Why does my PIXIE system not work reliably?

Home Owner · https://pixiepartners.com.au/support-docs/why-does-my-pixie-system-not-work-reliably/

Support Docs · Troubleshooting

Fixing intermittent *PIXIE behaviour*

If your PIXIE system is not always doing what you expect from the PIXIE or PIXIE PLUS app, this article walks you through the diagnosis in order. Most reliability issues come down to one of two things: software that needs an update, or a small gap in the wireless mesh inside the home. Both are quick to fix once you know what to look for.

8 min read Updated May 2026 Audience: Homeowners and electricians
Before you begin

What this article assumes.

This guide is for situations where the system is mostly working but is not consistent. It is not a wiring or hardware fault guide.

Two assumptions before you start

1. There is no electrical wiring fault, and all PIXIE devices are themselves operating correctly.

2. If you use the PIXIE PLUS app, your home internet and Wi-Fi network are in good working order.

If either of those is not true, that is the place to fix first. For wiring concerns, contact your installing electrician. For internet or Wi-Fi concerns, check those first before troubleshooting PIXIE.

Step 1
1

Update *everything* first.

Out-of-date software is the single most common cause of intermittent app behaviour. Update all three of the following before you do anything else, then try the system again.

Your PIXIE app

Open the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android) and check for an update to the PIXIE or PIXIE PLUS app. Install the latest version if one is available.

⚙

Your phone or tablet

Make sure your mobile device is running the latest operating system. Check Settings then Software Update on iPhone, or Settings then System then System Update on Android.

Your PIXIE devices

Each PIXIE device on the wall has firmware that can be updated from the app. Updating firmware resolves a wide range of issues. Use the support links below for the step-by-step.

Two firmware update walkthroughs:

How to update firmware in PIXIE devices from the PIXIE app

How to update firmware in PIXIE devices

Step 2
2

Confirm the devices themselves are working.

Before chasing app or wireless issues, make sure each PIXIE device is doing its core job. Press the switch or dimmer on the wall plate directly. If the connected light, fan or other device responds as expected, the PIXIE smart device is working.

Yes - it works at the wall

Devices respond when pressed at the wall

The smart devices themselves are fine. Any issue you are having from the app is almost always a wireless mesh issue. Continue to Step 3 below.

No - nothing happens at the wall

Devices do not respond when pressed at the wall

This is a different problem and is outside the scope of this guide. Contact your installing electrician or the PIXIE support team for help.

Step 3
3

Understand the most common cause: *a gap in the mesh.*

PIXIE devices talk to each other and to the app using Bluetooth Mesh. Every PIXIE device on the wall acts like a tiny radio relay, passing messages from one device to the next until the message reaches its destination. This is what makes PIXIE work without a hub for the basic app, and what makes it reliable across larger homes.

Like any wireless signal, Bluetooth Mesh has a range limit. PIXIE recommends roughly 10 to 15 metres between devices for reliable operation, but the actual range depends on the architecture and building materials in your home. Brick walls, concrete, double-brick cavities, metal framing and metal cabinets all reduce signal.

If devices work at the wall but the app behaves intermittently, the cause is almost always a *gap in the mesh* between two parts of the home.

The fix: a PIXIE Bluetooth Mesh Booster

A booster is a small PIXIE device that sits between the working area and the problem area to bridge the gap. The current recommended booster is the PIXIE Bluetooth Mesh Booster (model SGB3/BTAS).

About the SGB3/BTAS Booster

- Requires a permanent active (always powered)
- Can be installed behind a downlight or other concealed location

- Once installed: scan the PIXIE mesh from the app, add the device to your PIXIE home, and that is all that is required (configuration is automatic from there)
- Best installed between the two sections of the home where the disconnect is happening, so it knits the two halves of the mesh together

Whilst PIXIE recommends 10 to 15 metres between devices for reliable operation, this is highly dependent on architecture and building materials. Adding boosters (or installing additional PIXIE smart modules to control more devices) is the quick and easy way to overcome any specific site issues.

For detailed signal testing, the PIXIE Troubleshooting Guide has a section showing how to use the PIXIE app to perform signal tests in your home and pinpoint exactly where the mesh has a weak spot.

Download the PIXIE Troubleshooting Guide

Step 4
4

Identify the symptom.

There are several ways to control a PIXIE smart home, and the symptom you are seeing tells you where to look. Find the description below that matches your situation, then follow the diagnosis for that symptom.

Quick reminder of the two PIXIE apps:

SAL PIXIE is the basic app. It does not have voice control or out-of-home control, and depends entirely on Bluetooth Mesh inside the home. Free to download and use.

PIXIE PLUS requires the PIXIE Gateway (model SGW3/BTAM). It adds voice control, cloud assistant integrations, out-of-home control, advanced scheduling, and the ROOMS organisation feature. The Gateway is a bridge between the internet and the PIXIE Bluetooth Mesh in the home. Free to download and use.

Symptom A · SAL PIXIE app

Different devices appear in the app depending on where I am in the home.

What you might see

When you stand in one part of the home, you can see and control a few PIXIE devices in your local area. When you walk to another part of the home, those devices disappear from the app and a different set of devices now appears.

What it means and the fix

This is a clear sign that the Bluetooth Mesh signal between those two areas is broken. Install a PIXIE Booster (SGB3/BTAS) somewhere between the two sections to bridge the gap.

The rule of thumb: for the SAL PIXIE app, no matter where you stand inside the home, your device list should show every PIXIE device.

Symptom B · PIXIE PLUS app

Devices show as OFFLINE or are greyed out in the app.

What you might see

One or more devices regularly show as OFFLINE or appear greyed out in the device list, and you cannot control them from the app even though they work at the wall.

What it means and the fix

This is a Bluetooth Mesh signal issue, usually solved with one or more boosters. Because PIXIE PLUS uses the Gateway, the location of the Gateway is also critical. Check the Gateway placement using the checklist below.

PIXIE Gateway placement checklist

- Installed where its 2.4 GHz Wi-Fi transceiver can reach your home Wi-Fi signal (only needed if you are not using the Ethernet port)
- Its Bluetooth transceiver can reach at least one other PIXIE Master device reliably
- Not installed inside a metal cabinet, server rack or AV rack

- Best installed in an open-air environment in the home

Symptom C · PIXIE PLUS app

Scenes (or voice commands that trigger scenes) are inconsistent, but direct device control works fine.

What you might see

Tapping individual devices in the app works perfectly. But running a scene from the app, or using a voice command that triggers a scene, sometimes works and sometimes does not.

What it means and the fix

The Gateway is responsible for sending the scene commands when using PIXIE PLUS. Inconsistent scene operation almost always points to a signal issue between the Gateway and the Bluetooth Mesh of devices in the home.

Why scenes are more sensitive: a scene message is actually multiple messages sent rapidly across the mesh. The more reliable the mesh, the more reliable the scenes.

Action: first re-check the Gateway placement against the checklist above. If that is fine, add boosters between the Gateway and the parts of the home with affected devices.

Step 5
5

For wall switch issues: *identify your switch type first.*

If your problem is at a specific wall switch (for example, a 2-way or 3-way switch, or a button that should recall a scene), you first need to know which type of switch it is. The LED indicator on the device tells you straight away.

Blue LED visible at all times

Multifunction Controller (SMFBTAS)

Has a blue LED indicator on the button at a low light level whenever the device is powered. When pressed, the LED brightens for 1 to 2 seconds, then returns to its low level.

No LED visible normally

Multiway Switch (S2WBTAS)

Has no LED indicator visible most of the time. When pressed, the LED lights for 1 to 2 seconds, then returns to off.

Step 6

6

Wall switch is intermittent? Two checks, in order.

For both Multifunction Controllers and Multiway Switches, the diagnostic and the fix are the same. Do them in this order.

Make sure you are pressing the switch firmly

Depending on the wall plates used, the action of pressing a PIXIE smart switch can feel different from a traditional switch. Some users report needing a slightly firmer press than they are used to. Press the switch deliberately and fully, then check whether the issue persists.

If the issue continues, it is a mesh issue

If you are confident of a firm press and the inconsistent operation continues, the most likely cause is a Bluetooth Mesh signal gap between the wall switch and the device or devices it should be controlling. Install a PIXIE Booster (SGB3/BTAS) between the two locations to bridge the gap.

For nearly every wall switch reliability issue, the path is the same: *firm press first, booster second.*

Still not sorted? *Here is where to go next.*

If you have worked through the steps above and the system is still not behaving, the support library has more detail on each piece. The Troubleshooting Guide PDF in particular walks through how to use the app to perform signal tests and pinpoint exactly where in the home the mesh is weak.

Detailed PDF PIXIE Troubleshooting Guide Includes the signal test walkthrough using the PIXIE app

Identify your switch SMF-BT vs S2W-BT: what is the difference? Multifunction Controller vs Multiway

Switch 2-way / 3-way pairing My PIXIE 2-way switch is not working Setup instructions for the S2WBTAS Multiway control How to do 2-way and 3-way control with PIXIE The two methods (straps vs Multifunction) Background How does the PIXIE system work wirelessly? The fundamentals of Bluetooth Mesh and PIXIE Support hub All PIXIE support docs and FAQs Index of every support article and walkthrough