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npm install fails with EACCES, ERESOLVE or out of memory: what to do

Node.js & JavaScript

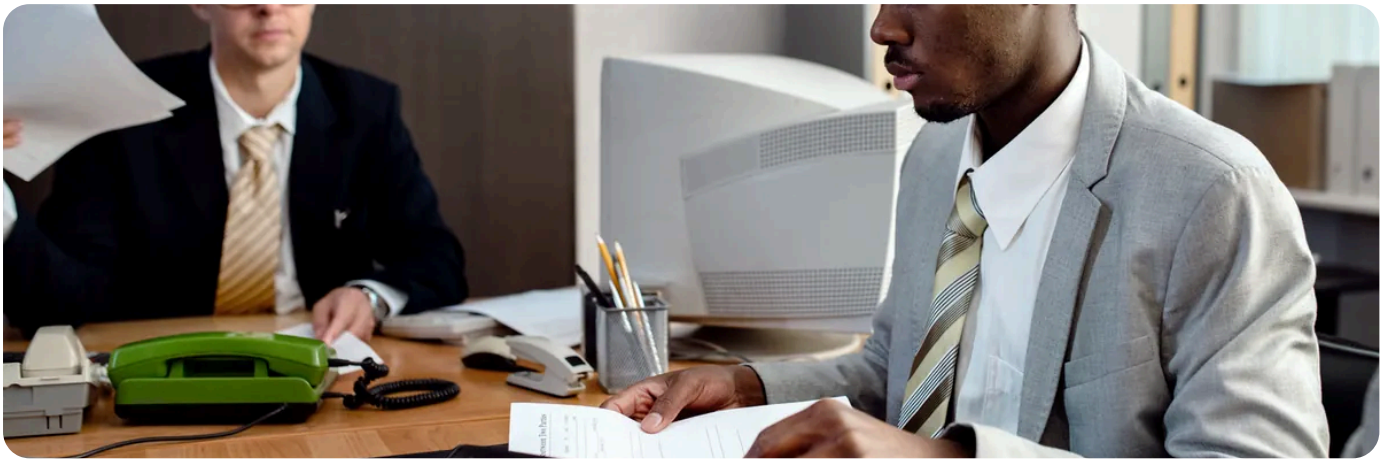
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npm install fails with EACCES, ERESOLVE or out of memory: what to do

Node.js & JavaScript Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



When `npm install` fails, the message is usually long, but the cause fits one of half a dozen families. **The short answer:** look in the output for the first line that starts with `npm ERR!` (or `npm error` in the newest versions) and the code that follows it (`EACCES`, `ERESOLVE`, `ENOSPC`…). The code says nearly everything. This article is for shared hosting (cPanel) and for a VPS.

The code, and what it means

What you see	What it is	What to do
`EACCES` **(permission denied)**	npm tried to write somewhere your user cannot, nearly always because of a `-g` (global install) or a folder that belongs to another user.	In cPanel do not use global installs or `sudo`: install in the project, inside the application's environment. On a VPS, do not run `sudo npm install` in the project: fix the folder owner (`chown`) instead of working around it. See also **permission denied in a Node.js or Python app**.
`ERESOLVE` **(unable to resolve dependency tree)**	Two libraries ask for incompatible versions of a third (a *peer dependency* conflict).	The clean fix is to line the versions up. To move on right now, `npm install --legacy-peer-deps` ignores the conflict. `--force` is more aggressive: use it only if you know what the conflict means.
`JavaScript heap out of memory`	Node ran out of the memory it is allowed while building or installing.	Build on your computer and upload the result. On a VPS you can raise Node's limit, for instance with `NODE_OPTIONS=--max-old-space-size=2048` (the value is an example), if the machine has free memory.
`ENOSPC` **or "quota exceeded"**	No disk space, or the account's file (inode) limit was reached.	**See the account limits**. Delete what you do not use and install only what production needs.

What you see	What it is	What to do
`node-gyp` , `gcc` , `Python.h`	A library has parts that need compiling, and the tools are missing.	Look for a version with a prebuilt binary, or a pure JavaScript alternative. On a VPS you can install the system's build tools.
`ETIMEDOUT` , `ENOTFOUND`	The server could not reach the npm registry: network or DNS.	Try again; check the connection with `curl -I https://registry.npmjs.org` .
`EINTEGRITY`	npm's cache got corrupted.	`npm cache verify` , then install again.

The routine that fixes most of them

1. **Check the Node version** the project asks for (the `engines` field in `package.json`):

```
node -v
npm -v
```

A wrong version produces errors that look like something else.

2. **Delete and start again**, from the lockfile:

```
rm -rf node_modules
npm ci
```

In cPanel, the "Run NPM Install" button does the install part, in the right environment.

3. **Read the first error message**, not the last. The last lines are usually just npm's summary.

4. **Changed the Node version?** Reinstall the dependencies: some have parts compiled for one specific version.

Do not use `sudo` to silence an EACCES.
It makes the install pass and leaves project files owned by root, which causes the next error, and another after that. In cPanel there is no root at all. If the problem is a folder with the wrong owner, fix the owner.

Keep the whole message
before deleting anything: npm writes a log file (the path appears at the end of the error). If you ask for help, that is what helps the reader most. To choose the right manager and lockfile, see **npm, yarn or pnpm**.

NEED A HAND?

The install fails and you cannot see why? Send us the domain and the first line of the error.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **npm, yarn or pnpm: which to use** →
- **Node.js in cPanel: choosing the version and using npm** →
- **The limits nobody advertises: inodes, processes and memory** →

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