How to Fix Not Enough Memory To Open This Page Error on Chrome

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Quick answer

Chrome’s "Not enough memory" errors often occur despite available RAM due to specific culprits like runaway tabs, problematic extensions, hardware acceleration conflicts, corrupted profiles, or Windows virtual memory pressure. The article provides a systematic troubleshooting approach using Chrome’s Task Manager to isolate the cause, followed by targeted fixes including Memory Saver settings, extension management, hardware acceleration tweaks, browser resets, and Windows paging file adjustments.

Key points

- Use Chrome Task Manager (Shift+Esc) to identify specific memory hogs (tabs, extensions, GPU processes) rather than relying on Windows Task Manager totals
- Enable Memory Saver in Chrome settings to free memory from inactive tabs, adding only critical sites to the exemption list
- Disable all extensions and re-enable one-by-one to identify problematic ones (particularly ad blockers, tab managers, and AI tools)
- Turn off hardware acceleration in Settings -> System to resolve GPU-related memory conflicts and rendering instability
- Clear cached images and files, plus cookies when necessary, and test in Guest/Incognito mode to determine if profile corruption is the cause
- Update Chrome via Help -> About Google Chrome to install stability fixes and bug corrections
- Reset Chrome settings (Settings -> Reset settings) to restore defaults without losing bookmarks/passwords when profile state is corrupted
- Check Windows virtual memory settings and free disk space on the system drive, as commit limit/paging file pressure can trigger errors even when physical RAM appears normal
- Follow the systematic 10-step diagnostic sequence starting with Task Manager identification and ending with virtual memory verification
- If errors persist on specific sites only, test in alternative browsers to determine if the issue is site-specific versus browser configuration

That message is annoying for one reason: it pops up when your PC still has plenty of RAM left. You open one more tab, reload a heavy site, or switch back to a video call and Chrome suddenly throws "Not enough memory to open this page" or an Aw, Snap-style out-of-memory crash.

Here’s the thing - this usually isn’t a simple "buy more RAM" problem. I’ve seen it happen because one tab ran away, one extension kept a background page alive, hardware acceleration went sideways, the browser profile got messy, or Windows ran into paging-file pressure even though physical memory looked fine.

The fastest way out? Stop guessing and isolate where the memory pressure is actually coming from. Chrome already gives you the tools to do that, and once you find the real trigger, the fix is usually pretty simple.

Start with the real memory hog

Before changing settings blindly, open Chrome’s built-in Task Manager with Shift + Esc. Sort by memory usage and look for the tab, extension, GPU process, or background page sitting far above everything else. Google still recommends this route because Chrome’s own process list is way more useful than staring at a single browser total in Windows Task Manager. If you want quick access to internal settings pages while troubleshooting, this Chrome settings URL guide can save some clicks.

Data last verified: April 2026

What you see in Chrome: One tab far above the others | What it usually means: A site is leaking memory or loading unusually heavy scripts, ads, media, or app code | What to do next: End that tab in Chrome Task Manager, reopen it alone, and test it in Incognito

What you see in Chrome: Extension or "Background page" near the top | What it usually means: An extension is continuously running and holding memory | What to do next: Disable all extensions, then re-enable one by one

What you see in Chrome: GPU Process using abnormal memory | What it usually means: Rendering or graphics acceleration conflict | What to do next: Turn off hardware acceleration and restart Chrome

What you see in Chrome: Many inactive tabs consuming memory | What it usually means: Chrome is keeping too many tabs resident | What to do next: Enable Memory Saver and keep only critical sites exempted

What you see in Chrome: Error appears after long sessions, even on normal sites | What it usually means: Corrupt cache, unstable profile state, or background browser clutter | What to do next: Clear browsing data, test a fresh profile, then reset Chrome if needed

What you see in Chrome: Error appears while system RAM looks fine | What it usually means: Windows commit limit or paging-file pressure, not just raw physical RAM | What to do next: Check virtual memory settings and free disk space on the system drive

Turn on Chrome’s built-in memory controls

Chrome’s Memory Saver setting is the first browser-side fix worth enabling. It frees memory from inactive tabs and lets you choose how aggressively Chrome should deactivate them. On machines that stay open all day with dozens of tabs, this can make the difference between a stable session and a mid-afternoon crash.

Go to Settings -> Performance -> Memory Saver and switch it on. If you rely on a few sites staying alive in the background, add them to the "Always keep these sites active" list instead of leaving Memory Saver off completely.

This helps most when Chrome itself is simply retaining too much inactive tab state. It won’t fix a broken extension, corrupted profile, or bad GPU interaction, so if the error returns quickly, move to the next section instead of looping on the same setting.

Disable the two most common troublemakers

1. Extensions

Extensions are one of the most common reasons this error keeps coming back. A lot of generic fix guides mention extensions, but the better approach is to disable all of them first, restart Chrome, and then test the same page again. If the error disappears, re-enable them one at a time until the problem returns.

Pay extra attention to ad blockers with many custom filters, tab managers, AI/sidebar tools, shopping helpers, VPN/proxy extensions, and anything that injects scripts into every page. If you want a broader checkup on extension hygiene and browser clutter, this browser troubleshooting guide lines up well with the same cleanup workflow.

2. Hardware acceleration

Google's own crash guidance still lists disabling hardware acceleration as a valid fix when Chrome becomes unstable. Open Settings -> System, turn off Use hardware acceleration when available, then relaunch the browser. That's especially relevant when the error appears on video-heavy pages, web apps, canvas-based sites, or systems with flaky graphics drivers.

If you want the exact Chrome path plus browser-side context, TechRounder already has a focused hardware acceleration walkthrough that matches this step cleanly.

Clean up cache, cookies, and stale browser state

Chrome can start throwing memory-related page errors after cache or site data corruption, even when the underlying problem isn't raw memory shortage. Clear browsing data from Settings -> Privacy and security -> Delete browsing data, then remove cached images and files. If the problem is isolated to one site, clear that site's data first before wiping everything.

If Chrome behaves badly across many sites, clear both cache and cookies, restart the browser, and test again in a Guest profile or Incognito window. That tells you whether the breakage is attached to your main profile state rather than the browser engine itself. The same cache-clearing flow also appears in this Chrome cleanup article, which is handy if you want a second internal reference for the browser-side reset path.

Update Chrome before you go deeper

An outdated build is easy to overlook, and Chrome's update path is quick enough that it should happen early in the process. Open Help -> About Google Chrome, let it update fully, and relaunch. Google continues to push frequent desktop updates, and stability fixes often ride along with security releases.

If the error began only recently, this step matters even more. A fresh build can fix rendering bugs, extension compatibility problems, and regressions that are hard to diagnose from symptoms alone.

Reset Chrome when the profile is the problem

If disabling extensions, clearing data, and updating Chrome don't help, reset the browser. Chrome's reset option restores startup pages, new-tab behavior, search engine, pinned tabs, and disabled extensions to their defaults without deleting bookmarks or passwords.

Go to Settings -> Reset settings -> Restore settings to their original defaults. This is the point where I stop trying to preserve every little customization. Once a profile gets unstable enough to throw repeated memory errors across unrelated sites, a clean reset is usually faster than chasing individual side effects.

Check Windows virtual memory if RAM looks "normal"

This is the part many articles skip. Windows can still hit memory-allocation problems when the commit limit is under pressure, which is tied to the paging file as well as physical RAM. Microsoft's page file documentation explains that page files extend committed memory, so Chrome can fail even when Task Manager doesn't show RAM at 100%.

On Windows, open System Properties -> Advanced -> Performance Settings -> Advanced -> Virtual memory and check whether paging is disabled, undersized, or sitting on a nearly full drive. If you manually configured it long ago, switching back to a system-managed size is often the cleanest fix. Microsoft still documents the same Virtual Memory path in its support guidance for paging configuration.

Also check free space on the system drive. A cramped C: drive can turn a manageable memory spike into a browser crash because Windows has less room to grow the paging file when applications ask for more committed memory.

A clean test sequence that usually finds the cause

1. Restart Chrome and your computer.
2. Open Chrome Task Manager and identify the top memory consumer.
3. Enable Memory Saver.
4. Disable all extensions and retest.
5. Turn off hardware acceleration and retest.
6. Clear cache and cookies.
7. Update Chrome.
8. Test in Guest mode or a new Chrome profile.
9. Reset Chrome settings.
10. Check Windows virtual memory and free disk space.

If the issue only happens on one site after all that, the problem is probably site-specific rather than a broken Chrome install. If it happens everywhere, profile corruption, an extension conflict, GPU rendering, or Windows memory management is still the more likely culprit.

What to do if it keeps coming back

Once Chrome is stable again, keep Memory Saver on, trim extensions hard, and check Chrome Task Manager before the browser session gets out of hand. If the same site keeps triggering the error, test it in another Chromium browser or a fresh Chrome profile. That usually tells you whether you're dealing with a bad page, a bad extension stack, or a local browser state problem.

References

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