

## My Ubuntu sound system suddenly stopped working. Can I restart it without rebooting?

Written by Garfield Lucas - Last Updated Thursday, 09 July 2009 15:20

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Sometimes your Ubuntu sound system can stop working. Often this is caused by a media player plugin in your web browser. You might also notice that your computer goes very slowly and that if it is browser-related, then the browser will perform at a snail's pace!

As a Linux user, you will no doubt consider rebooting to be a personal failure! It's also annoying if you have loads of apps open, as I usually do. However, restarting the sound system whilst keeping your system alive is actually pretty straightforward. Here's how...

1. You need to find out what sound-based process(es) are actually running. To do this open a terminal and type:-

```
lsof | grep pcm
```

This will return information similar to this:-

```
mplayer 23915 garf 83u CHR 116,16 11782 /dev/snd/pcmC0D0p
mplayer 27456 garf 83u CHR 116,16 11782 /dev/snd/pcmC0D0p
```

2. Kill the offending processes, like this:-

```
kill -9 23915 kill -9 27456
```

**Important!** Substitute "my" numbers with the numbers that *lsof / grep pcm* actually returns for you!

3. Restart ALSA (Advanced linux Sound Architecture) assuming that is the sound system you are using. In Ubuntu you do it like this:-

```
sudo /etc/init.d/alsa-utils restart
```

That's it! Your sound system should be up and running again. Moreover, if the problem was browser-related, then your browser should start running at normal speed again too.

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