

How To Fix the 404 Not Found Error

404 Not Found error messages are *frequently* customized by individual websites, so keep in mind that the 404 error may show up in just about any way imaginable depending on what website it's shown from.

1. Retry the web page by pressing **F5**, clicking the refresh/reload button, or trying the URL from the address bar again.

The 404 Not Found error might appear for several reasons even though no real issue exists, so sometimes a simple refresh will often load the page you were looking for.

2. [Check for errors in the URL](#). Often times the 404 Not Found error appears because the URL was typed wrong or the link that was clicked on points to the wrong URL.
3. Move up one directory level at a time in the URL until you find something.

For example, if **www.web.com/a/b/c.htm** gave you the 404 Not Found error, move up to **www.web.com/a/b/**. If you get nothing here (or an error), move up to **www.web.com/a/**. This should lead you toward what you're looking for or at least confirm that it's no longer available.

Tip: If you have moved all the way up to the website's homepage, try to run a search for the information you're looking for. If the site doesn't have a search function, try navigating to the page you want using category links to dig deeper into the site.

4. Search for the page at a popular search engine. It's possible that you simply have the entirely wrong URL in which case a quick [Google](#) or [Bing](#) search should get you where you want to go.

If you do find the page you were after, update your bookmark or favorite to avoid the HTTP 404 error in the future.

5. [Clear your browser's cache](#) if you have any indication that the 404 Not Found message might just be yours. For example, if you can reach the URL from your phone but not from your tablet, clearing the cache on your tablet's browser might help.

You might also consider [clearing your browser's cookies](#), or at least the one(s) involved with the website in question, if clearing the cache didn't work.

6. [Change the DNS servers](#) used by your computer but usually only if an entire website is giving you a 404 error, especially if the website is available to those on other networks (e.g. your mobile phone network or a friend in another city).

404's on an entire website isn't particularly common unless your ISP or government filters/censors websites. No matter the reason, if it does happen, giving another set of DNS servers a try is a good step to take. See my [Public DNS Servers List](#) for some alternatives.

7. Finally, if all else fails, contact the website directly. If they've removed the page you're after then the 404 error is completely legitimate and they should be able to tell you that. If they've *moved* the page, and are generating 404's instead of redirecting visitors to the new page, they might be very happy to hear from you.

A [WHOIS search](#), using the site's domain name (e.g. weather.com) as your search term, should give you some contact information.

Contacting a site via one of their social networking profiles is another good idea.

Write a dialogue

1. What's a "404 not found error"? Explain in simple terms.
2. What is the issue with 404 messages? (§1)
3. Make a list of the 7 piece of advice.
4. Transform this list into questions.
5. Vocabulary:

Look up the following words (wordreference.com)

Word/expression	Grammatical category	traduction	Pronunciation
An issue			
Refresh			
Point to			
Run a search			
Browser			

6. Imagine questions these pieces of advice could raise in an average user.
7. In pairs, use the text on the left to create a dialogue between an IT adviser and a **disgruntled** internet user. You should try at least 3 different ways to solve the problem before you succeed.