How to Fix the DNS Server Not Responding Error

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Quick answer

The "DNS Server Not Responding" error occurs when your device is unable to communicate with the Domain Name System (DNS) server. The DNS server is responsible for translating website domain names into IP addresses, allowing your browser to load web pages.

The "DNS Server Not Responding" error occurs when your device is unable to communicate with the Domain Name System (DNS) server. The DNS server is responsible for translating website domain names into IP addresses, allowing your browser to load web pages. When this system fails, you won't be able to access the internet despite having an active connection.

Common Causes of the DNS Server Not Responding Error

Several factors can lead to this error, including:

- DNS Server Outages: The DNS server provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP) may be down due to technical maintenance or high traffic.
- Network Configuration Issues: Incorrect DNS settings or outdated network configurations can prevent proper communication with the server.
- Router and Modem Malfunctions: Faulty network hardware can disrupt internet access.
- Firewall or Antivirus Interference: Security software may block DNS connections, mistakenly identifying them as threats.
- Corrupted DNS Cache: Cached DNS records may become outdated or incorrect, leading to resolution failures.
- ISP Restrictions: Some ISPs block access to specific DNS servers, which can cause connection issues.

Below are several effective troubleshooting methods to resolve this error on both Windows and macOS.

1. Restart Your Router and Modem

One of the simplest fixes is restarting your router and modem to refresh your network connection.

Steps:

1. Turn off your router and modem.
2. Unplug them from the power source and wait 30-60 seconds.
3. Plug them back in and power them on.
4. Try reconnecting to the internet.

2. Try Using a Different Browser or Device

If a particular browser displays the error, try using a different one. If another browser works, clear the cache and update the problematic browser.

You can also try accessing the internet from another device. If the error persists across multiple devices, the issue is likely with your network rather than your device.

3. Troubleshoot Network Issues

Windows and macOS offer built-in troubleshooting tools to diagnose connectivity problems.

On Windows:

1. Open Control Panel -> Network and Internet -> Network and Sharing Center .
2. Click Troubleshoot Problems .
3. Select Internet Connections and run the troubleshooter.

On macOS:

1. Hold the Option key and click the Wi-Fi icon in the menu bar.
2. Select Open Wireless Diagnostics and follow the instructions.

4. Flush Your DNS Cache

Clearing the DNS cache removes outdated or incorrect records, which can resolve DNS issues.

On Windows:

1. Open Command Prompt as an administrator.
2. Type: ‘ipconfig /flushdns‘ and press Enter .
3. Restart your computer.

On macOS:

1. Open Terminal .
2. Type the following command and press Enter : ‘sudo dscacheutil -flushcache; sudo killall -HUP mDNSResponder‘
3. Enter your administrator password if prompted.

5. Change Your DNS Server

Switching to a public DNS, like Google DNS or Cloudflare, can resolve connectivity issues.

On Windows:

1. Open Control Panel -> Network and Internet -> Network and Sharing Center .
2. Click Change Adapter Settings .
3. Right-click your active connection and select Properties .
4. Select Internet Protocol Version 4 (TCP/IPv4) and click Properties .
5. Choose Use the following DNS server addresses and enter:
    - Preferred DNS server: 8.8.8.8 (Google DNS)
    - Alternate DNS server: 8.8.4.4 (Google DNS) or 1.1.1.1 (Cloudflare)
6. Click OK and restart your computer.

On macOS:

1. Open System Settings -> Network .
2. Select your active network and click Details .
3. Go to the DNS tab and add 8.8.8.8 and 8.8.4.4 .
4. Click OK , then Apply .

6. Disable IPv6

IPv6 incompatibility with some networks may cause DNS errors.

On Windows:</4>

1. Open Network Connections using ‘ncpa.cpl‘ .
2. Right-click your active network and select Properties .
3. Uncheck Internet Protocol Version 6 (TCP/IPv6) .
4. Click OK and restart your PC.

On macOS:

1. Open System Settings -> Network .
2. Select your network and go to Details .
3. Under TCP/IP , change Configure IPv6 to Link-Local Only .
4. Click OK .

7. Disable Antivirus and Firewall Temporarily

If security software is blocking DNS traffic, disabling it temporarily can help.

On Windows:

1. Open Settings -> Update & Security -> Windows Security .
2. Click Firewall & Network Protection .
3. Disable Microsoft Defender Firewall for all profiles.

On macOS:

1. Go to System Settings -> Network -> Firewall .
2. Toggle it Off .

8. Update Network Adapter Drivers (Windows)

Outdated network drivers can cause DNS issues.

Steps:

1. Open Device Manager .
2. Expand Network Adapters .
3. Right-click your active adapter and select Update Driver .
4. Choose Search automatically for updated driver software .
5. Restart your PC after updating.

9. Restart in Safe Mode

Safe Mode can help determine if third-party software is causing the issue.

On Windows:

1. Open Start Menu -> Power .
2. Hold Shift and click Restart .
3. Choose Troubleshoot -> Advanced Options -> Startup Settings .
4. Press F5 for Safe Mode with Networking .

On macOS:

1. Restart your Mac and hold the Shift key.
2. Release it when the Apple logo appears.
3. Try accessing the internet in Safe Mode.

10. Reset Your Network Settings

If all else fails, resetting your network settings can fix misconfigurations.

On Windows:

1. Open Settings -> Network & Internet .
2. Scroll down and select Network Reset .
3. Click Reset Now and restart your PC.

On macOS:

1. Open System Settings -> Network .
2. Click Reset Network Settings .

Conclusion

The "DNS Server Not Responding" error can be frustrating, but it is usually fixable with the right troubleshooting steps. Restarting your router, flushing the DNS cache, changing the DNS server, disabling IPv6, and updating network drivers are some of the most effective solutions. If none of these methods work, contacting your ISP for further assistance may be necessary.