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How To Format USB Drive in Linux Command Line

Written by [Rahul K.](#)

Filesystem

flash drive, format, usb

9 Comments

Formatting a USB drive in Ubuntu using Terminal commands is much easier as formatting it in Windows systems. But few of Ubuntu users are not much familiar with terminal commands. This tutorial will help Ubuntu (Linux) users with the simple steps of USB Flash drive formatting.

1. Insert USB and Identify Volume

Insert USB drive into your system and identify your USB drive correctly. This is only step where you need to take care, because your may format wrong disk if not correctly identify your disk.

```
root@tecadmin:~$ df -h
```

Filesystem	Size	Used	Avail	Use%	Mounted on
/dev/sda1	28G	24G	2.3G	92%	/
udev	1.4G	12K	1.4G	1%	/dev
tmpfs	277M	1.2M	276M	1%	/run

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```
none          5.0M      0   5.0M    0% /run/lock
none          1.4G    34M   1.4G    3% /run/shm
/dev/sdc1     14.8G   1.4G  13.4G   10% /media/tec
```

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2. Format USB Drive in Linux

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When we attach any USB drive in Ubuntu system, it is automatically mounted and we can not format it. Ask on Linux systems which is already mounted. So first unmount this USB drive using following command.

```
$ sudo umount /dev/sdc1
```

Now use one of the following commands as per file system you want. To format a USB drive, most of the users prefer VFAT and NTFS file systems because they can be easily used on Windows operating system.

Format with vFat FileSystem

```
$ sudo mkfs.vfat /dev/sdc1
```

Format with NTFS FileSystem

```
$ sudo mkfs.ntfs /dev/sdc1
```

Format with EXT4 FileSystem

```
$ sudo mkfs.ext4 /dev/sdc1
```

Similarly, you can format USB Flash drive with any required file system.





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RAHUL K.

f t G+

I, Rahul Kumar is the founder and chief editor of TecAdmin.net. I am Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE) and working as IT professional since 2009.

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July 25, 2017 at 7:36 pm

its saying /dev/sdc1 file not found...

**SANDEEP REDDY**

↩ REPLY TO SANDEEP

June 11, 2017 at 4:38 pm

Awesome, Thanks for the info!



**PATRICK**[↩ REPLY TO PATRICK](#)

July 19, 2016 at 7:56 pm

tks! it help me a lot! pretty simple and direct.

**WARREN**[↩ REPLY TO WARREN](#)

March 17, 2016 at 9:58 pm

This was great thanks, quick question; how to you format a flash drive if it was in 2 partitions and make it one again? I lost the small partition.

**OLLE GLADSO**[↩ REPLY TO OLLE](#)

February 17, 2016 at 4:18 pm

I could not get Partitionmanager or GParted to work. This worked great, however. (I formatted a 3TB USB drive as ext4, for use as a backup drive)

**K HILL**[↩ REPLY TO K](#)

January 21, 2016 at 12:24 am

Your article is misnamed. It's "Format USB in UBUNTU". If your article is proprietary to Ubuntu, that is what you should call it.

**KEY**[↩ REPLY TO KEY](#)

May 29, 2016 at 4:51 pm

All the commands listed in the article are common for all the Linux distros.

**ASHLEY**[↩ REPLY TO ASHLEY](#)

January 1, 2016 at 10:06 am

nice description.thanks.

**ANJALI**[↩ REPLY TO ANJALI](#)

October 13, 2015 at 4:41 am

Thnks for the steps!!!
Were of great help!!! ☺



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