



Fixing "Bad Permissions" for .pem Files on Windows (SSH to EC2)

This guide explains how to properly set file permissions on a .pem private key file to allow SSH access to an EC2 instance using Windows.



Where to Start

- Your .pem file is stored in:
D:\Deployment\Pristine Couture\e-commerce.pem
- The SSH command you're using is:

```
bash
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ssh -i "D:\Deployment\Pristine Couture\e-commerce.pem"
ubuntu@<your-ec2-public-dns>
```



Problem

When trying to SSH, you got this error:

```
vbnet
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WARNING: UNPROTECTED PRIVATE KEY FILE!
Permissions for 'e-commerce.pem' are too open.
Permission denied (publickey).
```



Fix: Restrict Permissions for .pem on Windows

◆ Step 1: Open File Properties

1. Go to the folder in File Explorer:
D:\Deployment\Pristine Couture
 2. Right-click `e-commerce.pem` → click **Properties**
 3. Go to the **Security** tab
 4. Click the **Advanced** button
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◆ Step 2: Remove Inherited Permissions

1. Click **Disable inheritance**
 2. Select **Remove all inherited permissions from this object**
 3. Under **Permission entries**, remove:
 - NT AUTHORITY\Authenticated Users
 - Users
 - Any other accounts except your **Windows user**
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◆ Step 3: Add Your User with Read Permission

1. Still in **Advanced Security Settings**, click **Add**
2. Click **Select a principal**
3. In the dialog, either:
 - Type your Windows username (e.g., `user`) and click **Check Names**, or
 - Click **Advanced** → **Find Now**

- From the list, pick your user (e.g., `DESKTOP-MJ65D6G\user`)
 - Click **OK**
4. Under **Basic permissions**, check **Read**
 5. Click **OK**, then **Apply**, then exit all dialogs
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Test the SSH Command

Once permissions are fixed, run your command again:

```
bash
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ssh -i "D:\Deployment\Pristine Couture\e-commerce.pem"
ubuntu@<your-ec2-public-dns>
```

Example:

```
bash
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ssh -i "D:\Deployment\Pristine Couture\e-commerce.pem"
ubuntu@ec2-16-171-3-247.eu-north-1.compute.amazonaws.com
```

You should now connect successfully 🎉

How to Check Your Windows Username (Optional)

If you're not sure what your Windows username is:

CMD:

```
bash
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whoami
```

Returns: `DESKTOP-XYZ123\yourusername`

PowerShell:

powershell

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`$env:USERNAME`

Returns: `yourusername`