

Stop phantom message tones on an Android phone

By Steve Alexander, Star Tribune

February 14, 2021 — 2:00pm

Q: When my car and my Samsung Galaxy S5 phone connect via Bluetooth, the phone's notification alert tone goes off every 15 seconds. But when I check the phone, there are no notification messages. What can I do?

Dave Elgethun, Eden Prairie

A: The problem is probably a misbehaving app or an error in the phone's sound software. Try these methods to fix it:

- See if the problem lies with an app. One method is to click Apps, then Settings and then "Notifications." You will see a list of your phone's apps, each with an on-off switch. Turn them off one at a time to see if the unwanted tone goes away.

Another method is to put the phone in "safe mode" (see tinyurl.com/1loueefc). If the problem disappears in safe mode, then an app that you have added to the phone is at fault. You will need to uninstall your acquired apps one at a time to find the culprit.

- See if the problem is caused by the phone's sound software. Click Apps, then Settings, then "Sounds and vibration." Turn off these options one by one to see if the recurring tone disappears: "Touch sounds" (caused by touching the screen), "Screen lock sounds," "Emergency tone" and "Charging sound" (caused by attaching a charger).

- If neither approach works, try deleting the data files in the phone's "cache partition" (see tinyurl.com/xmjg8xd6). These temporary files may have been corrupted during an app installation or a phone software update. Erasing them won't affect your personal phone data.

- As a last resort, do a "factory reset" on the phone (see tinyurl.com/1jxlg4h4), which returns it to its original settings and content. This reset **will delete your personal data**, so back it up first.

Q: When I use Microsoft 365, the online version of Microsoft Office, the spell-check feature in Word doesn't work with existing documents, but does work with new ones. What can I do?

Lisa Brienzo, St. Paul

A: Microsoft 365's Word complaint log hasn't listed this issue (see tinyurl.com/1hqi0165), so I suspect there's a problem with the Word program on your PC.

The most likely cause is a change in Word's many settings, several of which affect editing functions (see tinyurl.com/11p48oga and tinyurl.com/8m6kt0x3). Even if you didn't make any changes, a software update to Word could have altered the settings.

Q: My PC thinks I'm in Brazil, even though Windows 10 and my browser are set to United States and English. What's wrong?

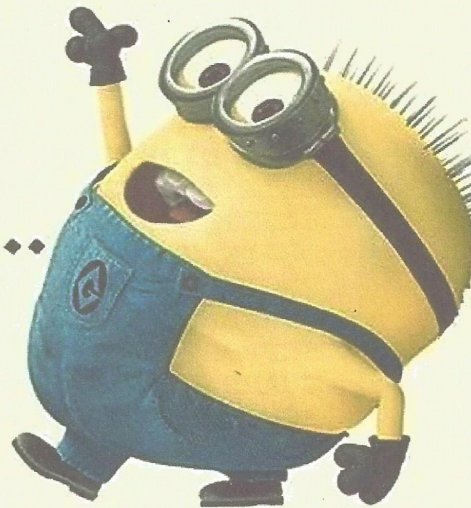
John Horbacz, Colorado Springs, Colorado

A: You have probably adjusted the Windows "Time & Language" settings, which include a "Region" setting. These settings determine how the PC displays times and dates, but they don't establish where you are.

To tell Windows where you're located, click Settings, then Privacy, then Location. Then click "default location" and type in your city. You should also clear your web browser's cache memory, which may contain incorrect location data.

E-mail tech questions to steve.j.alexander@gmail.com or write to Tech Q&A, 650 3rd Av. S., Suite 1300, Minneapolis, MN 55488. Include name, city and telephone number.

My doctor asked
if any members
of my family
suffered
from insanity...
I said nope,
we all seem
to enjoy it!!



Why your Android phone may stop connecting to your car

By Steve Alexander, Star Tribune

March 7, 2021 — 2:00pm

Q: My phone, a Google Pixel 3 XL, used to be able to play the directions from Google Maps through its wireless connection to my 2016 Toyota RAV4. But a couple of years ago that quit working, and now I can't even get Google Maps directions on my phone unless I turn the car off first. However, I can use the phone to play Google Maps audio in a rental car. What can I do?

Jonathan Griebel, Maple Grove

A: Your phone and car may no longer be using compatible versions of Android Auto, the software that normally links them.

Toyota was behind other car manufacturers in adding Android Auto compatibility, and didn't begin putting the software in the RAV4 until the 2020 model year. As a result, someone other than Toyota added the electronics and software for Android Auto — called a "stereo head unit" — to your 2016 car.

The question is whether the Android Auto software in your car has been updated since it was installed. If it hasn't, it may no longer be compatible with your phone, which has probably had several updates to its Android operating system and its Android Auto app. That would explain why your phone can get map directions in rental cars (they probably have up-to-date Android Auto software) and why your phone doesn't get map directions in your car unless you turn the car off (which probably turns off the flawed connection between your phone and the car.)

How can you fix the problem? Toyota dealerships may be able to upgrade the Android Auto software in car models sold with that feature, but they are unlikely to do it for cars like yours that have an aftermarket stereo head unit. So, your best bet is to try updating Android Auto on your phone and car yourself (some cars can receive an update through the phone, see tinyurl.com/ykn85c4h). If that doesn't work, you will need to ask the manufacturer of your car's stereo head unit about software updates. Major manufacturers include JVC, Pioneer, Sony and Alpine Electronics (see tinyurl.com/wymfmfds).

Q: I used to wirelessly print the newspaper's crossword puzzles from my iPad using my Google account to connect to "Cloud Print." But it stopped working, so I had to start printing via the Apple Safari browser. (A third option, HP Smart, won't print, either, because it says the connection is "not secure.") Why is this happening?

Barb Miller, Chaska

page 3 of 4

A: You can't use the Google Cloud Print service because it was discontinued on Dec. 31 2020.

Cloud Print relied on the internet. It used your Google account to upload the crossword puzzles to an online server, which then sent them back to your printer.

The Safari browser doesn't depend on an internet server. It uses the iPad's AirPrint software to send the crossword puzzles to your printer over your home Wi-Fi network.

The HP Smart software should function the same way as AirPrint. The most likely reason it doesn't work is that you have enabled HP Smart's optional security settings, which are designed to protect your printer's memory and data from outside tampering. Those settings may be blocking you from printing the crosswords directly from an internet website on the grounds that it's too risky (you might be downloading malware.) If you find that too restrictive, you can turn off the security settings for your printer by using the controls in the HP Smart app.

E-mail tech questions to steve.j.alexander@gmail.com or write to Tech Q&A, S. 650 3rd Av., Suite 1300, Minneapolis, MN 55488. Include name, city and telephone number.

*There are two ways of being rich.
One is to have all you want,
the other is to be satisfied
with what you have.*

Live the #OolaLife

page 4 of 4