

How to fix "Encountered a section with no Package: header" error on Raspbian

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Question: I installed fresh Raspbian on Raspberry Pi. But when I tried to update APT package index by running `sudo apt-get update`, it throws the following error:

```
E: Encountered a section with no Package: header E: Problem with MergeList /
var/lib/dpkg/status E: The package lists or status file could not be parsed or
opened.
```

I then cannot install any package on Raspbian. How can I solve this error?

```
Get:10 http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/contrib armhf Packages [23.6 kB
]
Get:11 http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/non-free armhf Packages [49.3 kB]
Get:12 http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/rpi armhf Packages [592 B]
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/contrib Translation-en_GB
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/contrib Translation-en
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/main Translation-en_GB
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/main Translation-en
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/non-free Translation-en_GB
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/non-free Translation-en
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/rpi Translation-en_GB
Ign http://mirrordirector.raspbian.org wheezy/rpi Translation-en
Fetched 7,144 kB in 31s (225 kB/s)
Reading package lists... Error!
E: Encountered a section with no Package: header
E: Problem with MergeList /var/lib/dpkg/status
E: The package lists or status file could not be parsed or opened.
pi@raspberrypi ~ $
```

The error saying "Problem with MergeList /var/lib/dpkg/status" indicates that the status file got corrupted for some reason, and so cannot be parsed. This status file contains information about installed deb packages,

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and thus needs to be carefully backed up.

In this case, since this is freshly installed Raspbian, you can safely remove the status file, and re-generate it as follows.

```
$ sudo rm /var/lib/dpkg/status  
$ sudo touch /var/lib/dpkg/status  
$ sudo apt-get update
```