Protected Mode Problem

Some DOS programs may have a problem on some computers running Windows 95, because it was written with a "Protected Mode Compiler" (which is awful technical sounding, but easy to diagnose via warning messages).

You will **ONLY** need to worry about this problem if:

1)   You are running Windows 95, and
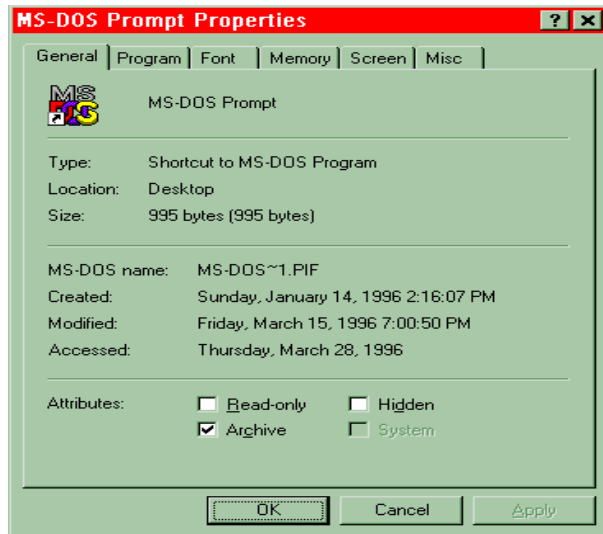2)   You get an error message saying:

"**This program is set to run in an MS-DOS mode and other programs can not run while it is running. All other programs will close if you choose to continue.**" A "Yes" or "No" button follow. Select NO... and read on...

To the best of our knowledge and testing, this error message only happens on about 20% of the systems running Windows 95. We have traced the error down, with the help of a couple Microsoft technicians, to certain programs that were designed or compiled for protected mode use, even then most Win95 systems don't fail here... depending on how they are setup and whether Win95 was a full retail install or upgrade or OEM (original equipment manufacturer) installation.
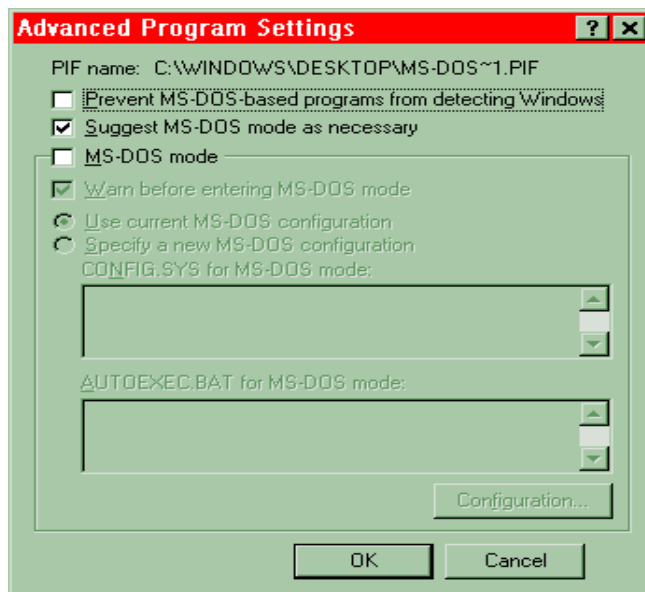
The Fix!

If you have the above problem, then you need to select NO for the above question, and take the following steps (manually, as it is system specific):

1)   Open Windows Explorer;
2)   Click on your CD Rom drive (with the disc containing the offending program on it in the drive at the time), usually drive D: is the CD;
3)   Find the EXE or COM file which starts the program (the easiest way to do this is to click on "Type" at the top of the right hand column to have Explorer sort the files with the "Applications" listed first. There may be more than one application. Most often, the start up file has a fairly obvious name, double click and try it, the error should be the same, or you may find a "backdoor" to get around the problem. **BE SURE TO READ THE SCREENS THAT COME UP!**
4)   Once the start up file has been found, you will need to have it highlighted (one click) and then right click on it. A menu will appear.
5)   Select "Properties," and go to the second Tab (at the top) named "Program." If you do not see the Program tab, you probably have the wrong file selected OR don't have a Protected mode problem, please make sure.

MS-DOS Prompt Properties

General | Program | Font | Memory | Screen | Misc

MS-DOS Prompt

Type: Shortcut to MS-DOS Program
Location: Desktop
Size: 995 bytes (995 bytes)

MS-DOS name: MS-DOS~1.PIF
Created: Sunday, January 14, 1996 2:16:07 PM
Modified: Friday, March 15, 1996 7:00:50 PM
Accessed: Thursday, March 28, 1996

Attributes: ☐ Read-only   ☐ Hidden
              ☑ Archive   ☐ System

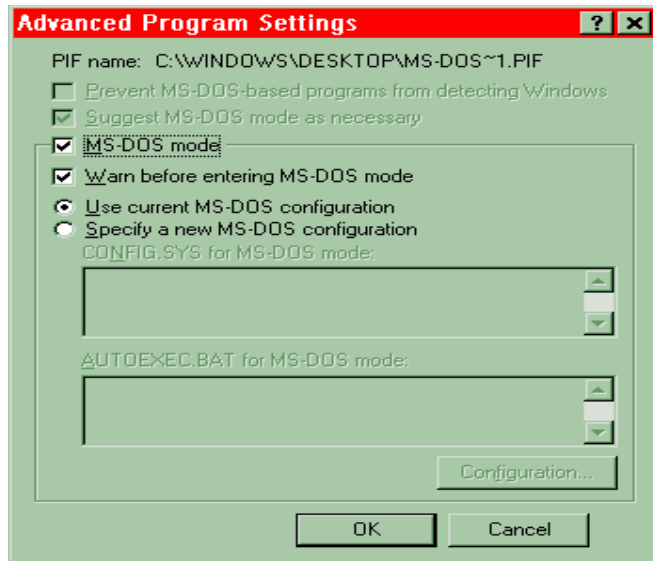[OK]   [Cancel]   [Apply]

** example of the Win95 Properties Menu above

6)   Once you've selected the Program tab, click on the "Close on Exit" check box toward the bottom center. Then, click on the "Advanced" button.

Advanced Program Settings

PIF name: C:\WINDOWS\DESKTOP\MS-DOS~1.PIF
☐ Prevent MS-DOS-based programs from detecting Windows
☑ Suggest MS-DOS mode as necessary
☐ MS-DOS mode
   ☑ Warn before entering MS-DOS mode
   ⦿ Use current MS-DOS configuration
   ○ Specify a new MS-DOS configuration
   CONFIG.SYS for MS-DOS mode:

   AUTOEXEC.BAT for MS-DOS mode:

                                    [Configuration...]

              [OK]   [Cancel]

7)   Once you've selected the "Advanced" button, select "MS-DOS Mode," (instead of the Suggest MS-DOS mode as necessary) and make sure "Warn before entering MS-DOS Mode" is NOT selected. In most cases you will want to select "Use current MS-DOS configuration"

8)   Now try to run the program again. The problem should be solved. This has worked on the two computers here that have had this problem without fail.

Good Luck, and please register your product. The more end-users using Windows 95, the more time we will spend licensing and developing Win95 applications and solving problems in a more efficient way.

Thank you.

The End