BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

AN EXTENDED GUIDE · NO. 2143

Updated November 2026

Roku Won't Load or Keeps Restarting

When your Roku freezes on the purple screen or loops over and over — the calm way to revive it

Plain-English TV help from:

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

A Roku that freezes or keeps restarting is almost always a power or temporary-glitch problem, not a dead device. Try a clean restart from Settings System Power, and if it is frozen, unplug its power for a full minute and reseat the stick. The biggest single cause of restart loops is powering the Roku from a TV USB port — use its own wall adapter instead.

Let it cool if it runs hot, and use an HDMI extender so a stick hangs in open air. A factory reset is a last resort because it erases every app and sign-in.

1 The Short Version

A Roku that freezes or keeps restarting is usually suffering from one of two things: not quite enough power, or a temporary software hiccup. Both are fixable at home, usually in a few minutes and without losing any of your apps or sign-ins.

Work down these steps in order. Most Rokus are back to normal by the second or third one, and nothing here erases your channels or settings unless you deliberately choose the last-resort factory reset.

- A restart loop is most often a power problem, not a broken Roku.
- Start with a proper restart, then a full power cycle (unplug for a full minute).
- Plug the Roku's power into a wall outlet, not a USB port on the back of the TV.
- A factory reset is a last resort — everything else comes first.

> **TIP**
>
> If your Roku stick is powered from a USB port on the back of the TV, that is the number-one cause of restart loops — the port often cannot supply quite enough power. Plugging the Roku's adapter into a wall outlet instead fixes a great many of these on its own.

> *A Roku that loops endlessly looks like it is dying, but it is almost always just hungry for steadier power — and that is one of the easiest things in all of home tech to put right.*

2 Why a Roku Loops or Freezes

A Roku is a tiny computer, and like any computer it occasionally gets its wires crossed and needs a fresh start. More often, though, a Roku that restarts over and over is simply not getting enough steady power. Rokus are designed to run from their own power adapter, and when they are run from a TV's USB port instead, the port may not deliver quite enough — so the Roku powers up, runs out of juice, and restarts, again and again.

Overheating can cause the same loop. A Roku stick crammed into a tight space with no airflow, or sitting on top of a warm device, can get too hot and restart to protect itself. It cools down, starts up, warms up, and restarts again — a cycle that looks alarming but is simply the Roku keeping itself safe. Knowing these two causes — power and heat — points you straight at the fixes that actually work, and away from the drastic ones that do not.

GOOD TO KNOW

None of this means your Roku is failing. Power and heat problems look dramatic — the endless loop feels like a death spiral — but they are among the easiest things to put right, and the Roku is usually perfectly healthy once it gets steady power and a little air.

3 Restart the Roku Properly

The first thing to try is a clean restart from the Roku's own menu — if you can reach it. This is gentler than pulling the plug and clears most temporary glitches.

1. If you can reach the home screen, go to Settings, then System, then Power, then System restart.
2. Choose Restart and let the Roku shut down and start up on its own.
3. If the screen is frozen and the menu will not open, skip to the full power cycle in the next chapter.
4. Once it restarts, try opening an app to see whether the trouble has cleared.

> **TIP**
>
> Some Roku remotes have a secret restart built in: press Home five times, then Up, then Rewind twice, then Fast-forward twice. If the on-screen menu is frozen but the remote still responds, this button sequence can trigger a restart without unplugging anything.

4 The Full Power Cycle

If the Roku is frozen solid or the restart did not hold, a full power cycle almost always revives it. This completely empties its short-term memory and gives it a clean start, and it is perfectly safe — your apps and sign-ins are untouched.

1. Unplug the Roku's power cable from the wall or adapter — not just turn off the TV.
2. Leave it unplugged for a full minute so it fully powers down (this matters more than it seems).
3. If it is a stick in an HDMI port, pull the stick out of the port too, then reseat it.
4. Plug the power back in and let the Roku start up completely before touching anything.

WATCH OUT

Turning off the TV is not the same as unplugging the Roku, especially if the Roku has its own wall adapter — it may keep running. Unplug the Roku's own power cable to be sure it truly restarts.

5 Fix the Power Supply

Because power is the most common cause of restart loops, it is worth making sure the Roku is powered the way it was designed to be. This one change cures more Roku loops than anything else.

- Use the power adapter that came with the Roku, plugged into a wall outlet, rather than a TV USB port.
- If the adapter or cable is damaged, frayed, or a mismatched replacement, that can cause loops — use a proper Roku power kit.
- Roku streaming sticks sold recently include a special adapter that can draw a little power from the TV's USB port even while the TV is on — if yours is missing, the port alone may not be enough.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can buy an official Roku power cable and adapter inexpensively, and it is the right fix if yours was lost or never used. If you are not certain which cable your model needs, that is an easy thing for me to sort out — bringing the correct one and confirming the loop is gone.

6 Let It Cool Down

If your Roku gets hot to the touch, or sits in a cramped, closed cabinet, overheating may be behind the restarts. A Roku that is too hot will restart to protect itself and keep doing so until it cools.

1. Unplug the Roku and let it sit and cool for ten to fifteen minutes.

2. Move it somewhere with air around it — out of a closed cabinet, off a warm device, away from direct sun.
3. For a stick behind a wall-mounted TV, use a short HDMI extender so it hangs in open air, not trapped against the hot TV.
4. Plug it back in and see whether the loop is gone now that it can breathe.

TIP

An HDMI extender cable — a short cable that lets the stick dangle out from behind the TV — solves both overheating and weak Wi-Fi at once, since the stick is no longer boxed in by the metal of the TV. It is one of the cheapest, most worthwhile little add-ons for any streaming stick.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

7 Check for a Software Update

Once the Roku is loading again, it is worth making sure its software is current, since an out-of-date Roku can be glitchy and prone to freezing. Rokus usually update themselves, but you can nudge it along.

1. From the home screen, go to Settings, then System, then System update.
2. Choose Check now and let it download and install anything it finds.
3. Let the Roku restart itself to finish the update — this is normal and should be a single, clean restart, not a loop.

GOOD TO KNOW

If the Roku will only stay on long enough to reach the menu briefly, getting an update installed can be what finally steadies it. A device stuck on old software sometimes cannot fix itself until it is nursed through one good update.

8 Check the Wi-Fi the Roku Came Back To

Once a Roku loads again, it sometimes finds it has lost its place on your Wi-Fi — the apps are there but nothing will play. A quick look at its network connection confirms whether the internet side is healthy before you blame anything else.

1. From the home screen, go to Settings, then Network, then About or Check connection.
2. Let the Roku test the connection and look for a “Connected” result with a decent signal.
3. If the signal reads “poor” or it cannot connect, choose Set up connection and rejoin your Wi-Fi.
4. Have your Wi-Fi password handy — you may need to type it in again carefully.

- A weak signal here can cause the very freezing that looked like a restart loop.
- If the Roku sits far from the router, moving it closer or adding a mesh point helps.
- A wired connection, where the Roku model supports it, is the steadiest of all.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> A Roku that keeps freezing mid-show, rather than during start-up, is often struggling with a weak Wi-Fi signal rather than a power fault. If the restart loop is really a buffering-and-freezing problem, the Wi-Fi reach is the thing to improve.

9 When Only One App Misbehaves

If the Roku itself is fine but one particular app freezes or crashes, the trouble is that single app, not the Roku. The fix is to give that app a fresh copy.

1. Highlight the troublesome app on the home screen and press the Star (asterisk) button on the remote.
2. Choose Remove channel to delete it — this does not cancel your subscription.
3. Go to the Roku's search or channel store, find the app again, and add it back.
4. Open it and sign in; it should behave now that it has a clean copy.

WATCH OUT

Removing an app means signing back in afterward, so have the email and password for that service handy before you remove it. If you do not know the login, try other fixes first or let me help recover it.

10 The Last Resort: Factory Reset

If nothing else works and the Roku still will not load, a factory reset wipes it back to how it came from the store. This is genuinely a last resort — it removes every app and sign-in, so you will set the Roku up again from scratch afterward.

Only do this once power, heat, and updates have all been ruled out, and only if you are comfortable re-entering your Wi-Fi password and all your streaming logins. If you are at all unsure, this is the point to call rather than risk locking yourself out of your own apps.

WATCH OUT

A factory reset is where I would rather you pause and call me. It is not dangerous, but it means re-entering every streaming login afterward, and if a password has gone astray it can turn a small problem into a frustrating afternoon. I can run the reset and have you fully set back up, signed into everything, before I leave.

11 Is It the Roku, the TV, or the Internet?

Before you spend long reviving a Roku, it is worth a moment to make sure the Roku is really the problem. A few quick checks tell you where the trouble truly lies, so you fix the right thing.

- If the TV shows its own menu and other inputs fine, the TV is healthy — look at the Roku.

- If the Roku loads but apps will not play, the trouble is likely the internet, not the Roku.
- If the Roku is dead on every TV and port you try, the Roku or its power supply is at fault.
- If only one app misbehaves, it is that app, not the Roku itself.

1. Switch the TV to a different input to confirm the TV and screen work.
2. Move the Roku to another HDMI port, or another TV if you have one, to test the Roku alone.
3. Open a different app — if everything fails to play, check your Wi-Fi and internet.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Ten minutes of this sorting saves hours of chasing the wrong fix. More than once, a "broken Roku" has turned out to be an internet outage or a tired HDMI cable — and the Roku was fine all along.

12 Keep It From Happening Again

Once your Roku is behaving, a few small habits keep it that way. Most of them simply protect the two things a Roku needs most: steady power and a little breathing room.

- Keep the Roku on its own wall power adapter rather than a TV USB port.
- Give a stick some air — an HDMI extender keeps it out of the hot, cramped space behind the TV.
- Let it install its updates; a Roku left on overnight now and then keeps itself current.
- Restart it cleanly every few weeks if it starts to feel sluggish, long before it loops.

> *Steady power and a little air — give a Roku those two things and the restart loops almost never come back.*

13 When to Call Bill

Most Rokus that loop or freeze come back with a proper power cycle and the right power supply, and this guide gets most people there. But if yours keeps restarting no matter what, or you have reached the factory-reset step and would rather not risk your sign-ins, there is no need to struggle.

I come to you, find whether it is power, heat, software, or the device itself, and set it right — bringing the correct Roku power kit or an HDMI extender if that is what it needs. If a reset is called for, I do it and sign you back into all your apps, so you are left watching, not wrestling.

- It keeps looping even after a full power cycle and using the proper wall adapter.
- The Roku runs hot and restarts, and you need it moved into open air.
- You have reached the factory-reset step and want your logins kept safe.
- You are not sure which power cable or adapter your Roku needs.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this by the TV. Try these in order; most loops end by the power cycle.

I want to…	Do this…
Restart it cleanly	Settings System Power System restart (or Home×5, Up, Rewind×2, Fast-forward×2)
Revive a frozen Roku	Unplug its power for a full minute, reseat the stick, plug back in
End a restart loop	Power it from the wall adapter, not the TV's USB port
Stop overheating	Let it cool; use an HDMI extender so a stick hangs in open air
Fix one bad app	Highlight it, press Star Remove channel, then re-add and sign in
Last resort	Factory reset — only after everything else, with logins on hand
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

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