Nvidia driver bug might make your CPU work harder after you close your game

Enlarge / Nvidia’s GeForce RTX 4080.
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Nvidia released a new driver update for its GeForce graphics cards that, among other things, introduced a new Video Super Resolution upscaling technology that could make low-resolution videos look better on high-resolution screens. But the driver (version 531.18) also apparently came with a bug that caused high CPU usage on some PCs after running and then closing a game.

Nvidia has released a driver hotfix (version 531.26) that acknowledges and should fix the issue, which was apparently being caused by an undisclosed bug in the “Nvidia Container,” a process that exists mostly to contain other processes that come with Nvidia’s drivers. It also fixes a “random bugcheck” issue that may affect some older laptops with GeForce 1000-series or MX250 and MX350 GPUs.

Not all PCs running the newer Nvidia drivers were being affected by the bug—some reporters observed the behavior on their systems, while others didn’t. Even relatively low CPU usage in the 10 to 15 percent range can have a noticeable

performance impact, taking CPU cycles from other tasks and preventing the CPU from going into an idle state. This generates more heat and uses more power and could also affect the battery life of laptops.

Another recent software bug in Nvidia’s drivers caused games to run slower when the Discord app was running in the background; an application profile issue was preventing GPU memory from reaching its peak clock speeds, reducing frame rates accordingly. This fix could be pushed silently in the background to PCs running Nvidia’s software, but installing the fix for the CPU usage bug requires that you download and install Nvidia’s typical 850MB driver package.

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