wnad-update.exe and wnad.lgc. Use Task Manager (ctrl, alt, del) to turn off wnad then do the following:

Navigate to this key and delete any reference to the programme:
hklm\software\microsoft\windows\run

Also check the run keys listed above for any reference to the programme.

If you are nervous about using regedit, you can go to start/run and type MSCONFIG. Then go to the startup tab and take the tick out of the box that refers to the programme.

Rename the wnad files listed above.

Here is Microsoft's Knowledgebase article about this troublesome programme:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;EN-US;q312931

ftapp.dll
An advertising spyware - installed by some *.exe files. Try renaming the DLL and see if that is sufficient to stop it in its tracks. I'm not certain what programme installs it, but if you right click the DLL you might be able to work it out from the properties.

dlder.exe
Clicktilluwin hijackware (advertising trojan) installed by (at least):

Bearshare 2.4.0 Beta 7

LimeWire 2.0.2 (no longer included)

Kazaa (no longer included) For information about even more Kazaa spyware/problems, look here

Grokster 1.33 (uninstaller available - http://www.grokster.com/virusinformation.html)

Net2Phone (unspecified versions)

BonziBuddy (removal instructions for BonziBuddy here
http://www.pchell.com/support/bonzibuddy.shtml)

Noted as a trojan by some antivirus programmes (W32.DlDer.Trojan), this little nasty tracks your web surfing *and* uploads this information to a website (now apparently shut down). It can also download *and activate* exe files (programmes). You can expect to find a file called explorer.exe in your ..\windows\system or ..\windows\explorer file (note that a legitimate Windows file is also called explorer.exe, but that is in ..\windows

Clicktilluwin's statement and removal advice can be found here:
http://www.clicktilluwin.com/clickprivacyterms.htm

Vbox

"...Failed to initialize VBox ..."

I have found this link http://www.previewsystems.com/products/vbox/ which seems to support the implication of expired freeware/shareware software in the above error when running IE6.

Some programmes I have spotted associated with Vbox are CorelDraw10 Trial, PowerQuest, Norton trial versions (including antivirus), VirusMD Personal Firewall, the already mentioned Visio 2000 and various Adobe products.

The following has been noted as working in the newsgroup alt.windows98 by a contributor called "Dave":

"...I moved the Vbox subdirectory from the C:\windows directory to an alternate partition for safekeeping. It contains the vbox ini file, digitally signed license, files for recovering a faulted download, and installation files...."

I'm afraid that only you know what shareware or time limited or preview software you have or have had installed that is now coming back to haunt you.

SWPORTAL

[...I have received numerous messages stating that the files associated with this programme cannot be renamed. That tells me that the programme is running at the time an attempt is made (note that I have not installed SWPORTAL on any of my systems, so am working on 'standard operating procedure')... Sandi]

First, make sure the programme is not running. Use Task Manager (ctrl, alt, delete key combination) and shut down everything except for Explorer and Systray. If using XP, 2000 or NT etc check the running processes if the programme doesn't appear in the list of running programmes.

Once the programme has been turned off, you should be able to proceed.

Search for a programme file called SWcaller2.exe or similar. Rename it. **Do not delete it until you are certain that no harm is being done to any other programme that may be dependent upon swportal.**

Search for any files called SWPORTAL*.* and SWCALLER*.* (where * is variable). Rename them as well.

Check you startup folder for any suspicious shortcuts.

The more advanced may like to check win.ini [load] and [run]

Also check the following registry keys for references to the programme (those who are less experienced may wish to use MSCONFIG (go to start, run and type MSCONFIG then check the startup tab).

Export the keys before editing any particular references, and ALWAYS ask for advice in the microsoft.public newsgroups if you are unsure:

[..HKLM = HKEY Local Machine ... HKCU = HKEY Current User...]

HKLM\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run

HKLM\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\RunOnce

HKLM\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\ RunServices

HKLM\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\ RunServicesOnce

HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\RunOnce

HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run

Prevent Computer Hijackings

As mentioned earlier on this page, I strongly recommend that you visit http://www.microsoft.com/security/ on a regular basis to check for the latest in the ongoing battle between Microsoft and those who would hijack your browser.

For a start......

Update to Internet Explorer 6. Most sites that try to hijack your home page will now trigger a 'do you want to do this' warning message that lets you stop the hijacking. The sneaky background activex downloads that are often used by hijack sites to install spyware will also trigger a 'do you want to do this' install window.

Make sure that your Java VM is at least version 3805 to protect against a vulnerability that allows website operators to change your home page and several other vulnerabilities.

Where to get the JAVA VM

The corresponding Technet article can be found here: http://www.microsoft.com/technet/treeview/default.asp?

url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS02-013.asp

* * * *

The latest cumulative patch for Internet Explorer - issued 22 August 2002 - can be found
here:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;q323759

Further details about the patch can be found here:
http://www.microsoft.com/technet/treeview/default.asp?
url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS02-047.asp

**Warning: The above critical update can cause problems when "connecting to
terminal services from a Web Page" - more information here:**
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;q328002

Patches generally CANNOT be removed.

**You can install individual patches, or you can wait for the cumulative patches to
be released, which occurs every month or so.**

Some known problems caused by recent patches include:

Q319847 MS02-009 May Cause Incompatibility Problems Between VBScript and Third-Party
Applications
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q319847

Q318808 Security Update MS00-024 Causes Problems with the SHGetFolderPath() Function
in Shfolder.dll
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q318808

Hewlett Packard

Iexplore caused an invalid page fault in URLMON.DLL
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q309/4/76.asp

GP Fault in Module Gdi.exe Printing from Internet Explorer
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q261/1/56.asp

Table Borders May Not Print Properly in Internet Explorer [Q257036]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q257/0/36.asp

Missing Text When Printing Web Pages to HP PhotoSmart P1000 [Q254772]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q254/7/72.asp

Problems Printing to HP DeskJet if BD Denver Font Is Damaged [Q271582]
(Iexplore caused an invalid page fault in GDI.EXE)
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q271/5/82.asp

Easy Internet Access
Windows 95 Stops Responding with IOD Shockwave Installation [Q250777]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q250/7/77.asp

* * *

FileBox Xtender (v1.50.02)

Doesn't work with IE6 - corrupting the file - open and file - save dialogue boxes

* * *

CRS32.DLL and CRS.EXE (and crs.reg?) problems

Various shareware / spyware have been noted to install these files including:

Adsubtract

Adverting software from gratisware.com - be warned, when you get rid of crs32.dll and crs.exe ALL gratis software will stop working - see here:
http://www.gratisware.com/Gratisware.nsf/htmlmedia/opt-out.html

Sundry games

You can try searching for and renaming the two files mentioned. Also search your registry for any references to the problem files and get rid of them as well (use MSCONFIG first to test and make sure you back up any registry keys befoe deleting).

MVP Max Spyridakis has mentioned the following about CRS and the registry:

Based on limited local testing, the install creates these three registry keys...

HKCR\CLSID\{5843A29E-1246-11D4-BA8C-0050DA707ACD}

HKCR\CrsHO.CrsHO\CurVer

HKCR\TypeLib\{5843A291-1246-11D4-BA8C-0050DA707ACD}

With those registry keys active, the CRS32.dll is probably locked while Windows runs...."

* * *

Netscape 4.06 Tuneup

Error Message with Netscape 4.06 TuneUp Installed [Q262900]
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q262900

* * *

Trend Micro PC-cillin

The POP3 Server Information Does Not Change and Error Messages Appear in Outlook Express 5.5 - (Cannot log on using Secure Password authentication and Unable to locate the POP3 server you specified)
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q312/3/47.asp

The programme can also stop downloads from working if the Real Time Monitor is running in the background.

* * *

Encompass Monitor Service (Encmonitor)

Causes the following errors:

Monitor caused an Invalid Page Fault in module Kernel32.dll *or* Windows Sockets Initialization failed
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q306/6/14.asp

* * *

Eudora can interfere with the text display size in IE

Font Changes Size in Internet Explorer 5 Using Eudora Pro 4.1 or 4.2
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q226/7/97.asp

* * *

New.Net and SaveNow
Causes the following errors:

IEXPLORE caused an invalid page fault in module Unknown *or* SAVENOW executed an invalid instruction in module Unknown

http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q302/4/63.asp

* * *

Quickview Plus

"Invalid Page Fault in Module Urlmon.dll" Error Message When Starting Internet Explorer
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q254/4/90.asp

* * *

Juno Software

Causes the following error message:
Explorer.exe caused an invalid page fault in explorer.exe at 0157F: 00401F31
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q296/2/11.asp

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Webhancer

This spyware has been installed by many programmes in the past including:

Audio Galaxy
iMesh
Wildcat web optimizer
BeFaster Internet Speed Up Toolkit

Removing Webhancer can kill IE. See the following links:
http://webhancer.com/support/index.asp?s=31#22

Installing Webhancer can kill IE
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q302/5/91.ASP

It causes the following error:
WHAGENT CAUSED AN INVALID PAGE FAULT IN MODULE WSOCK32.DLL

To remove it go to Control Panel, Add/Remove programmes.

Remove the program.

If it does not appear in add/remove programmes, you may find it listed in Task Manager (CTRL, ALT, DEL key combination). Close the program using Task Manager and manually delete it as follows:

1. Empty your C:\temp and/or C:\Windows\Temp directory.

---

2. Delete the directory C:\Program Files\webHancer\ if present.

3. Ensure the following files are no longer present on the computer:

webhdll.dll
whagent.inf
whInstaller.exe
whInstaller.ini

* * *

Aureate software (kernel32 and <unknown> errors)
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q259/6/84.asp

* * *

Prodigy Software
There are problems unique to Prodigy. Following is a link to one article released by Microsoft.

http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q248/0/05.ASP

* * *

Aventail Connect Virtual Private Network
Causes invalid page faults in <unknown>, aslsp.dll and alsp.exe
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q299/9/32.asp

* * *

AOL Software

As a general rule, removing AOL's adapters from your computer will fix problems accessing the internet after installing AOL's nightmare software. See here for AOL removal instructions (and screen shots):
http://www.adservio.net/support/uninstallaol.html

A few KB regarding AOL and 'issues' it causes with IE, OE and the operating system follow:

Cannot Browse the Internet Using Internet Explorer While Connect [Q238550]
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q238550

Internet Explorer Cannot Open the Internet Site... [Q175722]
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q175722

AOL 5 in Windows 95 Causes Problems for Other DUN Connections [Q244252]

http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q244/2/52.asp

Problems Connecting to AOL or Shutting Down Your Computer [Q276197]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q276/1/97.asp

OLEXP: AOL News and E-mail Servers Not Compatible [Q181429]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q181/4/29.asp

One newsgroup user was only able to get his computer working after doing the following:

remove the 8 registry entries as mentioned in
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q241344

Then remove all AOL programs and remove ALL of communication - not just TCP/IP did not do it. Then reinstalled communications in add/remove windows programs to reinstall Dial Up Networking and TCP/IP and then reinstall AOL

* * *

Earthlink Software

The installation of Earthlink software has been known to 'lock' the Internet Connection Wizard. If that happens, go to the following registry and set the noted DWORD to 0 (that's a zero). Make sure you know how to backup and restore the registry before proceeding.

 HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Control Panel

Connwiz Admin Lock

* * *

Bearshare
There have been reports that a programme called BEAR SHARE installs a little extra widget called **SAVE NOW**. This programme apparently causes problems for auto disconnect with IE and OE - preventing the appearance of the 'do you want to disconnect now' message. For more problems with Bearshare, look here.

* * *

Convert to Click 3.0
Stops Ctrl F (find) from working in Internet Explorer. Updates a file called "stdole2.tlb" which can be found in ..\windows\system and removes the file completely when uninstalled.

Use System File Checker (SFC.EXE) or MSCONFIG (depending on your operating system) to replace the missing file.

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NBCi's Quick Click causing invalid page faults in flylib.dll

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Gator (a utility for automating online form completion) and **Reget** (a download manager) caused MSHTML.DLL crashes in IE5.5. Both programmes have been updated to resolve the conflicts with IE5.5

Gator is also known to cause Kernel32 error messages:
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q253/3/64.asp

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Getright (a download manager) preventing graphics from appearing on web pages, as well as causing various invalid page faults.

Also, for another problem caused by GetRight, have a look at this link at Microsoft's Knowledge Base:
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q286/2/28.ASP

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AdSubtract can prevents graphics from appearing on red pages, causing the dreaded red x.

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@Guard stopped animated gifs after one cycle. Note **@Guard** has been bought by Nortons and will not be updated. Once you upgrade to ME you can forget about using it.

@Guard again. The ad-blocking option can stop the 'open in new window' function from working in IE, and also prevent javascript buttons that link to new windows from working as well.

@Guard number 3 - it can cause 'fail to get DOM' errors when using Windows Update.

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RealPlayer V7 installed **Comet Cursor** causing invalid page faults in user <unknown> or shlwapi.dll

Comet Cursor
http://www.cometsystems.com/help/real_privacy.shtml
Download Comet Cursor cleaner:

http://files.cometsystems.com/cometcursor/Comet_Uninstaller.exe

Make sure you are not prompted to install Comet Cursor again
http://download.cometsystems.com/no_nag/nonag.asp

Below is the KB released by Microsoft regarding Comet Cursor:

Random General Protection Faults with Comet Cursor 1.5 Installed [Q281849]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q281/8/49.asp

Real Player can be configured to stop attempts to record your preferences. Go to options/preferences and choose *not* to record a users "habits".

It has been noticed that Comet Cursor will cause <unknown> errors in IEXPLORE when trying to download Macromedia Flash (or even when refusing the plug-in). Uninstalling Comet Cursor has resolved the problem.

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Ghostwalker

The problem:

Protected Storage uses your Windows password to protect your personal data.
Protected Storage has detected data created with a previous version.
To continue to use this data, enter your Windows password below

The fix:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;q264033

McAfee Products

McAfee Antivirus deleted imagehlp.dll on install slowing down OE so much that it would take minutes to open, and also affecting online forms in IE. More recently, McAfee has confirmed that its antivirus programme causes kernel32 errors (as at V5.1).

McAfee VirusScan Causes Performance or Hang-up Issues [Q268113]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q268/1/13.asp

The problems with McAfee really are never ending <sigh>

IExplore Caused an Invalid Page Fault in Module MCSCAN32.dll
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q300/0/28.asp

There have also been MANY MANY reports of McAfee's email scan and auto-update

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facilities corrupting Outlook Express's data folders (*.dbx) causing massive loss of email, particularly the inbox folder. If you must use this programme, make sure that OE is NOT set to go directly to your inbox when opening.

McAfee have admitted there is a problem, and is referring its users to an MVPs rescue utility called DBXtract:
http://www.mcafeehelp.com/faq.asp?docid=60743&CategoryId=269&chat

If you have been unlucky enough to have lost your emails thanks to McAfee, there is a good chance Steve Cochran's DBXtract utility will save the day. You can find this wonderful wonderful little programme here.

McAfee now says it is not necessary for OE users to use email scan. Here's what they said:

"You don't have to worry about the e-mail scan as this is a corporate feature -requiring Outlook 2000 and a mail server such as Exchange server. Unless you meet the criteria you should make sure that it is disabled. As long as you have the Download scan and Internet filter enabled you'll be just fine as these two options effectively checks anything downloaded -including e-mails. I hope this answers your question. Remember e-mail scan is for corporate users only".
VirusScan can also slow down the right click speed in IE. Check out this link to my FAQ on this issue.

McAfee Safe 'n' Sound causes problems when downloading...

File appears to be downloading but is not
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q301/7/16.ASP

Next some more Knowledge Base articles:

Error Message "Iexplore Caused an Invalid Page Fault in Module Kernel32.dll" When You Close an Internet Explorer Window
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q276/4/59.ASP

You Cannot Change the Temporary Internet File Folder or the Cache Size (Q301897)
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;Q301897

OLEXP: Multiple Instances of OLEXP 5.5 After You Quit Program [Q250025]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q250/0/25.asp

OLEXP: Windows Me Hangs, Task Mgr Cites Msimn When You Close Outlook Express [Q297225]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q297/2/25.asp

OLEXP: Outlook Express Performance Is Slow [Q271510]

http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q271/5/10.asp

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Dr Solomon's Antivirus, **Norton Antivirus, Intermute**, and various other programmes reset proxy addresses and mail server addresses to 127.0.0.1 adversely affecting IE and OE.

OLEXP: Unable to Send or Receive Messages With NetGuard [Q195458]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q195/4/58.asp

Intermute can also prevent java applets from loading under some circumstances.

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Norton Products

Norton now acknowledge that autoprotection of email is not necessary. As taken from their support site:

"..If you disable email protection, is your computer still safe from email viruses? Disabling email protection does not leave you vulnerable to viruses and malicious software in email. It is a separate layer of protection in addition to Auto-Protect. Auto-Protect scans any incoming files, including email, as they are saved to your hard drive. As long as you keep your virus definitions up to date with LiveUpdate, and keep Auto-Protect enabled and set to scan files as they are created or downloaded, your system is fully protected."

Norton Antivirus' autoprotect feature also disconnects users from the internet whenever they try to download using Internet Explorer. Norton's fix? Disable autoprotect.

Also, users in Freeserve UK find they cannot download email after installing Norton Antivirus 2000/01. Again the advice is to turn off autoprotect.

Norton Antivirus causes OE6 to stop responding
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q309/6/76.asp

Also note that Norton Antivirus is known to cause **two** Messenger icons to appear in the systray near the clock. Norton knows about the problem, but the only workaround is turn off "run this programme when Windows starts" in Messenger.

NetGuard

OLEXP: Unable to Send or Receive Messages With NetGuard [Q195458]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q195/4/58.asp

Special Information for WindowsME users - Norton System Works:

If you are running Windows ME and have this programme installed, search your system for files called OEM****.INF (where * is variable) and the files are zero byte in size. If you find them delete them, turn off System Doctor and try the install again. Then contact Norton to see if they have issued a fix for this known bug.

Another problem caused by this programme is:

Norton System Works 2000 Is Not Compatible with Windows Millennium Edition (Q290664)
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;Q290664

The error mentioned (Windows could not update the file %1 from %2) can occur when rebooting after an IE upgrade or install, or when doing a normal reboot in WindowsME.

Other errors caused by Norton products:

IEXPLORE caused an invalid page fault in SCRBLOCK.DLL
Disable script blocking

Norton Internet Security

Cannot Display Web Pages with Norton Internet Securities 2000 [Q259846]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q259/8/46.asp

After installing Norton Internet Security (NIS) 3.0 on a Windows 2000 machine, whenever you try to open your browser, your computer may flash an error message about an unexpected kernel mode trap and the computer restarts.   There is no known solution.

Internet Explorer 5.x may not display any web pages. Task Manager will show IE is 'not responding'. Again, there is no known solution.

Cleansweep
Err Msg: Invalid Page Fault in Module Apitrap.dll [Q224813]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q224/8/13.asp

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First Aid (various versions)

Error Message: An ActiveX Control on This Page Is Not Safe... [Q182744]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q182/7/44.asp

Browser Window Is Blank After You Install First Aid 98 [Q182038]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q182/0/38.asp

Money 98: Error Message Running First Aid or Windows Guardian [Q174948]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q174/9/48.asp

OFF2000: First Aid 97 Causes Invalid Page Fault [Q235431]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q235/4/31.asp

OFF97: First Aid 97 Causes Invalid Page Fault [Q162398]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q162/3/98.asp

PUB: First Aid Utilities Incorrectly Detect Missing Files [Q162852]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q162/8/52.asp

DLL Errors Using First Aid 98 on Windows NT or Windows 2000 [Q227559]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q227/5/59.asp

"Exception 03h in Module..." Error Message Starting Windows Me [Q275003]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q275/0/03.asp

Rtfixmon Causes an Error Message During Shutdown [Q300623]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q300/6/23.asp

Cannot Start Microsoft System Information Tool [Q224425]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q224/4/25.asp

Dr. Watson Does Not Collect Program Fault Information [Q183809]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q183/8/09.asp

Invalid Page Fault in Module Gdi32.dll [Q166209]
http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q166/2/09.asp

Web Accelerators

Web accelerators that use a HOSTS file to create the illusion of faster web browsing can actually cause problems rather than speed things up.

Programmes that use the HOSTS file to speed things up have one basic flaw - they work by recording IP addresses. If the address changes for any reason (ever heard of dynamic IP addresses guys???), you can no longer get to the site until the reference is removed from the HOSTS file. Well, it was a good idea at the time... <G>

To make things even worse, some programmes write to lmhosts or hosts.sam in error (Norton products have been known to do this). lmhosts and hosts.sam are meant to be simply sample files.

Note that a hosts file can also stop you from recovering your email.

A gentleman by the name of Tom in the msn.discussion newsgroup suggested that the HOSTS file should be checked to see if it is causing errors for an MSN user, and he was right. Good on you Tom. The error was the generic Socket Error: 10060, Error Number: 0x800CCC0E

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Out of date video drivers can cause everything from weird display effects (pages erasing on scroll, animated gifs appearing up on the toolbars), to freezes and crashes involving kernel32.dll. On older systems, display issues can also be caused by out-of-date directx and/or scripting engines.

Internet Explorer is very demanding on video cards, therefore you can expect video driver problems to reappear with every upgrade of IE until the card manufacturers issue drivers that can cope with the latest advances and rendering engines.

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