Apple HD Backup Error: Tried To Open Too Many Files

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Note: HD Backup is not compatible with System 7; this article is relevant only
for those running System 6.0.x or earlier.

When using Apple's HD Backup, you may get a "Tried to open too many files"
error with "Cancel" or "Continue" options. When you click on continue, it goes
on to the next file, and then produces the same error.

Such an error message suggests files being backed up are "busy". This may be
due to:

  • Finder file information flags set incorrectly.

  • Damaged system software.

  • Maximum number of files allowed set unreasonably low in boot blocks.

  • A problem with HD Backup, which Apple's testing could not duplicate.

Resetting the file information flags can be done by "repairing" the hard disk
(hold down Command-Option as the volume is mounted).

To fix a system software problem, or ensure the number of files allowed is
reasonably set, reinstall the system from known good System Tools disks,
preferably by dragging the old System Folder to the trash, and then using the
Installer to install new software.

There is no specific limit to the size or type of a hard disk you're able to
back up with Apple HD Backup, only a practical one. To back up an 80MB hard
disk, you need more than 100 diskettes, and a lot of time and patience for
inserting and removing that many diskettes. Theoretically, you could back up
much larger drives, 1.5 gigabyte drives for instance, but we haven't tested
that capability or know of anyone who is likely to need or want that feature.

Numerous third-party alternatives to HD Backup exist.
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