

The Laptop that couldn't keep its colors straight
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I have an Acer Chromebook – a nice little laptop. It's a little over one year old, which means it is out of warranty.

The other day when I logged into my Google account, the screen colors reversed putting white letters on a black screen instead of the normal black on white. Something has gotten corrupted, I thought, but how to trouble shoot this?

First step is to look into the settings adjustments. There I found things for screen saver, Bluetooth and other unhelpful settings. Time for a Google search. No joy there, either, but I did find out how to do some diagnostics (hold down the ESC and refresh keys and press the power button).

Error message: “Chrome OS is missing or damaged!” filled the screen. Aha, I thought, this must be the problem. After more searching, I found a web site where I could download a recovery operating system to a thumb drive, insert the thumb drive in my laptop, and restore the OS. That didn't take long, and at least the error message went away, but as soon as I logged into my account, screwy colors again.

One Google guru opined that the laptop had a bad screen, but I didn't know how much I wanted to invest in repairing such an inexpensive computer. Time for another opinion. I called “Laptops4Every1,” a laptop repair service in Pacific Beach.

David, the “laptop fixer,” turned the computer on, went into the settings dialog, and clicked on something called “Accessibility.” That brought up another dialog box where he clicked on “High Contrast.”

Lo and behold, the colors were back to normal. David charged me \$20 for his service. I don't know why my laptop suddenly turned on High Contrast, nor do I know how many other Acer machines will suddenly decide to take colors into their own hands, but I'm glad I found a quick fix, and I'm sorry I didn't push my exploratory curiosity a bit further and check out that setting.

Of course, now that I know what to look for, Google, I found, has a lot of information on using High Contrast. Well, I learn something new every day, and while some lessons can be expensive, this one turned out to be not too bad.