**Can I take the hard drive with Windows installed on my Toshiba laptop and have it work on my HP laptop?**

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This is usually a bad idea. Even when it appears to work, you're never really certain that everything's been fixed up properly…..

I have Windows 7 Ultimate, hard drive built up on a Toshiba laptop. I want to replace the internal hard drive on my daughter's HP G60 laptop. Saying I boot up the HP G60 laptop in safe mode with the hard disk from the Toshiba hard drive installed in the HP computer, will it find the right/correct drivers?•

In this excerpt from [Answercast #57](http://ask-leo.com/answercast_57_data_travel_patterns_certificate_errors_transferring_gmail_moving_hard_drives_and_more.html), I look at the problems that can occur if you try to swap hard drives between computers and some possible fixes that may help it work.

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**Boot with different hard drive**

Unfortunately, the best answer I can give you is maybe.

This is not a technique that I recommend simply because it's just a maybe. And even when it appears to work, you're never really certain that everything's been fixed up properly.

The right way to do what you're doing is to install Windows from scratch on the new computer (or on your daughter's computer, in this case.) That insures that you're getting the right drivers and the right software installed for that particular hardware.

**Reformat and reinstall**

It's very possible that the hardware on your Toshiba is so dramatically different from that on the HP that the installation of Windows on the Toshiba may not even have the right drivers necessary to run on that HP laptop. So, I don't recommend what you're doing.

My strong recommendation (if you can do it all) is to do a true, clean, proper install of Windows on your daughter's machine.

**Possible repair install**

Now, there is one caveat I'm going to throw out at you and that is this:

* Let's say that we'll go ahead and take that hard drive out of the Toshiba and put it in the HP.
* Before you boot that machine, *instead* boot from a Windows installation DVD, the one that corresponds to the version of Windows that was originally installed on that Toshiba.
* Boot from that DVD and then proceed to do what's called a "Repair reinstall" of Windows.

Typically, that involves choosing the **upgrade path**. It will fix up and essentially reinstall Windows without changing anything else. The process of reinstalling it should get the right drivers in place from the installation media.

Now, it's still a big if. If the installation media was originally a Toshiba OEM CD or DVD, it is possible that it still doesn't have the drivers necessary for the HP hardware.

But it should get you closer than just plugging the hard drive in and praying it will work.

**Backup all data**

Now, the last thing I'm going to suggest (regardless of which attempt you decide to use)... backup first!

Make sure you backup what's on that hard drive before you do anything to it because any of these steps (be it just inserting it and hoping it works, doing a repair/reinstall, those kinds of things) are going to change what's on that hard drive. The result may be something that just doesn't work; it may be something that's even worse than what you had when you started.

So, if you want to for example put that hard drive back in the original Toshiba, you're going to want to be able to restore it to the state it was in when you took it out.

So my recommendation is: backup before you try anything. Then, if you need to, certainly try a couple of these other alternatives.

But my strongest recommendation is to reinstall Windows from scratch on this new machine.