BILL'S HOME TECH

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The TV/Monitor Says "No Signal" but Everything's On

The screen insists there's "no signal" though everything's plugged in and running — here's the calm fix

Plain-English tech help from:

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

"No Signal" means the screen is on and working but isn't receiving a picture — usually because it's set to the wrong input or a cable slipped loose. Start by pressing Input or Source on the remote and cycling through HDMI 1, 2, and so on until your picture appears; that fixes most cases. Make sure the device feeding the screen is actually on and awake, and reseat the HDMI cable firmly at both ends.

If that fails, try a different HDMI socket, and unplug the TV for 30 seconds to fully clear it. For a laptop on a TV, tap the Windows key plus P. If a known-good cable in a different socket still shows nothing, it's likely a failed cable or socket — both inexpensive to resolve.

1 The Short Version

"No Signal" means the screen is switched on and working fine, but it isn't receiving a picture from wherever it's looking. The two most common reasons by far are that the screen is set to the wrong "input" (looking at an empty socket), or a cable has come loose at one end.

Because the likely causes are few, you can get the picture back quickly and calmly. Most "No Signal" messages clear within a minute or two once you find the right input or reseat a cable.

- "No Signal" means the screen works — it's just not receiving a picture to show.
- Most often the input is set wrong; press Input or Source and cycle through the options.
- Loose or half-seated cables are the next most common cause.
- Make sure the device feeding the screen (cable box, computer) is truly on, not asleep.

TIP

Start with the Input or Source button on the remote — it fixes the majority of "No Signal" messages in seconds. The screen is simply watching the wrong socket; pointing it at the right one brings the picture straight back.

2 What "No Signal" Actually Means

The message is the screen being honest: "I'm on and ready, but nothing is coming in on the socket I'm watching." A modern TV has several inputs — several sockets to receive a picture — and it can only watch one at a time.

So if the screen is watching HDMI 1 but your cable box is plugged into HDMI 2, you'll see "No Signal" even though everything works perfectly. Nothing is broken; the screen is just looking in the wrong direction. The same is true if the device feeding it is off, asleep, or disconnected.

GOOD TO KNOW

This is why "No Signal" is usually good news in disguise — it tells you the screen itself is fine. The problem is in which socket it's watching or what's feeding that socket, both of which are quick to sort out.

3 Is It the TV, the Monitor, or Something Feeding It?

A moment's thought about your setup points you to the right fixes. A TV with a cable box and a streaming stick has different likely causes than a computer monitor on a desk.

- A TV: the input setting and the source device (cable box, streaming stick, game console) are the usual culprits.

- A computer monitor: the cable, the monitor's own input, or the computer being asleep.
- A laptop plugged into a TV or monitor: the laptop may not be sending the picture out — a quick key fix.
- In every case, the screen itself is almost certainly fine, since it's showing the message at all.

> **TIP**
> The fact that you can read "No Signal" on the screen proves the screen and its power are working. That alone rules out the scariest possibility, and lets you focus on the easy causes with a calm mind.

4 Fix Number One: Check the Input

This is the single most effective step, so always start here. You're going to tell the screen which socket to watch, and in most cases that's the entire fix.

1. Find the Input or Source button — on the remote (a rectangle with an arrow going in) or on the TV/monitor itself.
2. Press it to bring up the list of inputs (HDMI 1, HDMI 2, TV, and so on).
3. Move through them one at a time, pausing a few seconds on each to let the picture appear.
4. When your picture shows up, that's the right input — leave it there.
5. If none shows a picture, note which input your device is plugged into and go to the next steps.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> TVs jump to the wrong input after a power cut, a new device being plugged in, or someone pressing the wrong button. It's the most common "No Signal" cause of all, and cycling through the inputs is the whole fix the great majority of the time.

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5 Is the Source Device Really On?

Once the screen is watching the right socket, the thing plugged into that socket has to be awake and sending a picture. A sleeping or off source device shows "No Signal" just as surely as a wrong input.

1. Make sure the cable box, streaming stick, computer, or console is powered on — look for its own light.
2. Wake it if it's asleep: press a button on its remote, move the computer's mouse, or nudge the console's controller.
3. If it won't wake, restart it (many devices restart by unplugging for ten seconds).
4. Give it a minute to send a picture after it wakes.

TIP

A streaming stick or cable box that's gone into a deep sleep is a very common hidden cause. If the right input still shows "No Signal," waking or restarting the source device plugged into it is the next thing to try.

6 Reseat the Cables

A cable that's slipped even slightly out of its socket gives a clean "No Signal" — the connection has to be fully seated to carry a picture. This happens more than you'd think, especially behind a TV where cords get bumped.

1. Find the cable (usually HDMI) running from your source device to the screen.
2. Unplug it from the screen and push it firmly back in until it seats snugly.
3. Do the same at the source-device end — both ends matter.

4. Make sure you're using the socket number that matches the input you selected.
5. Check the picture again.

> **WATCH OUT**
> Push HDMI cables straight in rather than wiggling them side to side, which loosens the socket over time. A cable should seat snugly; if it falls out at the lightest touch, that socket or cable is likely your culprit.

7 Try a Different Socket

Sometimes one particular socket on the screen or the source device goes bad while the others are fine. Moving to a different one, and pointing the input there, rules this in or out.

1. Move the cable to a different HDMI socket on the screen (HDMI 2 instead of HDMI 1, say).
2. Change the input setting to match the new socket.
3. Check whether the picture now appears.
4. If the source device has more than one output socket, you can try a different one of those too.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> A dead HDMI socket is uncommon but real, and it looks exactly like a broken device until you try another socket. If moving to a different HDMI port brings the picture back, you've found a faulty socket, not a faulty screen or box.

8 Restart Both the Screen and the Source

If the input and cables all look right but the picture won't come, a clean restart of both the screen and the device feeding it clears many stubborn "No Signal" cases — especially after a power blip.

1. Unplug the TV or monitor from the wall for a full 30 seconds, then plug it back in.

2. Unplug the source device (cable box, streaming stick) for ten seconds, then reconnect it.
3. Turn the source device on first and let it start fully.
4. Then turn on the screen and select the correct input.

> **TIP**
>
> Pulling the TV's power for 30 seconds does something the remote's power button can't — it fully clears the TV rather than just sleeping it. This alone resolves a good number of "No Signal" messages that nothing else budges.

9 For a Computer Monitor

A separate monitor has its own power and input, independent of the computer, so a "No Signal" there has a slightly different checklist. The monitor is often simply waiting on a sleeping computer or a loose cable.

1. Confirm the computer itself is truly on and awake — tap a key or move the mouse.
2. Check the video cable is firmly seated at both the monitor and the computer.
3. If the monitor has more than one input, use its own menu buttons to select the one your cable uses.
4. An amber or orange power light on the monitor means it has power but no picture — point at the cable or a sleeping computer.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Monitors and computers use a few different cable types (HDMI, DisplayPort, and others). If a cable was recently changed or a new monitor added, make sure the monitor's input is set to the type of cable you actually plugged in.

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10 For a Laptop on a TV or Monitor

When you connect a laptop to a TV or monitor and get "No Signal," the laptop often simply isn't sending the picture out yet. A single key combination usually fixes it.

1. On Windows, hold the Windows key and tap P; choose "Duplicate" or "Extend" to send the picture to the second screen.
2. On a Mac, the second screen is usually detected automatically; if not, open Displays settings and click "Detect Displays."
3. Make sure the cable is firmly in both the laptop and the screen.
4. Select the matching input on the TV or monitor.

> **TIP**
> The Windows-key-plus-P tap is the magic move for a laptop that won't show on a TV or projector. If you just plugged in and see "No Signal," try that before anything else — it tells the laptop to start sending the picture out.

11 Swap the Cable to Test It

HDMI cables do fail, and a failing one gives an intermittent or total "No Signal" while looking perfectly healthy. Swapping in a known-good cable is the surest way to rule the cable in or out.

1. Borrow or use a spare HDMI cable you know works.
2. Replace the suspect cable with it, both ends firmly seated.
3. Select the right input and check for a picture.
4. If the new cable works, the old one was the problem — replace it.

> **WATCH OUT**
> You don't need an expensive cable — a standard, reasonable-quality HDMI cable is fine for home use. But a damaged or very cheap cable can cause flicker and "No Signal," so a decent replacement is worth the few dollars.

12 When It's Genuinely the Cable or a Socket

After the checks above, if a different cable in a different socket still shows nothing, you've likely found a real fault — a dead HDMI port or a failing cable. That's a clear, usually inexpensive conclusion rather than a mystery.

- A dead HDMI socket on the TV: use another socket, which is a free workaround.
- A failing cable: replace it, cheap and quick.
- A failing output on the source device: may need repair or replacement of that device.
- The screen itself is rarely the fault when it can still show "No Signal."

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> A dead socket on a TV is nearly always worked around by simply using a different HDMI port — you lose one socket but keep the TV. It's rarely worth replacing a whole TV over one bad input.

13 Prevent "No Signal" in Future

A little labeling and a spare cable turn most future "No Signal" scares into five-second fixes. You set this up once and benefit for years.

- Note which device uses which input ("cable box = HDMI 1, Roku = HDMI 2") on a card by the TV.
- Label the cables behind the screen so you can tell at a glance what's what.
- Keep one spare HDMI cable in a drawer.
- Learn where the TV's own Input and power buttons are, for when the remote won't do.

> **TIP**
>
> I'm glad to label the inputs and cables behind your TV and leave you a little card. It sounds minor, but it means the next "No Signal" is a confident press of one button rather than a worried guess.

14 When to Call Bill

You can safely work through all of these steps, and most "No Signal" messages come down to a wrong input or a loose cable that clears in a minute. But if a known-good cable in a different socket still shows nothing, if the picture flickers in and out, or if you simply can't tell which box is at fault, there's no need to keep wrestling with the cords.

I come to you, sort out the inputs and cables with a practiced eye, tell you plainly whether it's a two-dollar cable, a dead socket, or a device that needs replacing, and set everything up labeled and tidy so it's easy to manage yourself from then on.

- A known-good cable in a different socket still shows "No Signal."
- The picture comes and goes or flickers.
- You've several devices and can't tell which input or box is the problem.
- You'd like the whole setup labeled and made simple to use.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

"No Signal" means the screen works but isn't getting a picture. Start with the input.

I want to...	Do this...
Fix it fastest	Press Input/Source and cycle through HDMI 1, 2, etc. until the picture appears
Check the source	Make sure the cable box / stick / computer is on and awake
Fix a loose connection	Reseat the HDMI cable firmly at BOTH ends
Rule out a bad socket	Move the cable to a different HDMI port and select that input
Clear a stubborn case	Unplug the TV for 30 seconds; restart the source device too
Show a laptop's picture	Tap Windows-key + P and choose Duplicate or Extend
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.

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