

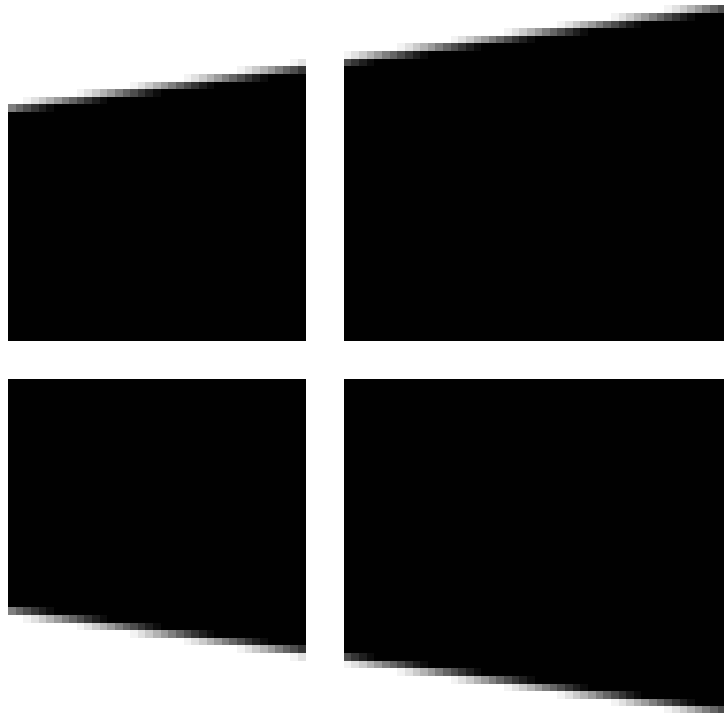
How to Format a Dell Computer

This wikiHow teaches you how to erase and reinstall Windows on a Dell computer's hard drive. If you just want to erase everything on the hard drive to clean-install Windows or remove a virus, you can use the Windows 10 'Reset' option;...

Method 1 of 3:

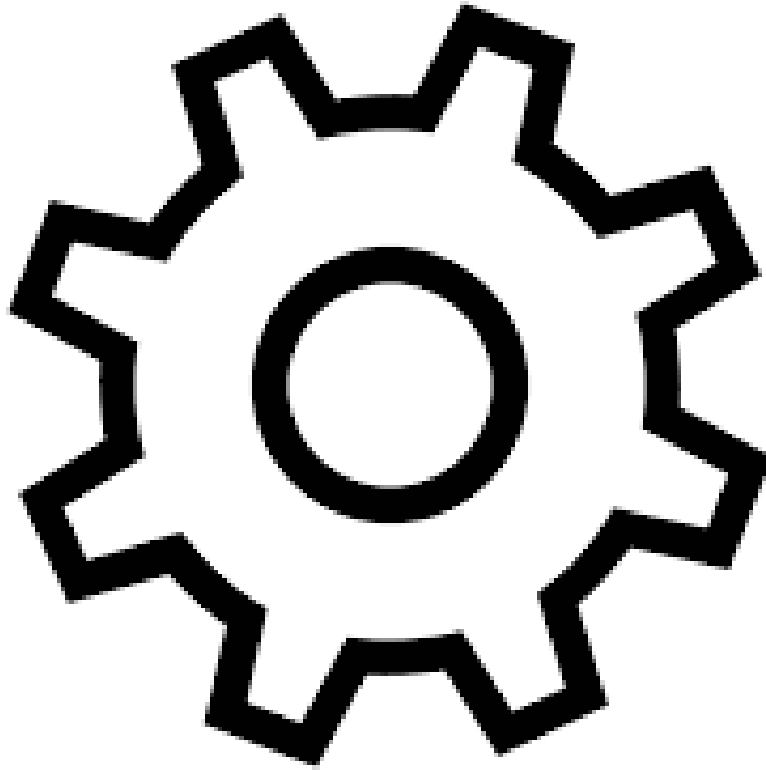
Using Windows Reset

1. Open Start

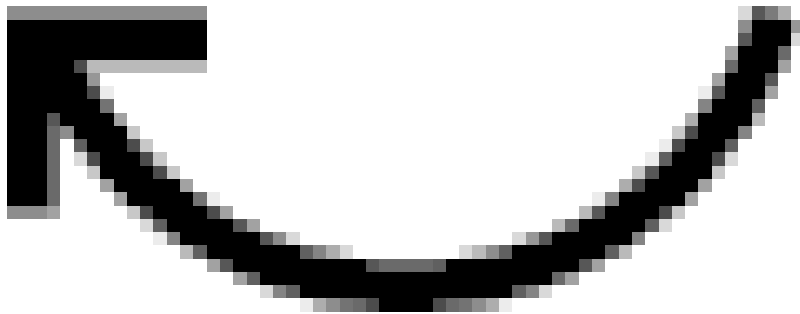
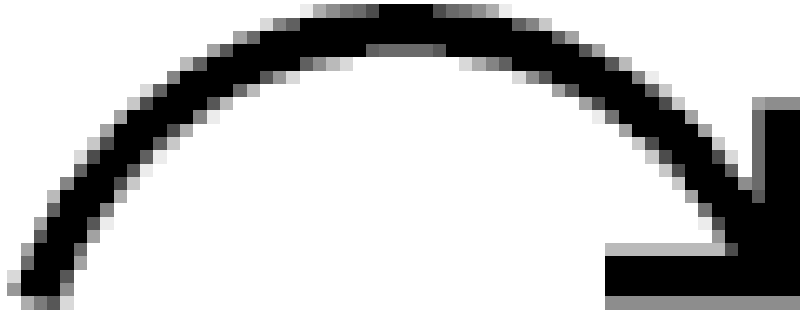


. Click the Windows logo in the bottom-left corner of the screen. The Start menu will open.

2. Open Settings



- . Click the gear-shaped icon in the lower-left side of the Start window.
3. **Click**



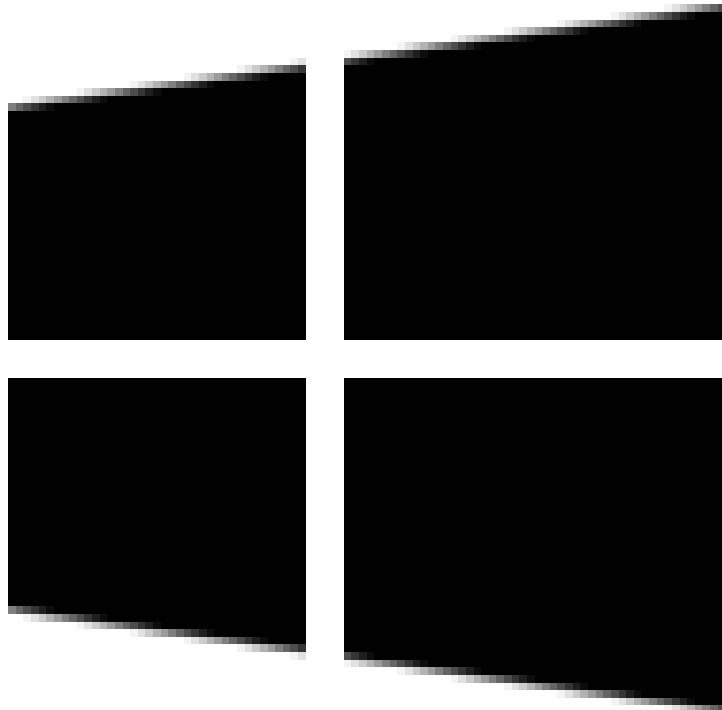
Update & Security. You'll see this icon near the bottom of the Settings window.

4. Click the **Recovery** tab. It's on the left side of the window.
5. Click **Get started**. This is below the "Reset this PC" heading at the top of the page.
6. Click **Remove everything** when prompted. It's at the top of the pop-up window.
7. Click **Remove files and clean the drive**. This option deletes everything from your hard drive and then reinstalls Windows for you.
 1. You may see a warning about not being able to roll back to a previous version of Windows here. If so, click **Next** before continuing.
8. Click **Reset** when prompted. Your computer will begin resetting itself.
9. Click **Continue** when prompted. Once your computer finishes resetting, you'll see this at the top of the page. Clicking it will take you to the setup page.
10. **Follow the on-screen prompts.** You'll select a language, connect to a Wi-Fi network, and perform other setup tasks to complete the Windows 10 reinstallation.

Method 2 of 3:

Using the Dell Computer Repair Drive

1. **Restart your computer.** Click **Start**



, click **Power**



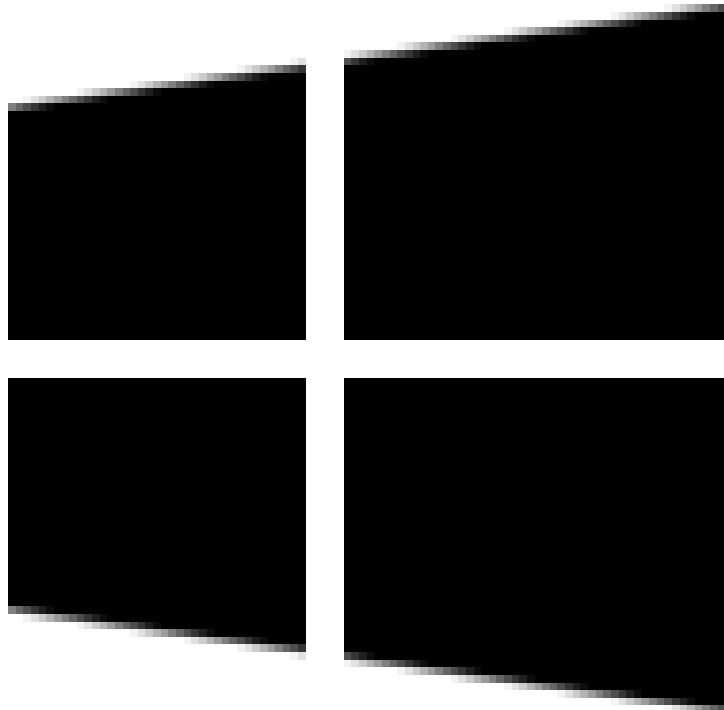
, and click **Restart** in the pop-up menu.

2. **Open the "Advanced Boot Options" menu.** As soon as you see the Dell logo appear, begin repeatedly tapping the **F8** key. If you time this correctly, you should see the Advanced Boot Options screen appear.^[1]
 1. If you see the Windows logo appear before you press the **F8** key, you'll have to restart the computer and try again.
3. **Select and press **? Enter**.** Use your computer's **?** arrow key to select this option.
4. **Select a language.** Click the "Language" drop-down box, click the language that you want to use, and then click **Next**.^[2]
5. **Log into your account.** Select your account, then enter your password. Your account must have administrator privileges for you to continue.
6. **Click when prompted.** This will open the Factory Image Restore window.
7. **Click .** It's in the bottom-right corner of the window.
8. **Confirm your decision to format the computer.** Check the "Yes, reformat hard drive and restore system software to factory condition" box if it isn't already checked.
9. **Click .** It's in the bottom-right corner of the window. Doing so will prompt your Dell's hard drive to begin erasing and reformatting.
 1. This process can take several hours, so just make sure that your Dell is plugged into an electrical outlet.
10. **Click when prompted.** Doing so will restart your computer. Your Dell should now be back to its original, clean settings.

Method 3 of 3:

Using a Windows Installation Disc

1. **Make sure that you have a Windows installation disc.** With a few tweaks to your computer's settings, you can prompt your computer to boot from the CD rather than from the main hard drive, allowing you to erase the hard drive and then reformat it.
 1. If you don't have a Windows installation disc, you can make one by downloading the Windows 10 installation tool ISO from the Windows 10 installation page and then burning the ISO onto a DVD.
2. **Insert your Windows disc into the computer.** Place the disc logo side-up in the DVD tray, then close the tray.
3. **Restart your computer.** Click **Start**



, click **Power**



- , and click **Restart** in the pop-up menu.
4. **Wait for the "Press any key to boot from disc" prompt to appear.** On most Dell computers, inserting a Windows installation disc will prompt the computer to select the disc as the boot option.
 1. If your computer completely restarts without this prompt appearing, you'll need to change your BIOS boot order.
 5. **Press any key on your keyboard.** Doing so will start the disc booting sequence.
 6. **Select a language.** Click the "Language" drop-down box, click the language that you want to use, and click **Next** in the bottom-right corner of the window.
 7. **Accept the terms of use.** Check the "I accept the license terms" box, then click **Next**.
 8. **Click** . It's in the middle of the window. This will prompt a list of your computer's connected hard drives to appear.
 9. **Select your Dell's hard drive.** Click the hard drive with (C:) on it to select it.
 1. If you don't see a (C:) option, look for a drive with the largest amount of space on it.
 10. **Click** . It should be near the bottom of the page. Doing so will erase your hard drive and reformat it according to Windows defaults.
 1. You may be prompted to select a file system. If so, select **NTFS** and click **OK**.
 2. The reformatting process can take several hours, so just make sure that your computer is plugged into a power source.
 11. **Click or when prompted.** Doing so completes the formatting process.
 12. **Follow the on-screen instructions.** There should be a "Reinstall Windows" option here; clicking it will begin the Windows reinstallation process, at which point you can follow the on-screen prompts to finish reinstalling Windows.

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