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Windows 7 - USB Windows 7 Installation Key Drive - Create

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USB Windows 7 Installation Key Drive - Create

How to Create a Bootable Windows 7 Installation USB Flash Drive
Published by **Brink**
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How to Create a Bootable Windows 7 Installation USB Flash Drive

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ℹ️ **Information**

This will show you how to create a USB flash key drive that you can boot from to install **Windows 7** with.

💡 *Tip*

If the USB flash drive is of sufficient capacity, say 8GB, then after copying the Windows 7 installation DVD onto it, you can create a new folder (ex: Device Drivers) in the USB key and place all of your latest driver installation files in it. This way you will have them handy to manually install the drivers after installing Windows 7 from the USB key.

📋 **Note**

If you booted from the USB drive to install Windows 7, then you may need to change the hard drive back to being listed before the USB key in the boot order in BIOS after the computer restarts during installation to prevent the computer from booting right back into the USB key starting the installation process over and over.

⚠️ *Warning*

- The USB key needs to be at least **4 GB** in size.
- This will **delete everything on the USB key**. Be sure to save anything that you do not want to lose on it somewhere else.
- Before installing Windows 7 from the USB key, you will need to:
  - Enable **Legacy USB storage detect** in the BIOS.
- When ready to install Windows 7 from the USB key:
  - Connect the USB key.
  - Restart the computer, and keep tapping the F key (see screenshot below) responsible to open the **Boot Menu** screen for the brand and model of your motherboard or computer until it does.

  - Select the USB key to boot from.
  - Start installing Windows 7.

OPTION ONE

Use a Program to Create Bootable Windows 7 Installation USB Flash Drive

NOTE: *If you do not have a ISO file, then you can use a free program like ImgBurn or ISODisk to create a ISO from your Windows 7 installation DVD to use with the Windows 7 USB/DVD Download Tool program to make a bootable USB flash drive with the ISO.*

> **1.** For how, see the Part 2 section here: **Windows 7 USB/DVD Download Tool**.

OPTION TWO

Manually Create Bootable Windows 7 Installation USB Flash Drive

> ⚠️ ***Warning***
>
> Using this method:
>
> - You can **only create** a **64-bit** Windows 7 **bootable USB flash drive** if your **current Windows 7 installation is also 64-bit**.
>
> - You **can create** a **32-bit** Windows 7 **bootable USB flash drive** if your **current Windows 7 installation is 32-bit or 64-bit**.

> **1.** Plug the USB key in**.**

> **2. If AutoPlay** opens a pop-up for the USB key, then just close it**.**
> **NOTE:** *Make note of what the* **drive size** *is for the USB key for use in step 6 below. You can also open* **Computer** *(step 19) to see what the drive size is to. For example, mine is* **3920 MB**. *(See screenshot below)*

> **3.** Open a **elevated command prompt**.

> **4.** In the elevated command prompt, type **diskpart** and press **Enter**. (See screenshot below)

> **5.** In the elevated command prompt, type **list disk** and press **Enter**. (See screenshot below)
> **NOTE:** *Make note of what* **disk #** *your USB key is listed as to use in step 6 below. You can also look for the drive size (step 2) of the USB key to help ID the disk number. For example, mine is listed as* **Disk 1** *here for the* **3920 MB** *disk.*
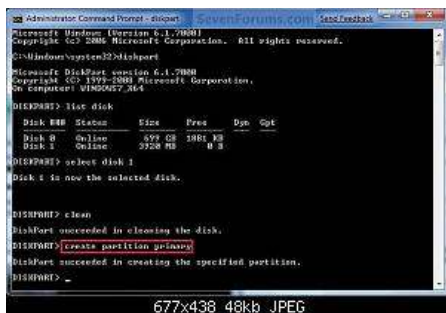
6. In the elevated command prompt, type **select disk #** (your USB disk #) and press **Enter.** (See screenshot below)
NOTE: *For example, my USB key is listed as **Disk 1**, so I would type **select disk 1** and press **Enter.***
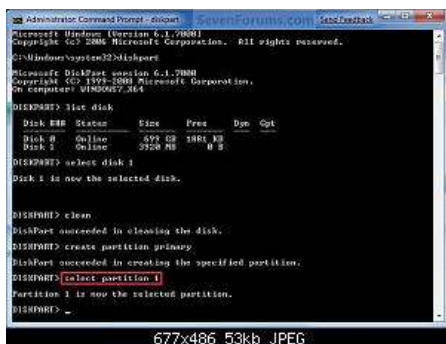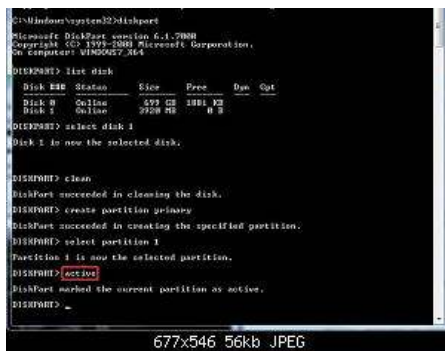

677x354 40kb JPEG

7. In the elevated command prompt, type **clean** and press **Enter.** (See screenshot below)

677x390 43kb JPEG

8. In the elevated command prompt, type **create partition primary** and press **Enter.** (See screenshot below)

677x438 48kb JPEG

9. In the elevated command prompt, type **select partition 1** and press **Enter.** (See screenshot below)

677x486 53kb JPEG

10. In the elevated command prompt, type **active** and press **Enter.** (See screenshot below)

677x546 56kb JPEG

11. In the elevated command prompt, type in the command below to format the USB as **NTFS** or **FAT32**, and press **Enter**. (See screenshot below)
NOTE: *This may take a few moments to finish formatting the USB key.*

📋 **Note**

You can substitute **Windows 7** within quotes in the commands below with whatever name (drive label) you would like to have displayed for the USB drive instead.

FAT volume labels

- If you have an **UEFI** instead of BIOS motherboard, then you will need to use FAT32 and not NTFS.
- Volume labels can contain as many as 11 characters and can include spaces but no tabs.
- Volume labels cannot contain the following characters: ? / \ | . , ; : + = [ ] < > "
- Volume labels are stored as uppercase regardless of whether they contain lowercase letters.
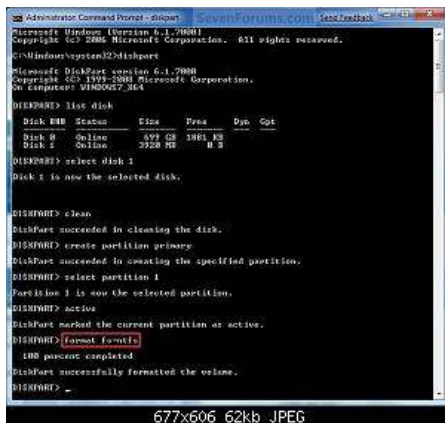
NTFS volume labels

- Volume labels can contain as many as 32 characters.

---

format fs=ntfs label="Windows 7" quick
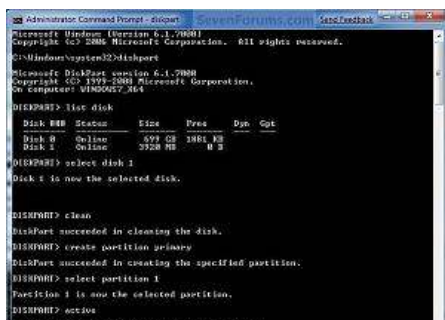
OR

format fs=fat32 label="Windows 7" quick

677x606 62kb JPEG

12. If **AutoPlay** opens a pop-up for the USB key, then just close it.

13. In the elevated command prompt, type **assign** and press **Enter**. (See screenshot below)
NOTE: *This will assign a new drive letter to the USB key. Make note of the new USB drive letter to use in step 22 below. For example, mine is now **H**.*

677x654 66kb JPEG

14. If **AutoPlay** opens a pop-up for the USB key, then just close it.

15. In the elevated command prompt, type **exit** and press **Enter**. (See screenshot below)
**NOTE:** *This will exit you from DiskPart from step 4.*

677x702 68kb JPEG

16. Close the elevated command prompt.

17. Insert your Windows 7 installation DVD into the DVD drive.

18. If **AutoPlay** opens a pop-up for the Windows 7 installation DVD, then just close it.

19. Open the Start Menu, right click on the **Computer** button, and click on **Open**.

20. Right click on the DVD drive (ex: **E:**) that has the Windows 7 installation DVD in it, and click on **Open**. (See screenshot below)


821x766 255kb JPEG
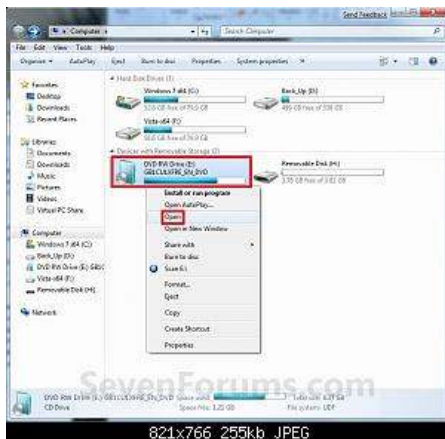
21. Highlight all of the contents, right click on the highlighted contents, and click on **Copy**. (See screenshot below)
NOTE: *You will need to copy all of the files and folders on the Windows 7 installation DVD to the USB key.*

820x651 260kb JPEG
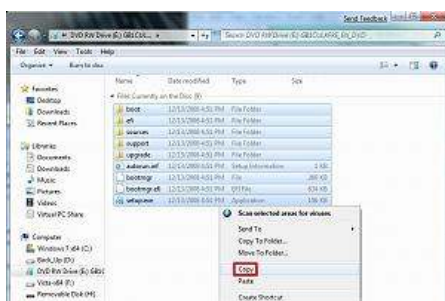
22. Go back to **Computer**, right click on the USB key drive (ex: H), and click on **Paste**. (See screenshot below)

807x731 252kb JPEG
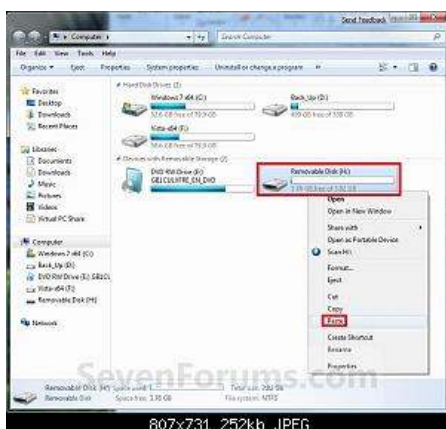
23. The contents of the Windows 7 installation DVD will now start copying over to the USB key. (See screenshot below)
NOTE: *This may take a few moments to complete.*

416x216 60kb JPEG

24. When finished, you can close the **Computer** window and unplug the USB key.

25. You now have a Windows 7 Installation USB key. 🤭

⚠️ **Warning**

If you have **UEFI** instead of BIOS motherboard, then you will need to temporarily disable **Secure Boot** to use the USB to install Windows. After installation is complete, you can enable Secure Boot again.

That's it,
Shawn

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