

Something that worked for me...

Title: *STEPS with Windows 2000 problems investigated*

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Following a series of reported problems using the STEPS modules with the Windows 2000 operating system it was sensible to investigate the problems.

A clean machine (one which had a new installation of Windows 2000 and had never had an installation of the STEPS modules) was used. The modules were downloaded from the website (<http://www.stats.gla.ac.uk/steps/>) and installed. This is probably the most common approach taken to installing the modules, although a book with an installation CD is available.

There are four groups of modules and a 'base'. The outcome of the installations is given below. Only three modules were found to have either installation or runtime issues.

Module	Download file name	Collection	Problem	Solution
STEPS Base	base.exe	Base	-	-
The Birds and the Bees	gulls.exe	Biology	TB30RUN.EXE not found at runtime.	Solution 1 below.
All Creatures Great and Small	bmi.exe	Biology	-	-
Skinfold Thickness	sft.exe	Biology	-	-
Trials and Tribulations	tt.exe	Biology	-	-
IgE	Ige.exe	Biology	-	-
ROC	Medscrn.exe	Biology	-	-
Eureka	Eureka.exe	Biology	-	-
Sterility Testing	Sterile.exe	Biology	-	-
Dyed Eyes	Eyes.exe	Biology	-	-
The Case of Luddersby Hall	Ludders.exe	Biology	-	-
Spatial Pattern of a Plant Population	Spatial.exe	Biology	-	-
Birds of a Feather I	Bof1.exe	Biology	-	-
Birds of a Feather II	Bof2.exe	Biology	-	-
Rats	Rats.exe	Biology	-	-
Pre-Natal detection of Genetic Diseases	Genes.exe	Biology	-	-
Lichen	Lichen.exe	Biology	-	-
Angina	Angina.exe	Biology	-	-
Probability Modules	Probmods.exe	Business	1. 'PIFHELP error' during installation. 2. Menus in later releases of Minitab are different.	Solution 2 below.
Bank Account Blues	Bankblue.exe	Business	1. 'PIFHELP error' during installation. 2. Menus in later releases of Minitab are different.	Solution 2 below.
Market Testing Sunjoy	Market.exe	Business	-	-
Unfinished Business	Unfinbus.exe	Business	-	-
Exploring Pharmaceuticals	Eda1.exe	Business	-	-
Comparing Pharmaceuticals	Eda2.exe	Business	-	-
Suppliers – how do they measure up	Supplier.exe	Business	-	-
Salary distribution	Saldists.exe	Business	-	-
Equipment breakdown	Equip.exe	Business	-	-
Quality Control	Quality.exe	Business	-	-
Pennine Rainfall: Visual	Rainvis.exe	Geography	-	-
Human Migration	Migrate.exe	Geography	-	-
Rainfall and River Flow	River.exe	Geography	-	-
Predicting Rainfall	Rainpred.exe	Geography	-	-
Pennine Rainfall: Numerical	Rainnum.exe	Geography	-	-
Travel to Work	Travel.exe	Geography	-	-
Bullying in Schools	Bully.exe	Psychology	-	-
Exploring Dyslexia	Dyslexia.exe	Psychology	-	-
Predicting Dyslexia	Predys.exe	Psychology	-	-
Head Injury	Headinj.exe	Psychology	-	-
Spatial Memory	Spatmem.exe	Psychology	-	-

Solution 1 for 'The Birds and the Bees'

There is a fault in the installation program. Shortcuts are not installed to the Desktop or correctly added to the 'Start' menu. The shortcut in the 'Start' menu needs to be altered. Here are the stages involved;

1. Go to 'Start', followed by 'Settings', followed by 'Taskbar and Start menu ...'.
2. Click 'Advanced'.
3. Although 'Start menu' will be highlighted, this is probably the wrong entry. Follow the tree structure up the screen from the highlighted entry until you reach 'All Users'.
4. Expand 'All Users'.
5. Expand 'Start Menu'.
6. Expand 'Programs'.
7. Work down the list until you find 'STEPS'. Expand STEPS
8. Click with the right mouse button on the 'Birds and the Bees' icon. Choose 'properties'.
9. Modify the 'Target' entry to read (assuming STEPS is installed to drive C);
C:\STEPS\BASE\TB30RUN.EXE
c:\steps\gulls\gull1_7.tbk
10. Click 'ok', close the file explorer window and click 'ok' the last window.
11. The option in the 'Start' menu should now work correctly.

Solution 2 for 'Probability Modules' and 'Bank Account Blues'

The cause of the first error is that PIF files are not supported beyond Windows 3. The module designs need to be altered to get round this.

The alterations to the Minitab menus can be got round by running Minitab by hand.

No ideal solution is available to these problems at present.

In Conclusion

As it turns out, most STEPS modules continue to run correctly under more recent Microsoft operating systems. For the immediate future the following activities are planned to continue the support of STEPS;

- A test of the modules under Windows XP and Windows ME.
- Updating of the STEPS website with 'fixes' for the most common problems.
- An update of the installation program. It was noted that it takes the better part of a day to download and install the modules when a modem is used for downloading, a 'bundled' version of each group could be prepared.

Editor's Note: Any user experiencing difficulty downloading, installing or running the modules is invited to make contact with: Dr Ewan Crawford email: ewan@stats.gla.ac.uk

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