RESOLVING SOUND "PLAYBACK" ISSUES IN "WINDOWS.."

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"Windows 10", "Windows 8.1", "Windows 7", and "Windows Vista" computers have many sound-enabled devices that automatically re-configure themselves as "default" when you do not want them to do so. Here is our explanation of how you can tame this "beast".
For "Windows Vista", "Windows 7", "Windows 8.1", and "Windows 10", when you attach a HDMI monitor (that has sound support), the audio circuitry inside the monitor is immediately made into the default playback device, even if the speaker jack of the monitor does not have speakers attached to it.
• To turn your existing speakers or headset audio back on, you have to re-enable it inside the "Playback" tab in the Sound applet in the "Control Panel" by right-clicking on the desired device:
For "Windows Vista", "Windows 7", "Windows 8.1", and "Windows 10", when you attach a USB Webcam that has a microphone, the Webcam's microphone is immediately made into the default recording device, if you are not actively speaking into the microphone of your headset at the time that the USB Webcam was attached to a USB port.
To turn your existing headset's microphone or a standalone microphone back on, you have to re-enable it by right-clicking on it inside the "Recording" tab in the Sound applet in the "Control Panel":

WINDOWS.. AUTOMATICALLY CHANGES DEFAULT AUDIO DEVICES!!
• If you disconnect and then reconnect the HDMI cable of the existing monitor (and this monitor has HDMI sound support) or if you use an HDMI cable to attach a second monitor (that has HDMI sound support) to the computer, "Windows 10" will usually automatically re-configure the newly-attached monitor to become the default device for audio "Playback".
If you disconnect the HDMI or DisplayPort cable of the existing only monitor (that has HDMI sound support) or if you use an HDMI or DisplayPort cable to attach a second monitor (that has HDMI/DisplayPort sound support) to the computer, "Windows 10" will usually automatically re-configure the HDMI-based sound controller inside the LG monitor to become the default device for audio "Playback".
Here is an example of what happens:
A computer running "Windows 10 Home" was set to send "Playback" audio from a motherboard-based Realtek sound card to a set of Hewlett Packard speakers:
Realtek HD Audio 2nd output
Realtek High Definition Audio
Default Device
In this case, we disconnected the HDMI cable that ran from the NVidia graphics adapter to the an older Samsung monitor that did not have audio support for it's HDMI port.

We disconnected the HDMI cable from the old Samsung monitor.

Then we connected the HDMI cable to a newer LG monitor that has audio support for it's HDMI port.
As soon as we connected the LG monitor, it's audio-capable HDMI port became the "default device" for sound "playback":
Then we connected the HDMI cable to a newer LG monitor that has audio support for it's HDMI port. As soon as we connected the LG monitor, it's audio-capable HDMI port became the "default device" for sound "playback":

WINDOWS.. AUTOMATICALLY CHANGES DEFAULT AUDIO DEVICES !! (continued)
LG ULTRAWIDE-C
NVIDIA High Definition Audio Default Device
After the LG monitor became the "default device" for sound "playback", the motherboard-based Realtek sound card was no longer sending audio to the "Hewlett Packard speakers"
This often-unwanted re-configuration of the default "Playback" audio device does not occur if the monitor that you connect to or that you disconnect and re-connect to does not have support for sound for their HDMI or DisplayPort jacks.
For Windows 7 or 8.1 or 10 (if you have at least two devices in the Playback tab and/or the Recording tab of your Sound applet, and everyone does), when you right-click on an existing device in the "Playback" tab or the "Recording" tab of the "Sound" applet in Windows.., you can either "Set as Default Device" and/or "Set as Default Communications Device".
In a Windows 7 or 8.1 or 10 computer, any working audio device in the "Playback" tab or the "Recording" tab of the Sound applet can perform one, both, or none of these two functions (if at least two devices are shown in the "Playback" tab or the "Recording" tab:
According to Leo Notenboom at http://ask-leo.com/how_do_i_get_sound_out_of_the_correct_speakers_in_windows_7_and_vista.html:
<Start of quote:>

• Default Device: This is the default playback device. If a program that plays sound does not itself explicitly choose one of the other devices, this is where sound will be played.
Default Communication Device: This is a new concept and it represents the device that communications programs, such as Skype, would use to play sound by default. Again, if the program itself allows the user to select a different device, this doesn't apply. But if the program simply uses the default communications device, this is where the sound would go.

<end of quote>
When "Windows.." sets your "Default device" and/or your "Default communications device" to the wrong device in the Playback or the Recording tab of the Sound applet, you have to manually set these devices back to the way you want them to be by right-clicking on them:
Set as Default Communication Device
WINDOWS.. AUTOMATICALLY CHANGES DEFAULT AUDIO DEVICES !! (continued)

• Windows.. can be unpredictable on how it reconfigures your "Playback" devices when you plug in a different HDMI monitor:
In the following case, we were originally using a USB headset as both a "Default Device" and a "Default communications device" as shown in the "Recording" tab of the Sound applet:
Select a playback device below to modify its settings:

Speakers
iMic USB audio system
Default Device
After we changed to a different HDMI "LG" monitor, Windows.. left the speakers of our USB headset as the "Default device". However, Windows.. made the LG Ultrawide monitor into the "Default Communications Device" which made our USB headset's speakers useless for communicating by means of Skype, Zoom, Team Viewer, etc.:
Select a playback device below to modify its settings:

- **Speakers**
  - iMic USB audio system
  - Default Device

- **LG ULTRAWIDE-4**
  - NVIDIA High Definition Audio
  - Default Communications Device
Here is an example of what happens when you plug in a Webcam that has a microphone into a "Windows Vista", "Windows 7", "Windows 8.1" or "Windows 10" computer:
A computer running "Windows 10 Home" was originally configured to use the microphone of a Logitech analog headset as the "default device":

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Select a recording device below to modify its settings:

- **Microphone**
  - iMic USB audio system
  - Default Device
• As soon as we attached a Logitech USB Webcam to the computer, it's microphone immediately became the default microphone device for the "Recording" tab of the "Sound" applet and the microphone of the headset that we were using became inactivated:
Select a recording device below to modify

- Microphone
  - HD Webcam C615
  - Default Device
- Microphone
  - iMic USB audio system
  - Ready
As soon as we plugged in the Webcam, Windows.. had made it's microphone into both the "default device" and the "default communications device" for the "Recording" tab of the Sound applet.
• To put the microphone of our headset back into service, we had to right-click on it:
From the pop-up, context menu, we clicked on "Set as Default Device".
Then, we right-clicked on our headset microphone again:
Select a recording device below to modify its settings:

- Microphone
  - HD Webcam C615
  - Default Device
  - Configure Speech Recognition
  - Disable
  - Set as Default Device
  - Set as Default Communication Device
  - Show Disabled Devices
  - Show Disconnected Devices

- Microphone
  - iMic USB audio system
  - Ready
This time, we clicked on "Set as Default Communications Device"
Set as Default Communication Device
• After we made our headset into both a "default device" and a "default communications device", a green checkmark was shown next to it and the Webcam's microphone no longer had a green checkmark next to it:
Select a recording device below to use:

Microphone
HD Webcam C615
Ready

Microphone
iMic USB audio system
Default Device
When you are making an audio or video recording, do not plug in or change any additional HDMI monitors or headsets or microphones or Webcams to your computer: If you do so, you will end up recording or listening to a different device than the one that you started with!
Prior to using any sound devices that are attached to your "Windows.." computer for "Playback" and/or "Recording" activities, it is best for you to right-click and disable any "Playback" and "Recording" devices that you are not using.
However, if you attach a different monitor, or a different headset or a different stand-alone microphone or a different USB audio controller, your "Windows.." will usually still make the newly-attached audio-capable device into your "default device" for audio "playback" or "recording"