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When dealing with a Windows 8.1 computer that refuses to boot, troubleshooting can be challenging but manageable if approached systematically. Several underlying issues could cause such a problem, ranging from hardware failures to software corruption. The goal is to identify the root cause accurately and apply the appropriate fixes. In this article, we explore various potential causes, diagnostic steps, and solutions—highlighting which options are applicable when fixing a Windows 8.1 system that is not booting.

"Advanced options" > "Startup Repair".

Applicable if the system can access the recovery environment but cannot boot normally. Not applicable if recovery environment is inaccessible or corrupted.

Boot from Windows Recovery Media

If the system cannot reach recovery options via normal startup, bootable media allows you to access recovery tools directly. To do this:

- 1. Create a Windows 8.1 installation USB or DVD using another PC.**
- 2. Insert media into the problematic PC, boot from it (adjust boot order in BIOS/UEFI).**
- 3. Select "Repair your computer" to access recovery options.**

Applicable when the built-in recovery options are inaccessible or damaged. Also essential if you plan to reinstall or reset Windows.

Perform a System Restore

System Restore rolls back system files and settings to a previous restore point. It's helpful if recent changes caused the startup failure. To perform System Restore:

- 1. Access recovery options via recovery media or automatic repair.**
- 2. Select "Troubleshoot" > "Advanced options" > "System Restore".**

3. Follow prompts to select a restore point and restore system files.

Applicable if restore points exist and the system can access them. Not applicable if restore points are missing or inaccessible.

Check Hardware Components

Hardware issues are common causes of startup failures. Testing involves:

- Running memory diagnostics (e.g., Windows Memory Diagnostic or MemTest86).**
- Checking the hard drive for errors using tools like CHKDSK or manufacturer diagnostics.**
- Ensuring power supply and motherboard are functioning correctly.**

Applicable if suspect hardware failure based on symptoms (e.g., clicking hard drive, error

beeps). Not applicable if hardware is functioning properly or tests are inconclusive.

Reset or Refresh Windows 8.1

These options reinstall Windows while preserving personal files (Refresh) or reset to factory settings (Reset). To access:

- 1. Boot from recovery media or use recovery partition.**
- 2. Select "Troubleshoot" > "Reset your PC" or "Refresh your PC".**

Applicable if the OS is severely corrupted but data backup exists. Not suitable if data recovery is needed prior to reset or refresh.

Reinstall Windows 8.1

If repair tools fail, reinstalling Windows may be necessary. This involves wiping the existing installation and installing fresh copies of the

OS. To do this:

- 1. Use recovery media or installation USB/DVD.**
- 2. Boot from media and follow prompts to perform a clean install.**

Applicable as a last resort when other repair options are ineffective. Data backup is recommended before proceeding.

Check BIOS/UEFI Settings

Misconfigured BIOS/UEFI settings can prevent booting. Key checks include:

- Boot order: ensure the primary drive is set as the first boot device.**
- Secure Boot: disable if incompatible hardware/software is involved.**
- UEFI/Legacy mode: confirm settings match the OS installation.**

Applicable when hardware configuration issues are suspected, especially after hardware changes or BIOS updates. Not applicable if BIOS settings are correct and the problem persists.

Investigate Hardware Failures

Persistent startup problems might indicate hardware failure. Diagnostics involve:

- Using manufacturer-provided diagnostic tools.**
- Listening for abnormal noises in drives or fans.**
- Replacing suspected faulty components.**

Applicable when software troubleshooting does not resolve the issue or hardware diagnostics point to failure. Not applicable if hardware tests pass.
