

Why does PathIsUNC say that paths that begin with \\?\ are not UNC's?

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An application vendor opened a bug with the product team saying that the PathIsUNC function was returning incorrect values in Windows Vista. Specifically, the `PathIsUNC` function was returning `FALSE` for strings that begin with `\\?\`, whereas Windows XP returned `TRUE`.

The answer is, “Yes, the `PathIsUNC` function returns `FALSE` for strings that begin with `\\?\`. Because they aren't UNC's.”

There was a bug in the Windows XP version of the `PathIsUNC` function where it reported that anything that began with two backslashes was a UNC, even if it wasn't. In particular, paths that begin with `\\?\` are not UNC's, unless they happen to begin with `\\?\UNC\`. The bug was fixed in Windows Vista so it returned `TRUE` only if the `\\?\` is followed by `UNC\`.

Fortunately, the application compatibility team had a ready answer for this: The Emulate-OldPathIsUNC compatibility shim returns the `PathIsUNC` function to its old behavior that is bug-for-bug compatible with Windows XP.

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