BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

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Stop Your Printer Dropping Offline for Good (Static IP)

The permanent cure for a printer that keeps going offline — giving it one fixed address on your network

Plain-English printer help from:

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Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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What's Inside

Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.

The 60-Second Version 3

The Short Version 3

Why Your Printer Keeps Wandering Off 4

Two Ways to Pin the Address 4

Find the Printer's Current Address 5

Understand the Address Parts 6

Method 1: Reserve the Address in Your Router 6

Method 2: Set a Manual Address on the Printer 7

Avoid an Address Clash 7

Confirm the Address Holds 8

Re-Add the Printer on Your Computer 8

Tidy Up Power-Saving Settings 9

Do the Same for Other Wandering Devices 9

When a Fixed Address Isn't the Whole Story 10

When to Call Bill 10

Everyday Cheat Sheet 12

A Note From Bill 13

Your Visit — and My Promise 14

SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

A printer that keeps going offline despite restarts is usually being given a new network address each time by your router, so the computer loses track of it. The lasting cure is pinning the printer to one fixed address. The best way is a “reservation” in your router, which always gives the printer the same address; the alternative is setting a manual (static) address on the printer itself, chosen outside the router's automatic range to avoid clashes.

Find the printer's current address first, set the fix, confirm it holds through a restart, and re-add the printer on your computer.

1 The Short Version

Every device on your home network has an address — a bit like a house number — that your router hands out. By default the router can change those numbers whenever devices come and go, and when it quietly gives your printer a new number, your computer keeps knocking at the old one and reports the printer offline. Giving the printer one fixed address that never changes stops this for good. There are two ways to do it, and this guide covers both.

- Printers go offline repeatedly because the router keeps changing their address.
- The permanent fix is pinning the printer to one fixed address.
- The reliable way is a “reservation” in your router; the alternative is a manual address in the printer.
- It involves a few technical fields — careful work, but a lasting cure.

> **TIP**
>
> If your printer drops offline only occasionally, the quick fixes — restart, re-select, set as default — may be all you need. The fixed-address fix in this guide is for the printer that goes offline again and again, where the quick fixes only buy a day or two.

2 Why Your Printer Keeps Wandering Off

Your router runs a system called DHCP that hands out addresses to every device automatically. It keeps a pool of numbers and lends them out, reclaiming and reassigning them over time. This is convenient and usually invisible — but it means a device's address can change, especially after the device sleeps, the router restarts, or many gadgets join the network.

When the printer's address changes, your computer's saved shortcut to the old address stops working, and it declares the printer offline even though the printer is perfectly fine. Pinning the printer to one address removes the moving target, so the computer always knows exactly where to find it.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> This is why restarting fixes it temporarily: the restart often lands the printer back on a familiar address for a while, until the router reshuffles again. The fixed address makes that reshuffle stop affecting the printer at all.

3 Two Ways to Pin the Address

There are two routes to a fixed address, and it is worth knowing the difference before you start.

Method	What it means
Router reservation (best)	The router always gives the printer the same address, by its ID
Manual address in the printer	You set a fixed address on the printer itself

The router reservation is usually the better choice, because the router stays in charge and there is less chance of a clash. Setting a manual address on the printer works too,

but you must choose an address that will not collide with another device. We cover both below.

4 Find the Printer's Current Address

Either method starts by learning the printer's current address, which you will either reserve or re-enter. The printer can tell you.

1. On the printer's screen, open the Network or Wireless settings and look for “IP Address.”
2. Or print a “network configuration” or “wireless” report from the printer's Setup menu.
3. Note the IP Address — four numbers with dots, like 192.168.1.50.
4. Also note the printer's “MAC address” or hardware ID if shown — the router uses it to recognize the printer.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> The IP address is the printer's house number on your network; the MAC address is more like the printer's permanent name tag that never changes. A router reservation links the two — “always give this name tag the same house number.”

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5 Understand the Address Parts

A quick word on what those numbers mean makes the next steps far less mysterious. A home address like 192.168.1.50 has two halves: the first part (192.168.1) is your network's name, shared by everything on it, and the last number (50) is the individual device.

- The first three numbers are the same for every device on your network.
- The last number is unique to each device — that is the part that must not clash.
- Your router itself usually ends in.1 (like 192.168.1.1).
- The pool of numbers the router hands out is often a range like.100 to.200.

> **WATCH OUT**
> When you choose a fixed number for the printer, pick one outside the router's automatic range — often a low number like.50 — so the router never tries to lend that same number to something else. This is the key to avoiding clashes.

6 Method 1: Reserve the Address in Your Router

This is the recommended way. You log in to your router and tell it to always give the printer the same address, matched to the printer's name tag. The router stays in control, so there is little to go wrong.

1. Open a web browser and go to your router's address (often 192.168.1.1) or use its app.
2. Sign in with the router password (often on a sticker on the router).
3. Find “DHCP Reservation,” “Address Reservation,” or “Static Leases” — usually under LAN or Wi-Fi settings.
4. Pick your printer from the list of connected devices (match it by name or MAC address) and reserve its current address.
5. Save, then restart the printer so it picks up the reserved address.

WATCH OUT

Router menus differ wildly from brand to brand, and signing in to the router can feel like stepping behind the curtain. This is the single most common reason people call me about a printer that "keeps going offline" — I set the reservation in a few minutes and confirm it holds, and the problem is simply gone.

7 Method 2: Set a Manual Address on the Printer

If you would rather not touch the router, many printers let you set a fixed address on the printer itself. It works, but you must choose an address carefully so it does not clash with another device.

1. On the printer, open Network or Wireless settings, then "IP Settings" or "TCP/IP."
2. Change the setting from "Automatic" or "DHCP" to "Manual" or "Static."
3. Enter an address with your network's first three numbers and a last number outside the router's range (such as.50).
4. Enter the same "subnet mask" and "gateway" the printer showed before (the gateway is usually your router, ending in.1).
5. Save, and confirm the printer reconnects and holds the new address.

WATCH OUT

A wrong number here — a last number already used by another device, or a wrong gateway — can knock the printer off the network entirely. Write down the original values before you change anything, so you can put them back if it does not take. If any field is unclear, this is a good point to get help rather than guess.

8 Avoid an Address Clash

The one real risk with a fixed address is two devices ending up with the same number, which knocks both offline intermittently. A little care prevents it.

- Choose a last number outside the router's automatic hand-out range.

- Do not reuse a number another device already has a reservation for.
- If the printer goes offline right after you set the address, a clash is the likely cause — pick a different number.
- The router-reservation method avoids clashes best, because the router tracks every number it gives out.

9 Confirm the Address Holds

After setting the fixed address, make sure it actually sticks across a restart — that is the whole point.

1. Restart the printer and let it reconnect.
2. Check its IP address again on the screen or a network report.
3. Confirm it matches the fixed address you set.
4. Restart it once more a bit later and check the address has not changed.

> **TIP**
>
> The real test is time: leave it a few days and see whether the offline problem returns. A printer with a properly fixed address should simply stay reachable, through sleeps, restarts, and the router's reshuffles.

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10 Re-Add the Printer on Your Computer

Because the printer's address may have changed when you fixed it, your computer might still be looking at the old one. Re-adding the printer lines the two back up.

1. Windows: Printers & scanners remove the printer “Add device” pick it again.

2. Mac: Printers & Scanners select the printer minus (–) plus (+) add it again.
3. Send a test page to confirm the computer now reaches the printer at its fixed address.

11 Tidy Up Power-Saving Settings

A fixed address fixes the wandering-number problem, but a printer that falls into deep sleep can still seem offline for a moment while it wakes. Easing its sleep settings helps.

- In the printer or maker's app, look for a sleep or power-save timer and lengthen it if it sleeps too quickly.
- Leave the printer powered on rather than switching it off at the wall between uses.
- Keep its firmware up to date through the maker's app, which can improve connection stability.
- Make sure the printer's Wi-Fi signal is strong where it sits.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> A deep-sleeping printer sometimes answers the first print of the day slowly, so the computer briefly calls it offline before it wakes. Lengthening the sleep timer, or simply sending the job again after a few seconds, smooths that over.

12 Do the Same for Other Wandering Devices

A printer is the device people notice going offline, but the same fixed-address trick steadies anything on your network that you reach by address — a network scanner, a security camera recorder, or a home server. Once you have done it for the printer, the rest are easy.

- Any device you connect to by its address benefits from a reservation.
- Reserving addresses for your key devices makes the whole network more predictable.

- It also makes troubleshooting easier, because each device is always in the same place.
- Leave phones, tablets, and laptops on automatic — they roam and do not need fixing.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> There is no need to pin every gadget in the house — only the ones you reach by a fixed address, like a printer or a camera recorder. Phones and laptops are happier left on the automatic system, since they come and go.

13 When a Fixed Address Isn't the Whole Story

Occasionally a printer keeps dropping offline for a reason beyond its address — a weak Wi-Fi signal, an overloaded router, or the HP+ always-online quirk. If a fixed address does not fully cure it, these are the next places to look.

- Weak Wi-Fi where the printer sits — move it closer or improve coverage.
- An old or struggling router that drops devices — a restart or replacement may be due.
- An HP+ printer reacting to internet blips — see the HP+ offline guide.
- Interference from other devices or a crowded network.

14 When to Call Bill

Giving a printer a fixed address is the lasting cure for the offline cycle, but it genuinely is the fiddliest fix in the printer library — it means signing in to your router or entering network numbers on the printer, where a small slip can knock things off. There is no shame in handing this one over; it is the most common printer call I get.

I set the reservation in your router in a few minutes, confirm the printer holds steady through restarts, re-add it on your computer, and check your Wi-Fi coverage while I am at it. You end up with a printer that simply stays reachable — and you never think about it going offline again.

- You would rather not sign in to your router or enter network numbers yourself.
- You set a fixed address and the printer still drops offline.
- You are not sure which address is safe to use.
- You simply want the offline problem gone for good, done right the first time.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this by the router. A fixed address is the lasting cure for going offline.

I want to...	Do this...
Find the current address	Printer's Network menu note the IP (like 192.168.1.50)
Best fix: router reservation	Sign in to the router DHCP/Address Reservation reserve the printer
Alternative: manual on printer	Printer Network IP Settings Manual address outside the router's range
Avoid a clash	Pick a last number the router doesn't hand out automatically
Confirm it holds	Restart the printer and check the address hasn't changed
Reunite the computer	Remove and re-add the printer, then print a test page
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.
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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.

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