

## [Windows Wont Load? Use a System Repair Disc/USB Drive to Fix Your PC](#)

Previously, we showed you where to download Windows 7 and how to burn it to disc, put it on a thumb drive, or boot from it while using your current Windows 7 installation: Download Windows 7 and Burn it to Disc/put it on a Thumb Drive  
<http://mintywhite.com/windows-7/7maintenance/download-windows-7-burn-discput-thumb-drive/>

Having the whole operating system on disc isn't necessary if you just need to repair your Windows installation. You should have a repair disc on hand to deal with the following situations:

- You've made a change to your PC and it now won't boot into Windows.
- You get a message such as NTLDR is missing but your hard drive is healthy.
- You get a virus on your PC and need command line access to fix the issue.
- Windows starts to boot and then your PC power cycles.

In this guide, we show you:

- Where to download a Windows 7 or Windows Vista Repair Disc.
- How to make a Windows 7 repair disc yourself.
- How to make a Windows 7 repair USB drive.
- How to boot from a disc/USB drive and use it to repair your PC.

**Note:** A repair disc cannot be used to install Windows and provides no functionality beyond a Windows installation disc. If you already have an installation disc, you can use that for system recovery.

## **Download a Windows 7 or Windows Vista Repair Disc**

If you don't want to create a disc yourself or you're using Windows Vista, you can download one. The instructions to do so are here:

Windows Vista:

<http://mintywhite.com/vista/vsecurity/download-a-windows-vista-recovery-disc/>

Windows 7:

<http://mintywhite.com/windows-7/7maintenance/download-windows-7-system-repairrecovery-disc/>

## **Make a Windows 7 Repair Disc Yourself**

To make a Windows 7 repair disc yourself:

1. Click *Start*, type **create** and click *Create a System Repair Disc*.
2. Insert a CD/DVD, choose the DVD drive in which the disc resides and click *Create Disc*.

Once the disc is finished, I recommend booting from the disc to test it before you need it and find it burned incorrectly.

## **Make a Windows Vista/7 Repair USB drive**

If you own a netbook, don't have an optical (CD/DVD/Bluray) drive, or just don't keep good track of your discs, you may find you run in to trouble when trying to repair your PC in the event of an operating system failure.

To make a bootable Windows repair USB drive you'll need to:

1. Download the Windows recovery ISO.
2. Make your thumb drive bootable.
3. Copy the recovery files to your thumb drive.
4. Boot from it.

### **1. Download the Windows 7 Recovery ISO**

Download the Windows 7 recovery ISO

<http://mintywhite.com/windows-7/7maintenance/download-windows-7-system-repairrecovery-disc/>

Windows Vista recovery ISO.

<http://mintywhite.com/vista/vsecurity/download-a-windows-vista-recovery-disc/>

### **2. Make your Thumb Drive Bootable**

To prepare your USB drive, do the following:

(Use a thumb drive that you don't mind deleting everything from)

1. Press **Winkey+R** to Open the Run dialogue.
2. Type ***diskpart*** and hit Enter (If you don't have diskpart, get it here.

<http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?displaylang=en&id=23711>

3. Run the ***list disk*** command.
4. Run ***select disk 3*** where the “3” is the corresponding number of your USB drive.
5. Run ***clean***.
6. Run ***create partition primary***.
7. Run ***active*** to make the partition active.
8. Run ***format fs=fat32 quick*** to format the drive as Fat32.
9. Run ***assign*** to give the drive a letter.

### **3. Copy the Recovery Files to Your Thumb Drive.**

To copy the files to your thumb drive.

1. Locate the Windows 7 recovery ISO file.
  2. Open the file with a utility capable of browsing ISO images (7 zip works well.)
    1. Download 7zip and install it.
    2. Right click the ISO file and select 7-Zip > Open Archive.
  3. Extract the contents of the ISO to your previously-formatted USB drive.
- ### **4. Boot from Your Recovery Thumb Drive**

Read on to learn how to boot from your recovery thumb drive.

## **Boot from a Disc/USB Drive and Use it to Repair Your PC**

To boot from your disc/USB:

1. Shut down your PC.
2. Insert your bootable repair disc/USB drive.
3. Power on your PC.
4. When your BIOS is loading (if you have a brand-name PC, this is usually when you can see the brand's logo), press the key that loads the boot options menu (this is usually displayed as an option on the screen and is typically the **ESC/F8** key.)
5. Arrow down to "CD-ROM Drive" / "DVD-ROM Drive" / "Removable Media" / "USB Media" and press **Enter**.
6. The recovery software will take some time to load:
7. Now select your default keyboard layout:
8. After the software detects your installation of Windows, click *Next*:

## **What Can You Do with a Repair Disc?**

A repair disc cannot be used to reinstall Windows but can perform many repair tasks. Here is just a small list of what you can do with a repair disc:

1. Startup Repair
2. System Restore
3. System Image Recovery
4. Windows Memory Diagnostic
5. Command Prompt

The most commonly used function (for me at least) is the Startup Repair. I use this when I get an error message like “NTLDR Missing”, “Unable to boot” etc. The startup repair checks the MBR, GPT etc for common errors and repairs them.

If you cannot boot into Windows because of corrupted settings, a virus etc, then you may find using a previously-created System Restore point will help you get back to Windows.

If you created a system image using Backup and Restore, <http://mintywhite.com/windows-7/7security/create-system-image-windows-7/>

you can use it to completely restore your computer to a previous state.

The memory diagnostic is used to check for bad memory sectors.

Finally, the command prompt can do (almost) anything the full command prompt can do while using Windows. This can be very useful to run tools like `chkdsk` to find out why your hard drive is suddenly not working.