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How to Perform a Windows XP Repair Install

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Please click on the warnings links before proceeding with the Repair Install.

- [Warning #1](#)
- [Warning #2](#)

It is extremely important that you backup important data that is not available from other media sources. This backup should be located on a separate hard drive, CD, DVD, network storage, etc. that will not be affected by the repair install.

Please check out the warning links before attempting the Repair Install. It is to your advantage you follow the suggestions to prevent data loss and especially if you also have the capability to boot into XP, perform the steps listed in the [Warning #1](#), before proceeding with the repair install.

After completing [if **Windows** is still accessible] the steps listed to prevent data loss in [warning #1](#) and you did not remedy the **no boot** situation, you can use an **OEM XP Pro or Home, "retail" XP Home or Pro full or upgrade version CD** of the same version Home or Pro to perform a Repair Install. **OEM Restore disks or hidden restore folders on the hard drive will not work for the Repair Install.**

A Repair Install will replace the system files with the files on the XP CD used for the Repair Install. It will leave your applications and settings intact, but Windows updates will need to be reappplied.

A Repair Install will replace files altered by adware and malware, but will not fix an adware, malware problem.

You can use the ***In place upgrade*** option to change a Product Key in the event you entered a key that was already activated. The In Place Upgrade also produces the same result as the Repair Install.



An option I highly recommend is creating a Slipstreamed XP CD with SP1, SP2, etc..

[Slipstreaming Windows XP with Service Pack 2 \(SP2\) Good](#)

[Another Slipstream step by step Better](#)

[AutoStreamer](#) mirror link for [AutoStreamer Best!!](#)

[Step by Step on AutoStream](#)

Alternate options to [Change XP Product Key](#) #18 on the FAQ list.

XP Repair install

1. Boot the computer using the XP CD. You may need to change the boot order in the system BIOS so the CD boots before the hard drive. Check your system documentation for steps to access the **BIOS** and change the boot order.
2. When you see the "**Welcome To Setup**" screen, you will see the options below

This portion of the Setup program prepares Microsoft Windows XP to run on your computer:

To setup Windows XP now, press ENTER.

To repair a Windows XP installation using Recovery Console, press R.

To quit Setup without installing Windows XP, press F3.

3. Press **Enter** to start the Windows Setup.



do not choose "*To repair a Windows XP installation using the Recovery Console, press R*", (you **Do Not** want to load Recovery Console). I repeat, **do not** choose "*To repair a Windows XP installation using the Recovery Console, press R*".

4. Accept the License Agreement and Windows will search for existing Windows installations.
5. Select the XP installation you want to repair from the list and press **R** to start the repair. If **Repair** is not one of the options, **read** this **Warning#2!**
6. Setup will copy the necessary files to the hard drive and reboot. **Do not press any key to boot from CD when the message appears.** Setup will continue as if it were doing a clean install, but your applications and settings will remain intact.

[If you get files not found during the copying stage.](#)

Blaster worm warning: Do not immediately activate over the internet when asked, enable the **XP firewall** before connecting to the internet. You can activate after the firewall is enabled. Control Panel - Network Connections. Right click the

connection you use, Properties, and there is a check box on the [Advanced](#) page.

[KB 833330](#) Blaster removal

[What You Should Know About the Sasser Worm and Its Variants](#)

Microsoft Security Bulletin [MS04-011](#)

7. Reapply **updates** or **service packs** applied since initial Windows XP installation. Please note that a Repair Install from the Original install XP CD will remove SP1/SP2 and service packs will need to be reapplied.

[Windows XP Service Pack 1](#)

[Service Pack 2](#)

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[AutoStreamer](#) mirror link for [AutoStreamer Best!!](#)

[Step by Step on AutoStreamer](#)

Printable **Repair Install** step by step. [repair.txt](#)

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Warning! #1

Should you do a repair install; and is it the best choice?

A Repair Install is not foolproof, and should not be considered the cure-all fix for non-boot situations.

To prevent loss of data or program settings, perform the following before the Repair Install.

Manually delete the Undo_guimode.txt file from the Windows\System32 folder before you perform any of the actions that are listed in the "Symptoms" section of this article. To do this in Windows XP, type the following command at a command prompt:

```
del /a /f %windir%\system32\undo_guimode.txt
```

1. From the **Start** menu, click **Run**. **Screenshot Image**
2. In the **Run** dialog box, in the **Open** text box, type: **cmd**. Click **OK**.
3. Delete the undo_guimode.txt file. In the **C:\Windows\System32\cmd.exe** dialog box, type: **del /a /f c:\windows\system32\undo_guimode.txt**. Press the ENTER key. **Screenshot Image**

KB [Q312369](#)

Check the link below for an option for recovering from a non-boot event.

[Windows XP Crashed? Here's Help](#)
[A salvage mission into the depths of Windows XP, explained by a non-geek](#)
[by Charlie White](#)

Also as a precaution the windows\system32\WPA.DBL and WPA.BAK should be copied to a floppy before doing a repair install. For more information see Alex Nichol's article on [XP activation](#).

More articles to help prevent data loss.

<http://cquirke.mvps.org/reinst.htm>

Back

Additional tips to perform before initiating the Repair Install.

You should complete the basic requirements of backing up all files and folders that cannot be restored from other media. This includes passwords, applications purchased and downloaded from the internet without CD support, financial records and folders, digital images that cannot be replaced.....

Backup copies of your registry files (in the %systemroot%\Repair folder) are also replaced after the in-place upgrade is complete. Copy these registry backups to another location before you perform an in-place upgrade/Repair Install. You may need to use them after the in-place upgrade is complete.

It would also be a good idea to run the **Files And Settings Transfer** wizard **F.A.S.T** located on the XP CD.

If you made unorthodox registry changes with third party software, there is the potential of data loss from a Repair Install. Another consideration of concern would be a power failure during the repair install could render your system unbootable and result in loss of data.

The likelihood of you losing the files and folders is probably of minimal risk, but you have to expect the worst and make sure you are prepared for recovery.

If you are sure you have explored all other troubleshooting avenues, then proceed with the **repair install**.

Warning!! #2

If the Repair Option is not Available

What should I do? Most important do not ignore the information below!

If the option to Repair Install is **NOT** available and you continue with the install; you *will delete* your *Windows & Documents and Settings* folders. *All Applications* that place keys in the registry will need to be re-installed.

You should exit setup if the repair option is **not** available and consider other options. I have found if the Repair option is not available, you have a few paths I have listed to try before XP requires a **Clean install**.

Very important!!

If you still have the ability to access the Windows XP installation, backup all important files not restorable from other sources before attempting any recovery console or other trouble shooting attempts.

Possible Fix by reconfiguring boot.ini using Recovery Console.

1. Boot with XP CD or 6 floppy boot disk set.
2. Press R to load the Recovery Console.
3. Type **bootcfg**.
4. This should fix any boot.ini errors causing setup not to see the XP OS install.
5. Try the repair install.

One more suggestion from MVP Alex Nichol

"Reboot, this time taking the immediate R option, and if the CD letter is say K: give these commands

```
copy K:\i386\ntldr C:\  
copy K:\i386\ntdetect.com C:\
```

(two other files needed - just in case)

1. Type: **attrib -h -r -s C:\boot.ini del C:\boot.ini**
2. Type: **BootCfg /Rebuild**

which will get rid of any damaged boot.ini, search the disk for systems and make a new one. This might even result in a damaged windows reappearing; but gives another chance of getting at the repair"

Feedback on success or failure of the above fixes would be greatly appreciated.

Feedback

Try the link below if the **repair** option is **not** available.

Windows XP Crashed?

Here's Help. A salvage mission into the depths of Windows XP, explained by a non-geek

by Charlie White

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Related links

You May Lose Data or Program Settings After Reinstalling, Repairing, or Upgrading Windows XP ([Q312369](#))

System Restore "Restore Points" Are Missing or Deleted ([Q301224](#))

How to Perform an In-Place Upgrade (Reinstallation) of Windows XP ([Q315341](#))

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