

# ExecFormatError

```
(8)Exec format error: exec of '...' failed
```

Usually this error message means one of two things:

1. Your CGI script does not have a `#!` line
2. Your CGI program is not a valid binary for the system

The first two bytes of a file are used to determine how to execute the file. If those two bytes are `#!`, something special happens: The rest of the line is treated as the path to an executable to run the rest of the file. If those two bytes are not `#!`, then the system assumes it's a binary file and tries to execute it that way.

## See Also

- [Shebang \(Unix\) – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)