THE NOTION TROUBLESHOOTING FIELD MANUAL

Quickly Diagnose, Fix & Prevent Common Notion Problems

Your practical field guide for getting unstuck in Notion

For beginners, intermediate users & advanced Notion builders

> **THE GOAL**
>
> Don't panic. Don't rebuild your workspace.
>
> **Identify the problem → Find the likely cause → Apply the smallest fix → Prevent it from happening again.**

2026 Edition

PAGE 2 — HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Welcome to Your Notion Fix-It Guide

Notion is incredibly flexible. That's one of its biggest strengths—and one of the reasons it can sometimes be frustrating.

A formula suddenly returns an error.

A relation doesn't show what you expected.

A database appears empty.

An automation stops firing.

A page seems to disappear.

Before you start rebuilding everything, use this manual.

THE 4-STEP TROUBLESHOOTING METHOD

01 — IDENTIFY

What exactly isn't working?

02 — DIAGNOSE

What are the most likely causes?

03 — FIX

What's the smallest change that could solve it?

04 — PREVENT

What can you do to stop the problem returning?

> **FIELD RULE**
>
> **Never change ten things at once.**
>
> Change one thing → test → observe → continue.

PAGE 3 — THE 60-SECOND TROUBLESHOOTING CHECKLIST

Before You Change Anything…

Run through these questions.

- What exactly isn't working?
- Is the information actually missing—or simply hidden?
- Did I check my filters?
- Did I check my database view?
- Do I have permission to make this change?
- Did a property type or setting change?
- Is a required field empty?
- Is a formula involved?
- Is a relation or rollup involved?
- Is an automation involved?
- Am I working offline or on mobile?
- Could this be a Notion service issue?

> **STOP & CHECK**
>
> If you haven't identified the specific symptom yet, don't start changing your workspace.
>
> **“My Notion is broken” isn't a diagnosis.**
>
> “My task doesn't appear in the Completed view after changing its status” is.

PAGE 4 — QUICK REFERENCE MAP

Find Your Problem Fast

Problem	Start Here
Formula error	Formula syntax + property types
Formula works sometimes	Empty values
Rollup is blank	Relation
Relation is missing	Related database
Database looks empty	Filters
Page isn't visible	View/filter
Can't edit something	Permissions
Automation isn't firing	Trigger + conditions
Automation stopped	Error + active status
Template behaves strangely	Relations + permissions
Mobile behaves differently	Mobile/offline limitations
Page seems lost	Search + workspace + trash
Generic error message	Connection + service status

> **FASTEST RULE**
>
> **Start with the simplest explanation first.**
>
> A hidden filter is more likely than a completely broken database.

PAGE 5 — FORMULA PROBLEMS

01

Formula Problems

Formulas are powerful, but they're also one of the most common places users get stuck.

Common symptoms

- Formula displays an error
- Formula works on some pages but not others
- Formula returns an unexpected result
- Formula works in a database but fails inside an automation
- Formula has become extremely complicated

PROBLEM

“My formula shows an error.”

LIKELY CAUSES

- Missing parentheses
- Incorrect property name
- Incorrect function syntax
- Wrong property type
- Empty values
- Missing access to a referenced property

QUICK FIX

1. Open the formula editor.
2. Look for the highlighted section.
3. Check the property types being used.
4. Test the formula on a record with complete information.
5. If it works there, compare that record with one that fails.

PREVENTION

Build formulas with empty values in mind.

Ask:

> **“What should happen if this field is empty?”**

Use conditional logic when necessary.

> **REMEMBER**
>
> A formula error doesn't necessarily mean your whole database is broken.
>
> **Isolate the failing property first.**

PAGE 6 — FORMULA PROBLEMS

“My Formula Works on Some Records but Not Others”

LIKELY CAUSE

One or more records contain missing or unexpected information.

QUICK FIX

Compare:

Working record

vs.

Failing record

Check:

- Dates
- Numbers
- Selects
- Text
- People
- Relations
- Empty properties

EXAMPLE

Your formula calculates:

Days Until Deadline

One task has a deadline.

Another doesn't.

The formula may work perfectly on the first task but fail or behave unexpectedly on the second.

PREVENTION

Design formulas for real-world data—not perfect data.

> **FIELD TIP**
>
> Whenever you create a formula, test at least:
>
> **1. A normal record**
>
> **2. An empty record**
>
> **3. An unusual/edge-case record**

PAGE 7 — FORMULA PROBLEMS

“My Formula Doesn't Work in an Automation”

LIKELY CAUSE

The automation may expect a particular type of output.

For example:

Automation expects: Date
Formula returns: Text

QUICK FIX

Ask:

> **“What type of information does the next step expect?”**

Then make sure your formula returns that type.

PREVENTION

Before building the formula, identify:

Input → Formula → Expected Output

> **DIAGNOSTIC TIP**
>
> If a formula works perfectly in a database property but fails inside an automation, don't assume the formula itself is broken.
>
> Check the **expected output type**.

PAGE 8 — FORMULA PROBLEMS

“My Formula Has Become Ridiculously Complicated”

LIKELY CAUSE

Too many dependencies.

You may have:

Formula → Formula → Rollup → Formula → Formula

QUICK FIX

Map the dependency chain.

Then ask:

- Can two formulas become one?
- Can a rollup be eliminated?
- Is this calculation really necessary?
- Would a simpler database structure solve the problem?

PREVENTION

THE SIMPLICITY TEST

Before adding another layer, ask:

“Will this make my system easier or harder to maintain?”

PAGE 9 — RELATIONS & ROLLUPS

02

Relations & Rollups

Relations connect information between databases.

Rollups let you retrieve or calculate information through those relationships.

When something goes wrong, troubleshoot **backward from the result to the source.**

PAGE 10 — RELATIONS

“My Relation Isn't Showing the Page I Want”

LIKELY CAUSES

- Wrong database
- Wrong relation property
- Target page doesn't exist
- You're using a duplicated database

- Permissions/access issues

QUICK FIX

Trace the connection:

Relation

↓

Related Database

↓

Target Page

Confirm that each step points where you expe