Windows-based programs resolution issues on Apple Retina display

- Parallels Desktop for Mac Home Edition
- Parallels Desktop for Mac Pro Edition
- Parallels Desktop Lite
- Parallels Desktop for Mac Business Edition

Symptoms

Some of my programs in the Windows virtual machine don't look right: buttons aren't displayed properly, some are missing, program's interface (GUI) looks broken in general.

NOTE: if you are having general resolution issues with Microsoft Windows running in Parallels virtual machine please visit this article: Virtual Machine display resolution issues on Macs with Retina display

Cause

Such programs could be:

- Quickbooks
- Quicken
- CAD software (Computer-aided design);
- Web sites or clients (banks, messengers, RTs);
- Photo/Video editors
- Other Windows-based programs which do not support high DPI resolution.

Some Windows-based programs are not adapted for such high pixel density (DPI) resolution of the Retina display: Windows virtual machine resolution becomes very high thus everything is too small; in-program fonts, UI buttons or images are not rendered properly.

Learn more about the Apple Retina display in this article: Frequently asked questions about using a Retina display.

Resolution

To make sure that Windows applications are displayed properly with 1:1 scale factor you need to select Scaled view mode in the virtual machine graphics settings. Parallels Desktop 13 for Mac brings enhanced Retina display support for Windows applications in Scaled mode.

1. Adjust the Windows virtual machine's configuration settings > Hardware > Graphics > and change the Retina setting from Best for Retina / Best for External Displays / More Space to Scaled (HiDPI disabled).
2. Check the Windows virtual machine's scaling settings:

For Windows 7/8.1: right click on Windows Desktop > Screen resolution > Make text or other items larger or smaller > set 100% scaling and hit Apply & Sign Off.
For Windows 10: right click on Windows Desktop > Displays settings > set 100% scaling and hit Apply.
For more information about Windows scaling options please visit this page.

3. macOS System Preferences > Displays > make sure Resolution option is set to Default for display.
4. Reboot the virtual machine to apply changes.

After applying the solution above all Windows-based programs will be displayed properly in 1:1 scale ratio - everything will be on its position. The only minor inconvenience you may notice is the quality of fonts in Windows - the result of running Windows on Apple Retina display. Parallels Desktop 13 for Mac brings enhanced Retina display support for Windows applications in Scaled mode.

**Related articles**

- Parallels virtual machine's recommended Retina video settings
- Using an external display alongside with Apple Retina
- Broken screen resolution in Windows 8.1 Virtual Machine on Retina display after the latest update of Parallels Desktop 9
- I cannot keep custom screen resolution in Full screen mode
- Virtual Machine resolution is too small via Remote Desktop Connection

#- INTERNAL (content below this line is not visible in published article) -

Verified by Leann Foley. Do not publish without asking Ekaterina Zelenskaya.