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## How do I revoke a PGP key on a server?

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Here's the situation, I have a PGP key I generated a long time ago and I have lost my private key. However I have a revocation certificate on my USB drive and I would like to revoke the key.

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8 After looking on the internet I found this solution

```
$ gpg --import /path/to/usb/revocert-01324567.asc  
gpg: key 01324567: no public key - can't apply revocation certificate  
gpg: Total number processed: 1
```

I'm unsure how to download my public key from the keyserver, and how to upload it. Help would be appreciated.

pgp

asked Sep 12 '14 at 15:39



Alice Ryhl

432 2 5 12

### 1 Answer

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However I have a revocation certificate on my USB drive and I would like to revoke the key.

▼  
You're lucky, lots of people don't

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```
$ gpg --import /path/to/usb/revoc  
gpg: key 01324567: no public key  
gpg: Total number processed: 1
```

You already correctly found the way to import the revocation certificate, but it still misses your public key. This is very easy to import, just run

```
gpg --recv-keys [key-id]
```

Now import the key using the command formerly failed:

```
gpg --import [revocation-certificate-file]
```

After doing so, send the keys back to the key servers again:

```
gpg --send-keys [key-id]
```

Replace `[key-id]` and `[revocation-certificate-file]` by your key id respectively revocation certificate filename. It seems you still know your key id (looks like it is contained in your revocation certificate file name), otherwise use `gpg --search [mail address]` to query the key servers for the ID.

## Using a Web Interface

An alternative (if your revocation certificate is an ASCII-armored file, thus not binary) would be to use the web interface of any keyserver of your choice, where you can directly paste the revocation certificate. The one of <http://keyserver.ubuntu.com> doesn't have a separate field for revocation certificates, but the "Submitting a new OpenPGP Key" field should also accept your (ascii-armored) revocation certificate. Search for your key afterwards to verify whether it was correctly revoked.

## Synchronization of the Revocation Certificate

(Most) key servers gossip with each other and exchange new key data, including your revocation certificate. Just wait for some time (minutes, hours), and it should spread throughout the key server network.

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[keyserver.ubuntu.com](https://keyserver.ubuntu.com) gives error message: "Add failed: This is a stand-alone revocation certificate. A revocation certificates should be imported to the respective public key before being published to a

keyserver" Isn't the point of a stand-alone (anything) that you can use it without any other information? –

C.Rogers Jan 3 '18 at 12:32 

OpenPGP pretty much always considers public keys as the set of all their individual packets -- revocations being one kind of them. Just add it to the end of the respective public key or import key and certificate, then upload them to the key servers. That's just the general use case, and probably nobody bothered implementing a special procedure for OpenPGP packets not being preceded by a public key (additional implementation effort and larger complexity vs. a use case expected to be rare or not existing). –

Jens Erat Jan 3 '18 at 20:48

