

What to do if Your Computer Freezes

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Pop quiz. You're in the VISE lab working on your homework when, for no obvious reason, Netscape completely freezes up the windowing system. Do you

- a. Wait patiently until the computer un-locks.
- b. Email ECN to come fix the problem.
- c. Wait until nobody's looking, reboot the computer, and flee the building.
- d. Kill the offending job yourself.**

It's very important to realize that the VISE lab computers are multi-user machines, and that while you're working at the computer, someone else may be running background jobs for their research. If the machine is rebooted, all these jobs will be lost and some PhD candidate who's defending in a few days may come looking for you (they're smart—they can tell who did it). Therefore, in general, **users should not reboot these computers.**

If your windowing environment completely locks up, it's most likely that a single program is responsible (Netscape for example). In such a case, the CPU is probably still functioning, but the window manager will stay frozen until the offending program is "*killed*". The following procedure describes how to do this.

Situation: You're logged into *wise15* and Netscape locks up the the window manager.

1. Log into another computer, *wise16* for example.
2. Open up a terminal window, and remotely log into *wise15* using `rlogin wise15`.
3. Look at your jobs on *wise15* using the "*top*" command. Once *top* is running, you can display only your jobs by typing "u" and entering your login.
4. To kill the job, type "k" and enter the PID corresponding to the job that's hanging the machine. If this doesn't kill the job, type "q" to quit *top*, then type "`kill -9 <PID>`" at the Linux prompt.