

How to Create a Bootable Windows 7 or Vista USB Drive

Need to install Windows 7 on a computer with no drive? Do you want to create a backup installer in case your install cd becomes damaged? Follow these steps to get the Windows install files onto a bootable USB thumb drive. Install a free...

Steps

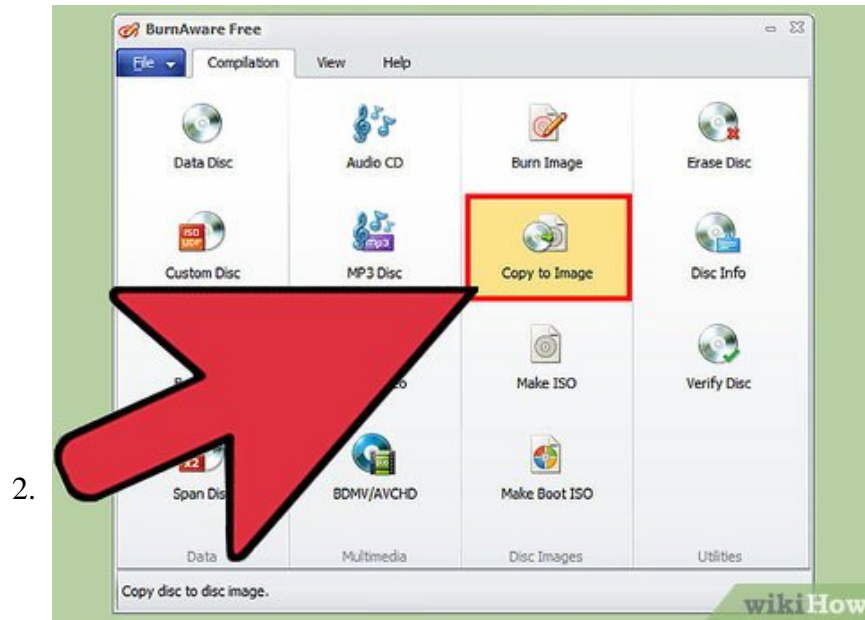
Part 1 of 4:

Creating or Obtaining A Windows Vista/7 ISO

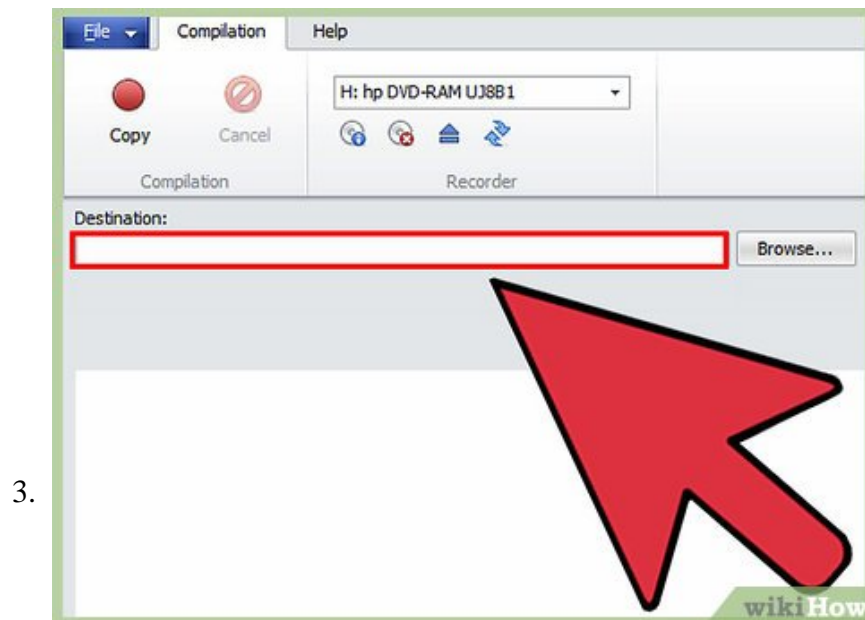


Install a free burning program. There are a number of free burning utilities available online. You need one that can create ISO files.

1. If you received your Windows 7 as a downloadable ISO file from Microsoft, you can skip to the next section.



Insert your Windows 7 DVD. Open your new burning program. Look for an option such as 'Copy to Image' or 'Create Image.' If prompted, select your DVD drive as the source.

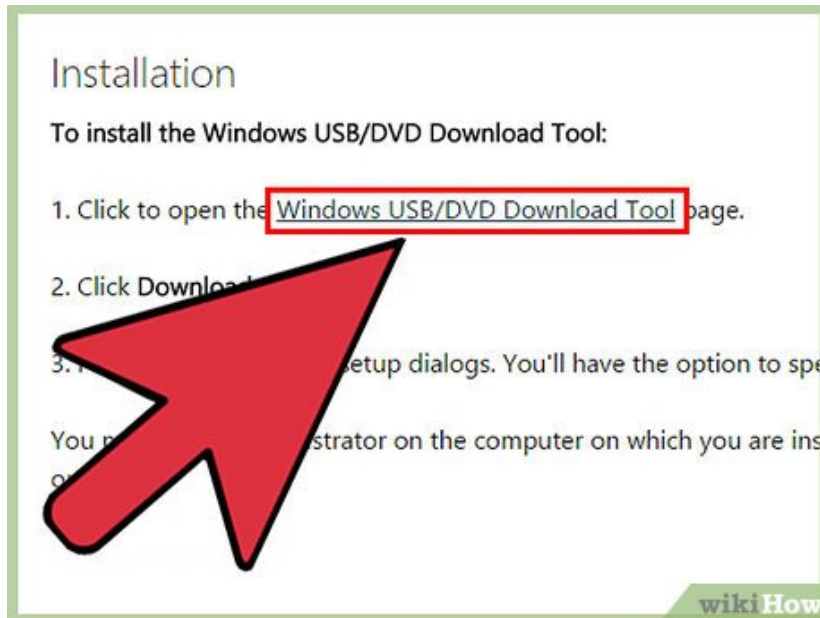


Save your ISO file. Choose an easy to remember name and location for the file. The ISO you make will be equal in size to the disc you are copying. This means it can take up several gigabytes of space on your hard drive. Be sure you have enough storage available.

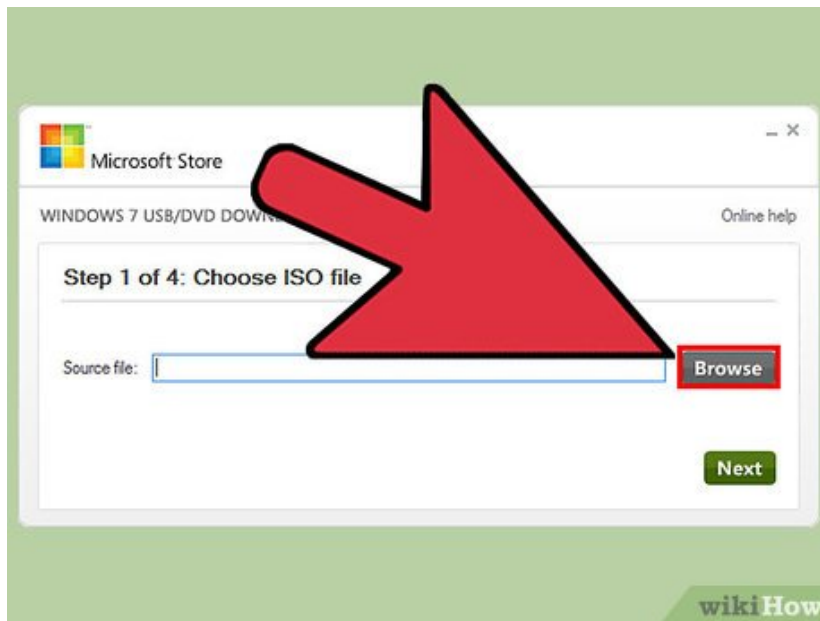
1. Creating the ISO can take a long time, depending on the speed of your computer and DVD drive.

Part 2 of 4:

Creating a Bootable Drive

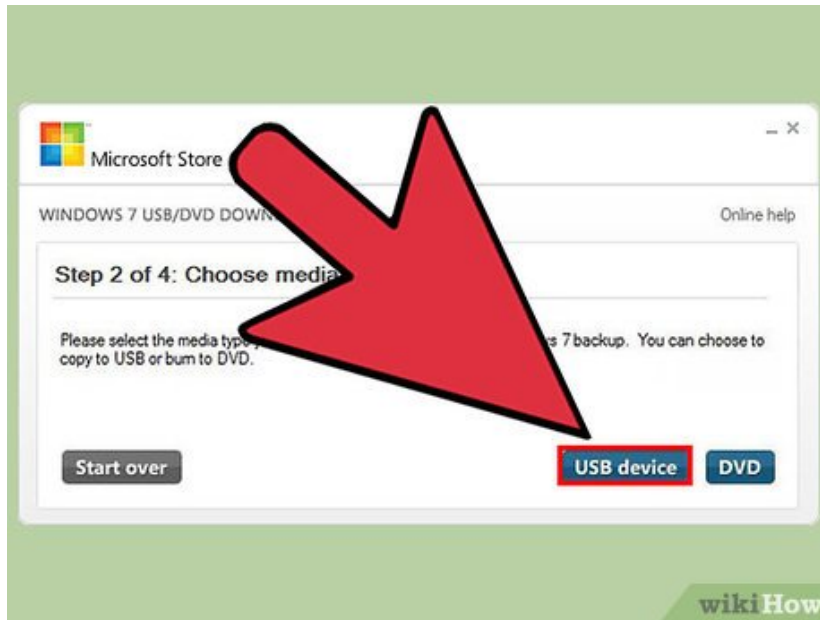


Download Windows 7 USB/DVD Download Tool. This is available for free from Microsoft. Despite its name, this tool works with Windows Vista ISOs as well. You can run this tool on virtually any version of Windows.



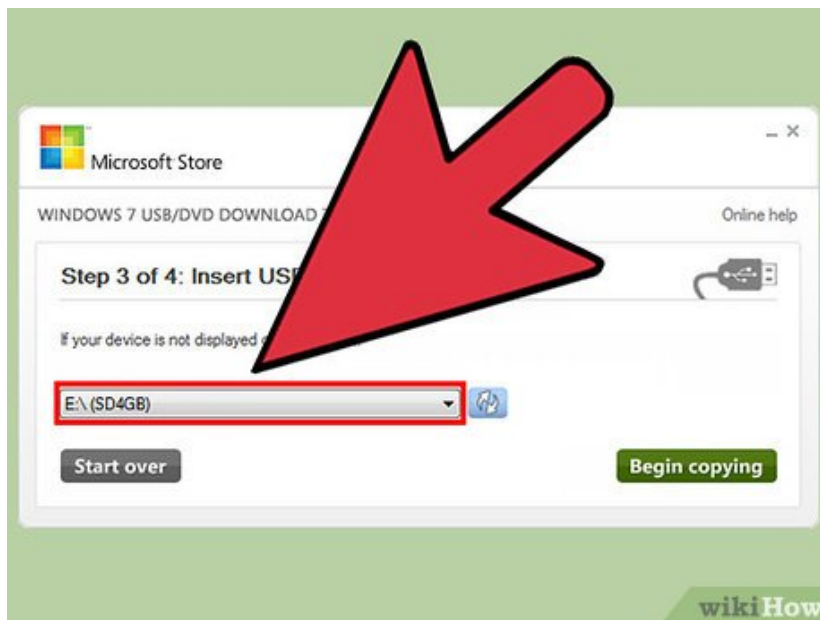
Select the Source file. This is the ISO that you created or downloaded in the first section. Click Next.

3.

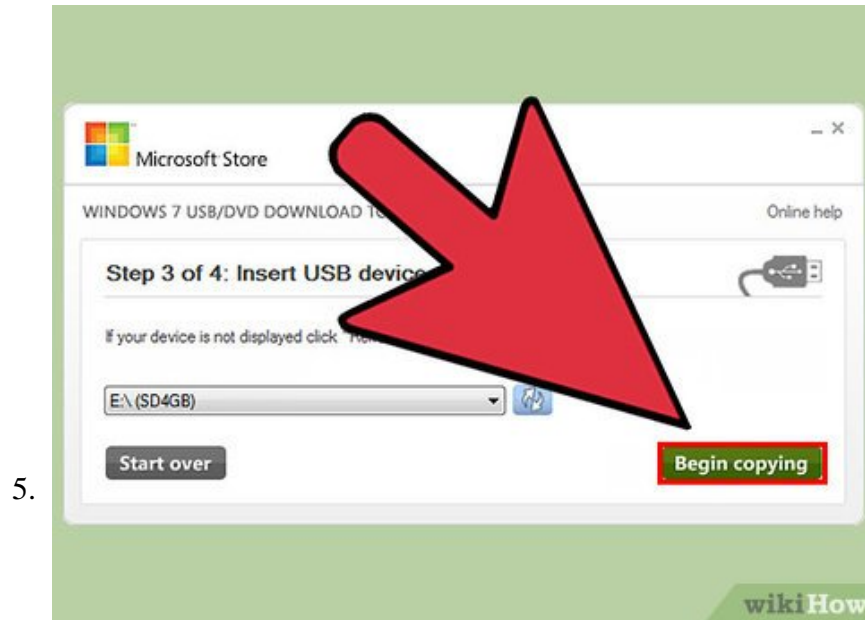


Select USB device. You are given the option to either burn to a DVD or create a USB device. For this guide, click USB Device.

4.



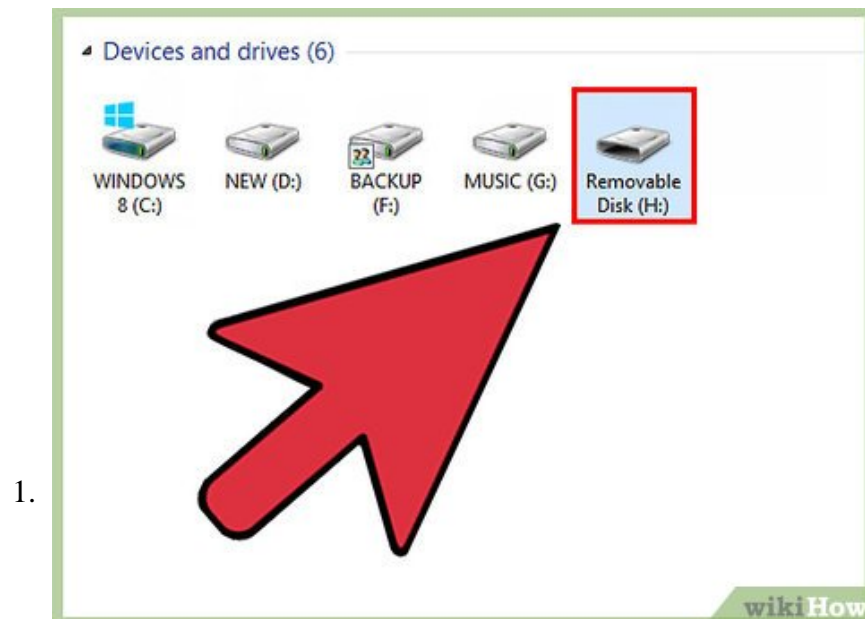
Choose your USB device. Make sure that your flash drive is connected correctly. You will need at least 4GB space on your flash drive to copy over the Windows installation.



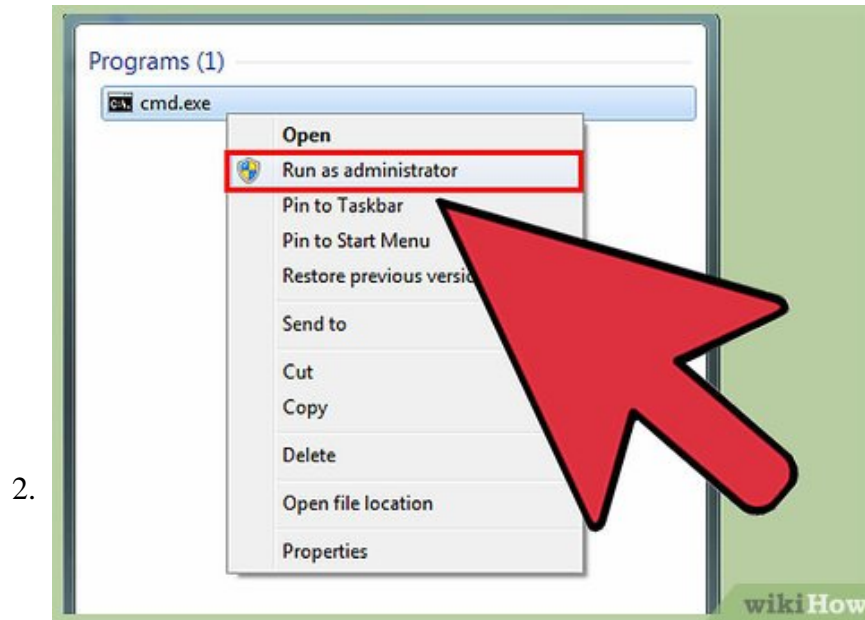
Wait while program works. The program will format the USB drive to boot correctly, then copy the ISO file onto the drive. The copying process can take up to 15 minutes to complete, depending on the speed of your machine.

Part 3 of 4:

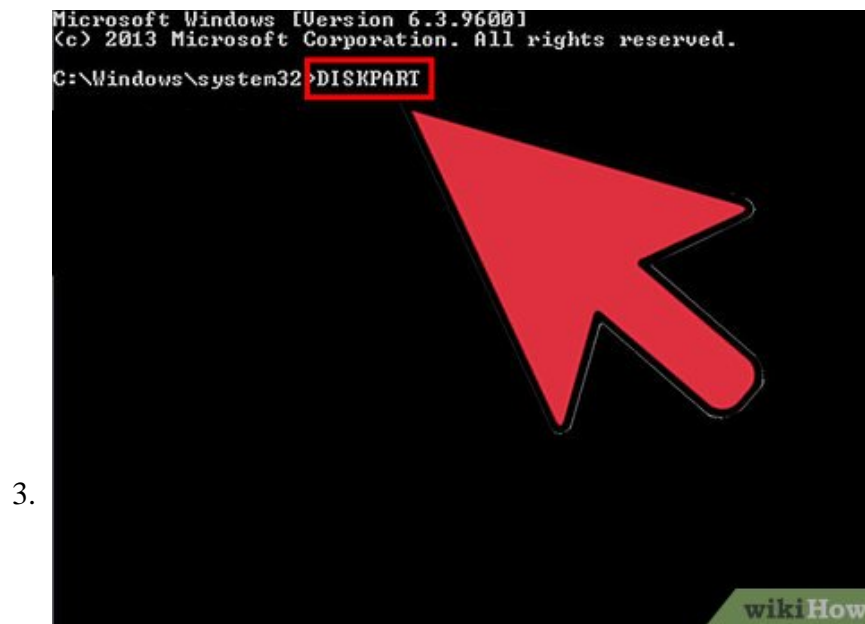
Using the Command Line



Plug-in your Flash Drive. First plug-in your USB stick to your USB port and copy all the content to a safe location in your hard drive.



Run Command Prompt as an administrator. To open a command prompt, go to the Start menu and search for CMD. Right-click on it and select **Run as Administrator** to use it with admin rights.



Using the *Diskpart* utility find the drive number of your flash drive. To do so, type in the following command in the command prompt: DISKPART

1. Running DISKPART will display the version of DISKPART you are running and the name of your PC.
2. Type 'list disk' to see a display of all your connected disk drives. Make a note of the number assigned to your Flash drive.

```
Microsoft Windows [Version 6.3.9600]
(c) 2013 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Windows\system32>DISKPART

Microsoft DiskPart version 6.3.9600

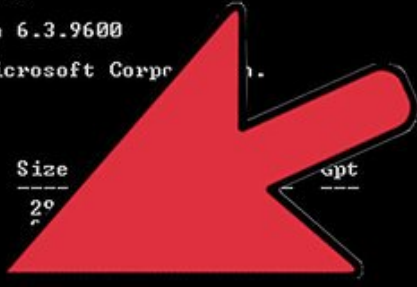
Copyright (C) 1999-2013 Microsoft Corporation.
On computer: DESKTOP

DISKPART> LIST DISK

   Disk ###  Status         Size           Partition Style
   -----  -
   Disk 0    Online         29 GB          MBR
   Disk 1    Online         29 GB          MBR
   Disk 2    Online         29 GB          MBR

DISKPART> SELECT DISK 2

Disk 2 is now the selected disk.
```

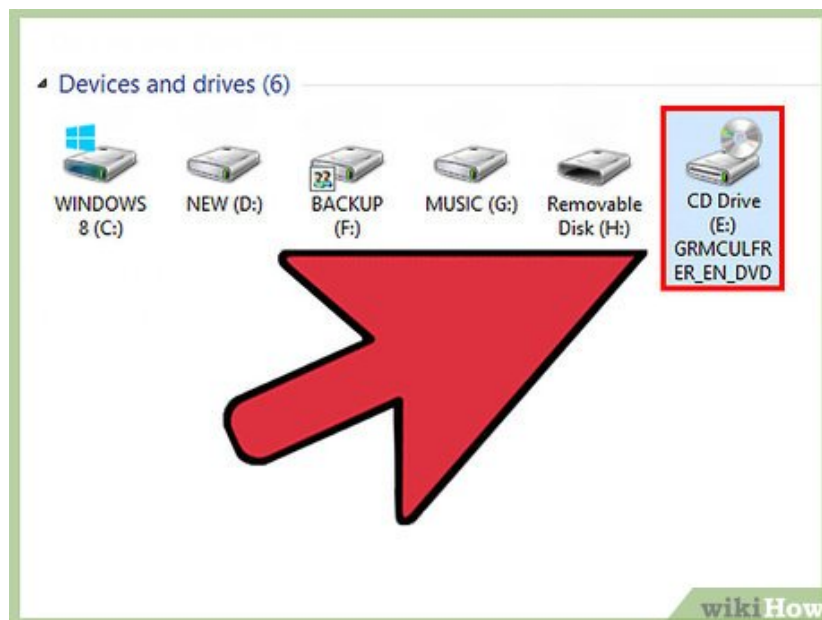


4.

wikiHow

Format the drive. Execute the following list of commands one-by-one. Make sure you replace Disk 1 with the proper Disk number from DISKPART.

```
select disk 1
clean
create partition primary
select partition 1
active
format fs=NTFS QUICK
assign
exit
```



Make the flash drive bootable. Use the *bootsect* utility that is shipped with Windows 7/Vista. To do so:

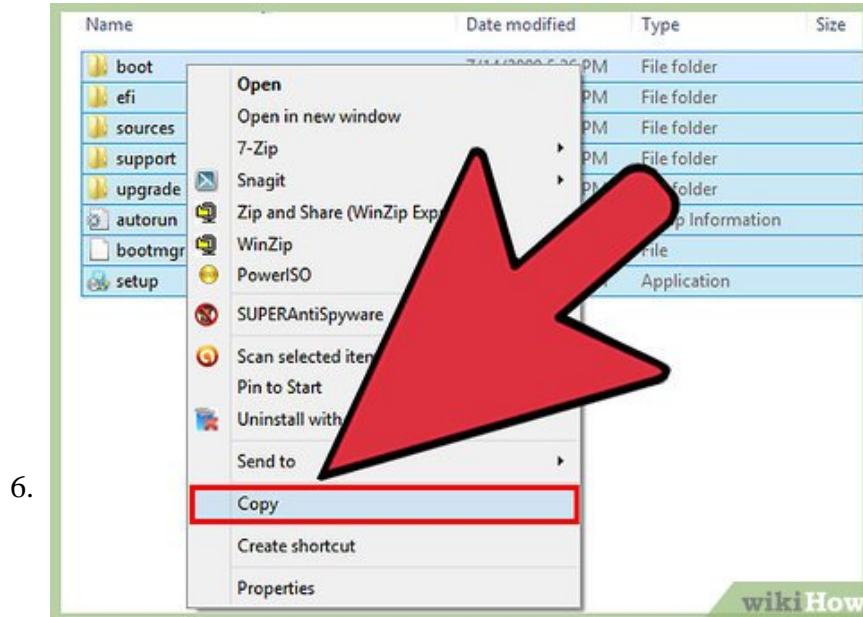
1. Insert the Windows 7/Vista DVD and note down the drive letter of the DVD drive. For this guide, the DVD drive is D: and the USB drive is G:.
2. Navigate to the directory where *bootsect* is found.

```
D:  
cd d:\boot
```

3. Use the bootsect to make the USB Drive bootable. This updates the drive with BOOTMGR compatible code and prepares it to boot Windows 7/Vista.

```
BOOTSECT.EXE /NT60 G:
```

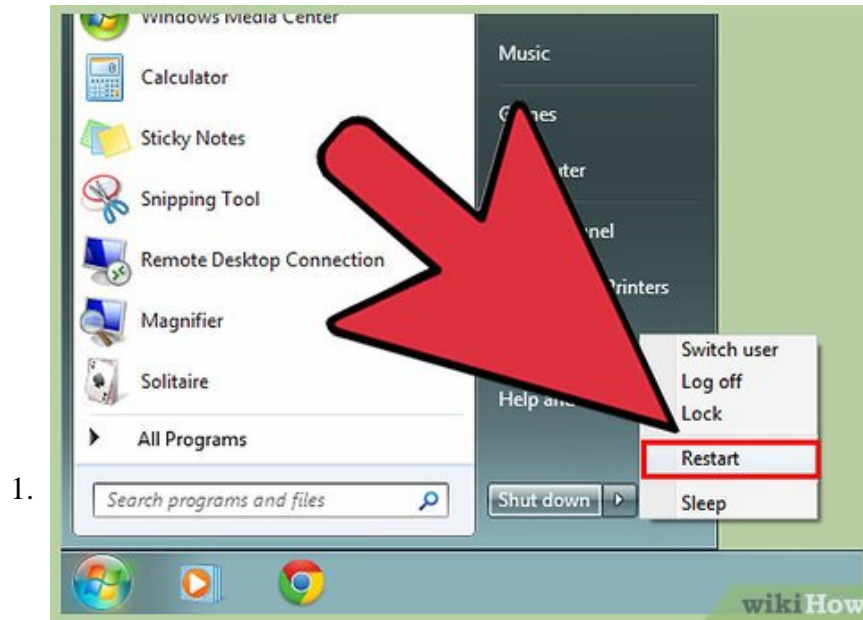
4. Close the Command Prompt windows.



Copy all files from the Windows 7/Vista DVD to the formatted USB stick. The safest and the fastest way would be to use the Windows Explorer. Open the disk, select everything, and drag it into your flash drive. This could take a few minutes to copy.

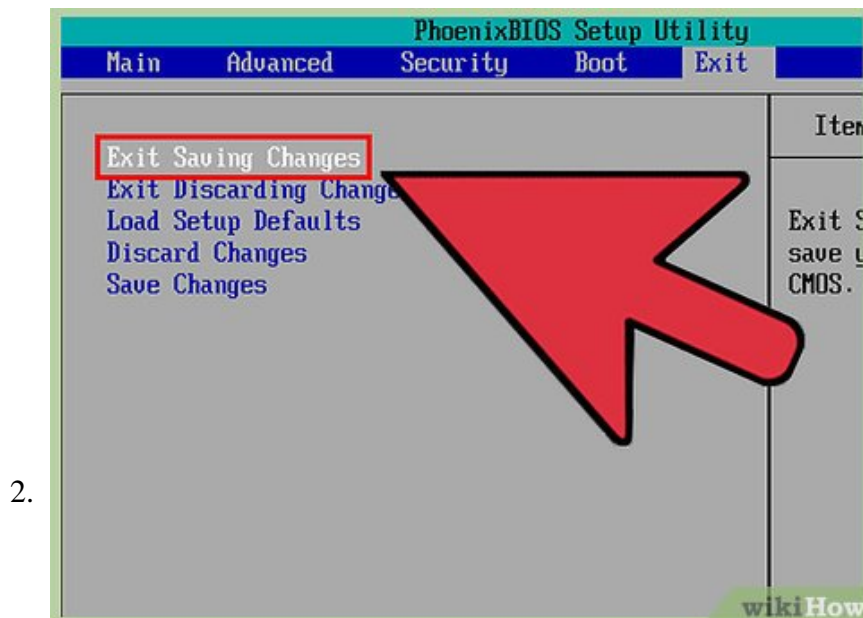
Part 4 of 4:

Preparing to Install



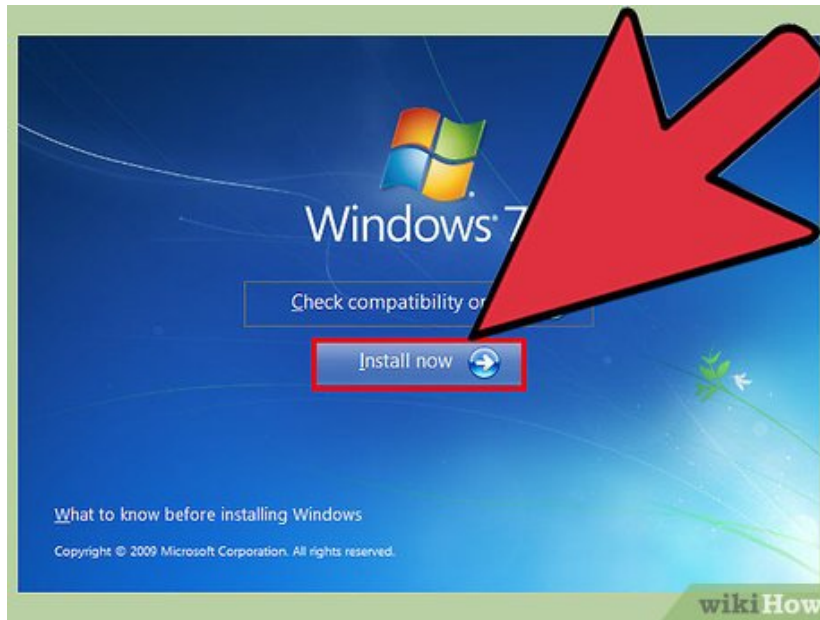
Change the boot order. To boot from the USB drive, you will have to set the BIOS to boot from USB first instead of the hard drive. To open the BIOS, reset your computer and hit the displayed key to enter Setup. The key varies by manufacturer, but is usually F2, F10, F12, or Del.

1. Open the Boot menu in your BIOS. Change the 1st Boot Device to your USB drive. Be sure that it is inserted, or you may not be given an option to choose it. Depending on your manufacturer, it may say Removable Device or list your flash drive's model.



Save changes and reboot. If you set the boot order correctly, your Windows 7 or Vista installation will load after the manufacturer's logo disappears.

3.



Install Windows. The installation process will load and the Windows setup will begin. Check out our guide on installing Windows 7 for an in-depth walkthrough.

You finished reading the article "**How to Create a Bootable Windows 7 or Vista USB Drive**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.