



## Building Homes of Our Own Teacher FAQs

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Listed below are some of the most frequently asked questions for *Building Homes of Our Own*. If you don't see an answer to your question here, please [email us](#).

### Technical Questions

#### Ordering

**1. I want to order Building Homes of Our Own. Which version should I order?**

Version 1.1 was developed for Windows 98 and runs best on this system. It allows you to save games on one computer and access them again later from the same machine. Order version 1.1 if you will be playing *Building Homes of Our Own* on a classroom computer.

Version 2.0 was developed for Windows XP and runs best on this system. It allows you to save an unlimited number of games on your computer OR on a server network to later access them from any other network served computer. Order version 2.0 if you will be playing *Building Homes of Our Own* in a network supported computer lab.

Both versions are installed on individual computers' hard drives and can be installed on multiple computers without violation of the software license agreement.

**2. My registration didn't go through, I'm getting an error message or the site says I've registered before and I haven't.**

If you are getting an error message, it means that the system shows that your registration has been successfully completed even if you didn't think it went through. If you have questions about your registration, email us at [dennis@mediaop.com](mailto:dennis@mediaop.com).

**3. It's been more than 2 weeks and I still haven't received my program. What should I do?**

While we try to get orders to recipients immediately, sometimes shipping can take 2-3 weeks. However, if you want to confirm the status of your order, email us at [dennis@mediaop.com](mailto:dennis@mediaop.com).

#### Usage/Licensing/Disk elements

**4. Other teachers want to use the game and/or students want a copy. What should I tell them?**

If other teachers want to use the game, you can either loan them the disk to install on their computers, or direct them to the [www.HomesOfOurOwn.org](http://www.HomesOfOurOwn.org) web site to order their own copy. If a student wants a copy of the game, you can lend him/her the disk to install on a home computer. You can also encourage students to work with their school library and/or local public library to secure a free loan copy.

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### **5. *My school requires a site license; how do I secure one?***

Email us at [dennis@mediaop.com](mailto:dennis@mediaop.com), and we will email you a five-year free license to use *Building Homes of Our Own*. Please provide the name of your school, address, including city, state, ZIP, and the school phone number.

### **6. *Why can't home school parents get copies of the game?***

The development grant has a provision that the game only be sent to schools with enrollments of at least 100 students. Home school parents are encouraged to work with their local public library to secure a free loan copy.

The game can only be sent to school addresses or public libraries for free loan. Since the game is loaded on individual computer hard drives, a simple installation of the game and Teacher's Guide onto the computer gives the user all program elements. Once the installation is completed, the disk is not required to use the program.

### **7. *Is there a printed Teacher's Guide available or just the PDF on the disk?***

Right now, the 200-page Teacher's Guide is limited to printable, downloadable PDF format and is included as part of the CD-ROM installation process. In addition, an updated version of the Middle School Teacher's Guide and a new High School Teacher's Guide are available for download at [www.HomesOfOurOwn.org](http://www.HomesOfOurOwn.org).

There are no plans to provide printed versions of the guides at this time; however, the PDF version is easily printable by educators and schools.

### **8. *Is there any extension of this program for High School application?***

High school teachers have told us the program works for their students as well. An accompanying High School Teacher's Guide with content standards, benchmarks and new sample lessons is now available online. Visit [www.HomesOfOurOwn.org](http://www.HomesOfOurOwn.org) to download the guide.

There is also an excellent school-to-career program for high school students available from the Home Builders Institute called Build a Home, Build a Career. Information about this program can be found at [www.hbi.org](http://www.hbi.org).

## **Installation and Technical Difficulties**

### **9. *The game stalls after the opening animation runs. What's wrong?***

There are several things that can cause this:

- 1) The game was not installed correctly by not using the installer provided. Many assets like the proper QuickTime player may not have loaded if the game icon was "copied" to the hard drive.
- 2) There could be a conflict with Windows XP; version 1.1 works best on Windows 98 operating system.

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- 3) You are running Windows 2000 or NT, which may require "Administrator" permission to load/copy any application to the hard drive.

### **Version 1.1**

#### **10. *The games aren't saving when the students select save.***

Version 1.1 was developed for Windows 98 and runs best on this system. If you are running on Windows XP, there is a possibility that games will not save. To correct this problem, select Windows 98 platform as your preference and students should be able to save games without problem. If you are running version 2.0 for network served computers, please see the Version 2.0 section.

#### **11. *My IT expert installed the game on our network, but it's not working or it's working but not saving games.***

If you are using version 1.1 of *Building Homes of Our Own*, the game will not save because it was not designed to be used over a server network. Version 2.0 can be used over a network but the game application must be installed on each individual computer's hard drive using the provided installer. If you are using version 2.0, please see the Version 2.0 section.

#### **12. *Can I save more games other than the slots provided in the Save Game section?***

If you are using version 1.1 of *Building Homes of Our Own*, there are a finite number of games that can be saved. Once the maximum number of games has been saved, games will have to be deleted to accommodate new games. If you are using network version 2.0, there is no limit on the number of games that students can save. Please see the Version 2.0 section.

### **Version 2.0**

#### **13. *I installed Building Homes of Our Own on my computer, but it won't let me start the game. What should I do?***

If the game won't start at all, you probably did not enter a path to the location where "saved game" information should be filed. Step 2 of Setup instructs you to create a folder on your computer's local drive or, if saving games to a server, on the appropriate network drive (usually drives E: or higher). You must indicate the location of this folder in the Set Path to Server file that comes up when installation is complete. To enter this path again, please follow these steps:

- 1) Double-click "My Computer" and locate the local computer drive.
- 2) Open the "Program Files" folder; then open the "NAHB" folder; and then the "Building Homes of Our Own" folder.
- 3) Double-click on the "Set Path To Server" icon.
- 4) Type in the path or browse to the location of the new folder you created. Once the path is entered, click "Save Path." If you cannot see the "Save Path" button, check your screen setting. Your screen resolution should be set at 600 x 800.

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### ***14. I am having trouble opening saved games on another computer. What do I do?***

With version 2.0, you may open the same game on different computers - but not at the same time. If this occurs, the program on the second computer will open the game at its last saved point. Then it will freeze, and the program will force itself to shut down. If this is not the problem, be sure that you are entering the correct login ID.

### ***15. Every time I start the game, I get an error message telling me the game can't locate my files. What should I do?***

Make sure that you have the correct path entered in your Set Path To Server file. To do this, follow these steps:

- 1) Double-click "My Computer" and locate the local drive.
- 2) Open the "Program Files" folder; then open the "NAHB" folder; and then the "Building Homes of Our Own" folder.
- 3) Open the "working" folder and then open the "dbs" folder.
- 4) Open the text file titled "BHOOO." After the equal sign (=), the location of your players' information directory should be there. If it is not, you entered in the path incorrectly.
- 5) Open the Set Path To Server file again to retype or browse to the correct location. The file is located in your local drive under "Program Files," within a folder called "NAHB," which contains the "Building Homes of Our Own" folder.
- 6) Double-click on the "Set Path To Server" icon.
- 7) Type in the path or browse to the location of the new folder you created as a players' saved information directory. Once the path is entered, click "Save Path." If you cannot see the "Save Path" button, check your screen setting. Your screen resolution should be set at 600 x 800.

### ***16. The game will not let me create a new login ID. Why?***

A login ID can contain up to 20 characters of letters, numbers or underscores, but NO spaces. If you attempt to enter an ID with spaces or more than 20 characters, the game may give you an error message when you try to save games or open saved games.

The game does not limit the number of login IDs you create. The only limit is the available file space within your designated folder. Change your folder settings to save new login IDs and games.

### ***17. I want to save all of my students' games, but the game won't let me. What should I do?***

You can only save 20 games under each login ID. To save more than 20 games, simply create a new login ID for a student who wants to save more games, and they can begin a new game set.

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- 18. My IT expert installed the game on our network, but it's not working or it's not saving games.**

If the game has been installed on a central server, it most likely will not function or it will only work for one student computer. It will not save games because it was not designed to be served over a network. Only players' information files (saved games) should be saved on the server drive (drives E: or higher).

You must install the game application on each individual computer's hard drive. Uninstall the game from your server drive and install it on each computer's local drive.

- 19. My IT expert installed the game on individual computers' hard drives, but when I enter the game, I get an error message. If my IT expert has already checked the path to the server, what should I do?**

If your IT expert has already checked the path entered in your Set Path To Server file (see Question 15 above), check your system configuration. Version 2.0 was designed to be run on and works best on Windows XP. It does work on Windows 98 and higher, but there is a greater chance of compatibility issues.

- 20. My IT expert installed the game on individual computers' hard drives, but when I enter the game, certain pieces or elements don't play. What can I do?**

For all elements of the game to play, your computer must have QuickTime 5.0 or later. The InstallShield Wizard will automatically check for the necessary QuickTime components. If the provided installer was not used, many assets like the proper QuickTime player may not have loaded. Uninstall and reinstall the game using the provided installer to check for the necessary QuickTime player.

If the elements still do not play, your computer may be missing Java software. To download free Java software, go to [www.java.com](http://www.java.com) and follow the minimum installation instructions.

### Game Play Questions

- 1. My students are having trouble scoring at least 70% in an Urban or Suburban section. What can I do?**

Click on the Insider Sheet PDF to get step-by-step instructions for Level 1 in the Urban and Suburban Environments. The sheet provides valuable information and insights into how the scoring/pricing is determined.

If you continue to have difficulties with pricing, keep in mind that all prices were based on 2001 U.S. published averages. Within the glossary, have students read the definition for Fair Market Value to get a general idea of the pricing range they may want to consider as a percentage over their loan amount.

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### ***2. I can't unlock Rivers and Lakes or Coastline sections of the game; what do I do?***

The program is meant to be completed in levels. In order to unlock Rivers and Lakes, students must score at least 70% in a session of the Urban or Suburban sections; to unlock Coastline, students must score at least 70% in a session of Rivers and Lakes.

### ***3. The game keeps telling me that I have "unassigned rooms." What am I doing wrong?***

In the design phase, all squares must be accounted for. In many cases, students believe that the dark blue "outer squares" are walls, but they are actually interior squares that need to be assigned with room tiles. Each square represents a 4'x4' area and must be "assigned" as part of a room. Don't forget hallways, doors, windows, bathrooms and closets.

### ***4. Where do you save the game? We can't find a save button.***

Click on the "Menu" button in the bottom left corner and it will take you to the "Save Game" screen. If you are not seeing the Menu button, check the screen setting. If your screen size is not set correctly (600 x 800) or if your screen has limitations, you may not be seeing the entire menu bar or a student may have collapsed the tool bar at the bottom of the game.

In version 2.0, you may also select the "Save As" button if you wish to save this game where it is. This is helpful if students are beginning a complex section of a game, and may want to "do it over." They can come back to the game they saved under another name and it will open at that earlier saved point.

### ***5. Once my students have made certain decisions is there any way they can go back and change them?***

In most instances, once a decision has been made, it is locked in (the exception is the house footprint selection, which is not locked in until the permit is approved). If students want the option to change items, the best way to achieve this is through select saving.

The game always opens to the last place saved. Say your students save at the beginning of the Building Phase. If they choose their building materials and construct the walls, but decide they want to change the building materials, they should select "Quit Game" from the Menu page, and then select not to save changes. When they re-open the game, it will open at the last saving point - before they built the walls.

The same is true of the Landscaping section. If students save right before they begin placing trees and other landscaping items, they can go back and start again if they don't like the finished product.

In version 2.0, students also have the option to "Save As," so they can save a game at a certain point under another name, continue on with the present game, and select the "saved as" game if they decide they want to try again from the earlier point of play.

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- 6. *I can't save the game from certain points of play, for example, after I write an ad for my house. What do I do?***

The game will not save at all points. The way the game generates buyer information does not allow for saving at this point. So, just like real life, if you don't review and select an offer in a timely fashion, the bidders will go away. If you want to save your bid selection, accept the desired bid to find out if your selected buyer was approved by the bank or not. You may save the game at this point.

- 7. *I want to print out a screen from the game, like the building framework. How do I do that?***

If you have any paint software on your computer (such as MS Paint), you can copy and save screens from the game and then print them. To do so, follow these steps:

- 1) Open your paint software from "Programs" on the Windows "Start" menu before beginning the game for easiest printing. Minimize the screen so it is available later.
- 2) When you are at the screen in the game that you want to save, select and hold down the "Alt" and the "Print Screen" keys on your keyboard to make a copy of the screen. (Suggestion: you can minimize the game menu bar to get the full screen view of your construction or house.)
- 3) Then hold down the "Windows" button and the "Tab" button. That will bring up your computer's navigation bar and give you access to your paint software. When your paint software is open, select the "Paste" option. This will usually appear under "Edit."
- 4) If you get a message saying, "The image in the clipboard is larger than the bitmap. Would you like the bitmap enlarged?" Select "Yes." This paint file can be saved and printed.