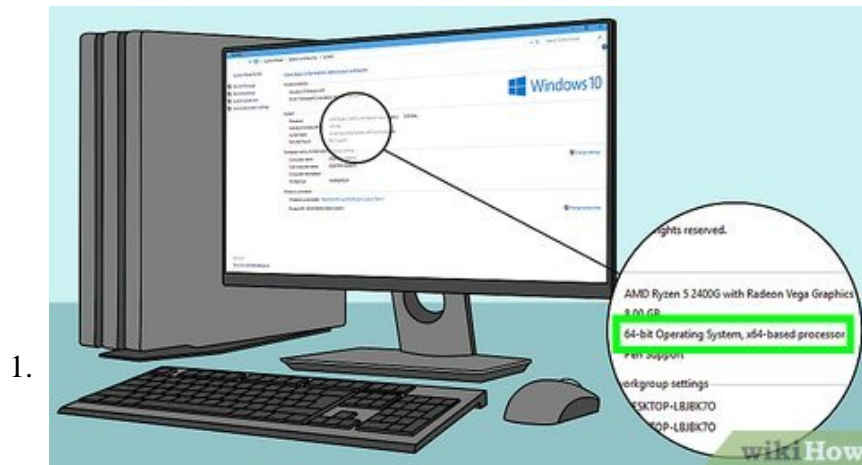


How to Install Windows from a USB Flash Drive

This wikiHow teaches you how to use a USB flash drive to install a version of the Windows operating system onto a Windows computer. Using a USB flash drive is useful when your computer doesn't have a CD drive or when you don't have an...

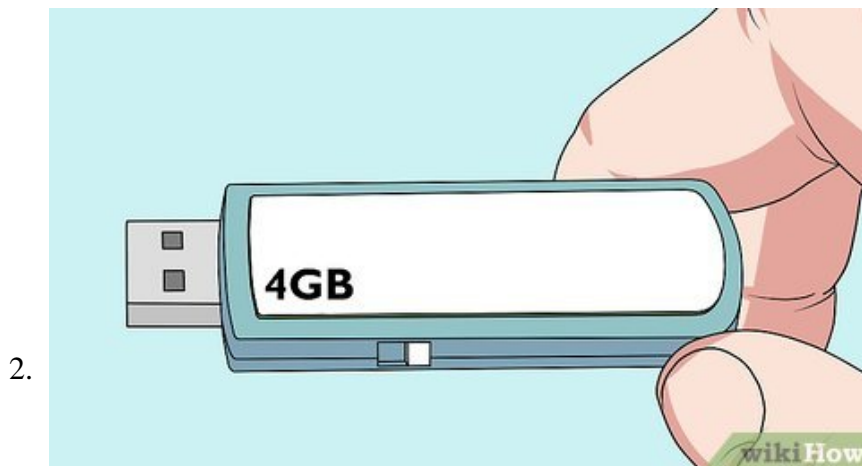
Part 1 of 5:

Creating the Installation Flash Drive for Windows 10



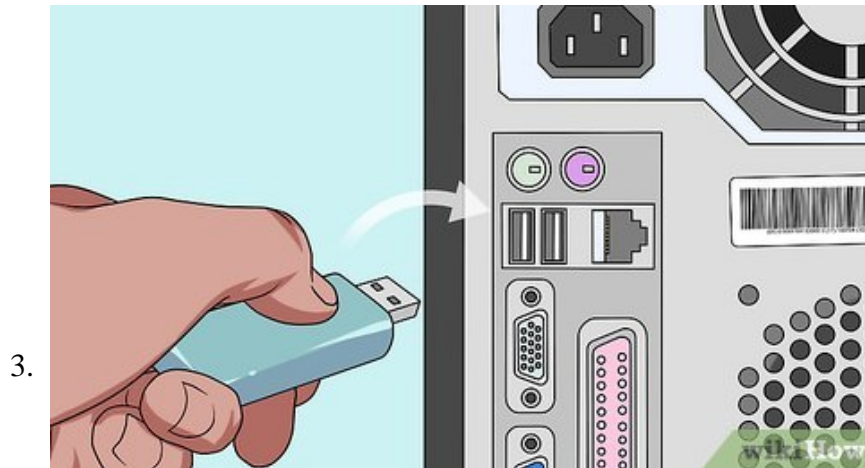
Check the computer's architecture number. Before you download an installation tool for your preferred operating system, you'll need to know whether the computer on which you want to install Windows runs a 32-bit system or a 64-bit system.

1. Make sure that you do this on the computer on which you're going to install Windows.

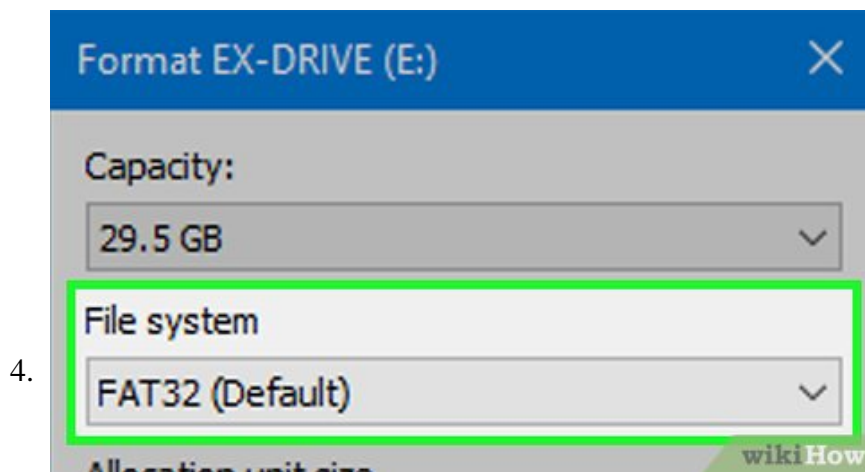


Make sure that you have at least a 4-gigabyte flash drive. Windows needs at least four gigabytes of space for its installation file.

1. Flash drives are fairly cheap; you can get a 16-gigabyte flash drive—four times the space you need—for less than \$10.



Plug the flash drive into your computer. The flash drive should fit into one of your computer's rectangular USB ports.

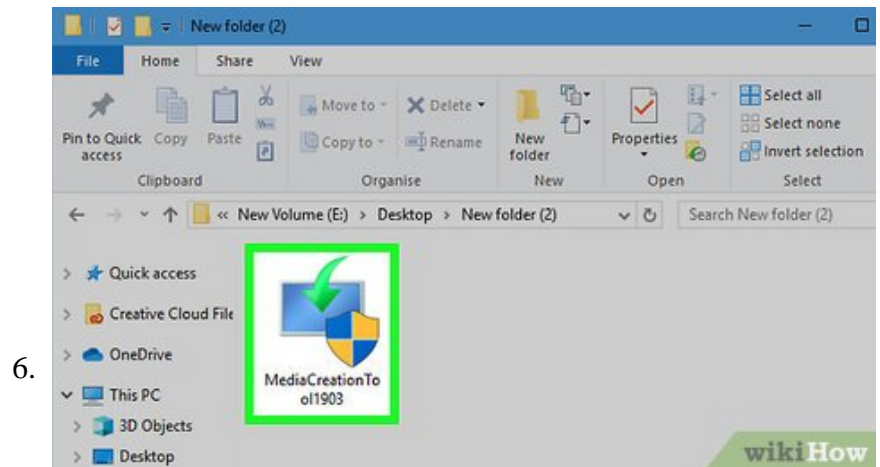


Format the flash drive for FAT32 or exFAT. When formatting your flash drive, click the **File system** drop-down box, then click **FAT32** or **exFAT** in the drop-down menu.

1. Formatting your flash drive will erase everything on it.

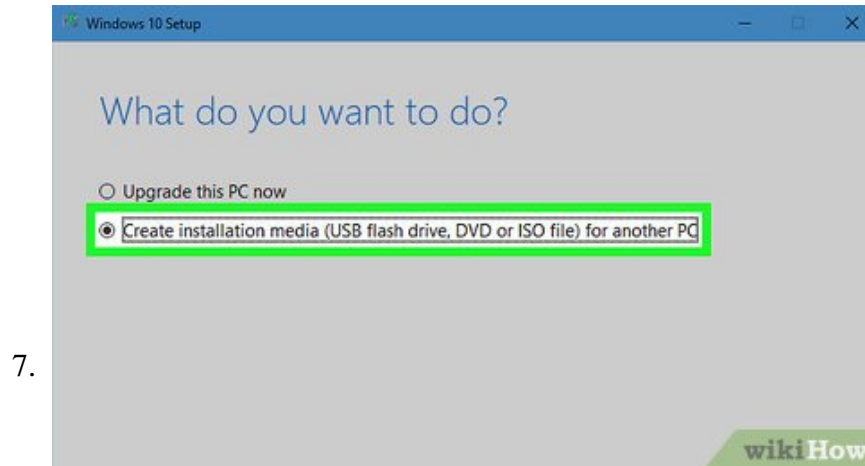


Download the Windows installation tool. Open the Windows 10 download page, then click **Download tool now** at the bottom of the page.

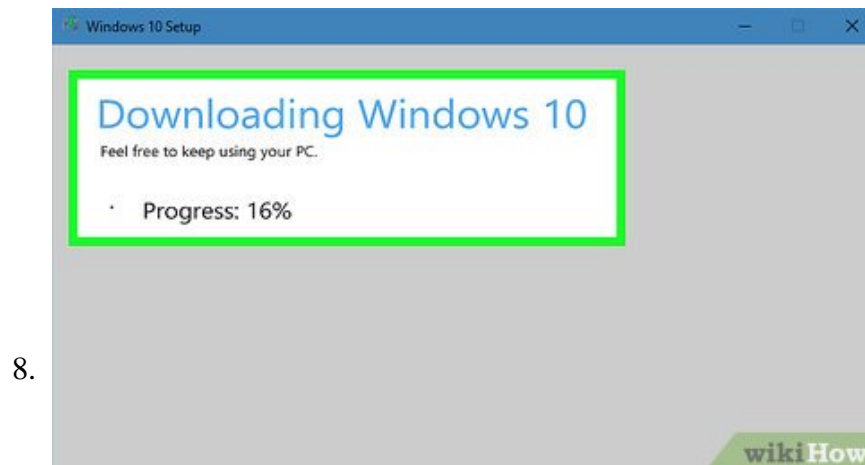


Run the installation tool. Double-click the "MediaCreationTool" EXE file, click **Yes** when prompted, accept any terms, and fill out any on-screen sections until you get to the installation section.

1. As part of the installation tool, you'll be prompted to select a language, an edition of Windows, and an architecture for the setup process. Make sure to use the same architecture here as you found in step two of this part.



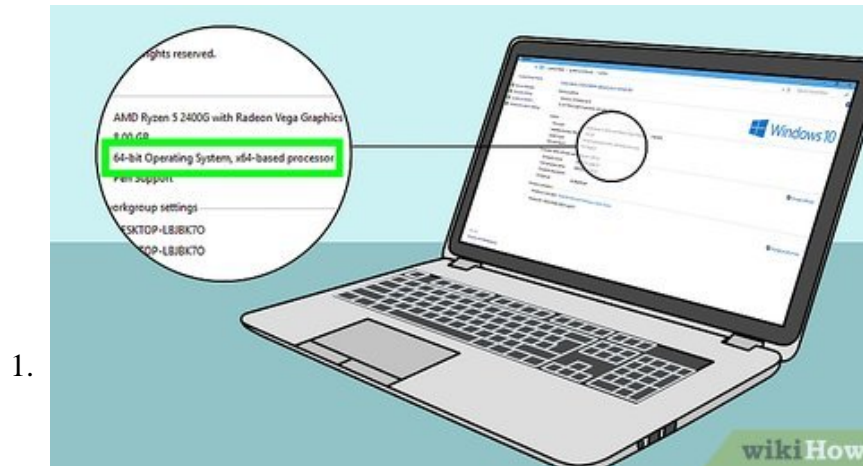
Create your bootable flash drive. Once the installation section of the Media Creation Tool window opens, click the "Create installation media" checkbox, click **Next**, select your computer's language, edition, and architecture, click **Next**, click the flash drive's name, and click **Next**.



Wait for the flash drive setup to complete. This may take several minutes. Once all of the setup files have downloaded (or pasted) into the flash drive, you can proceed with changing your computer's boot order.

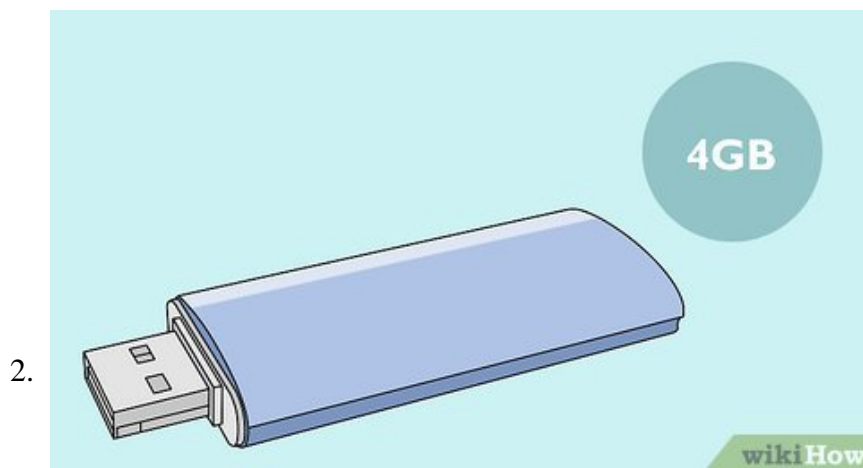
Part 2 of 5:

Creating the Installation Flash Drive for Windows 8.1



Check the computer's architecture number. Before you download an installation tool for your preferred operating system, you'll need to know whether the computer on which you want to install Windows runs a 32-bit system or a 64-bit system.

1. Make sure that you do this on the computer on which you're going to install Windows.

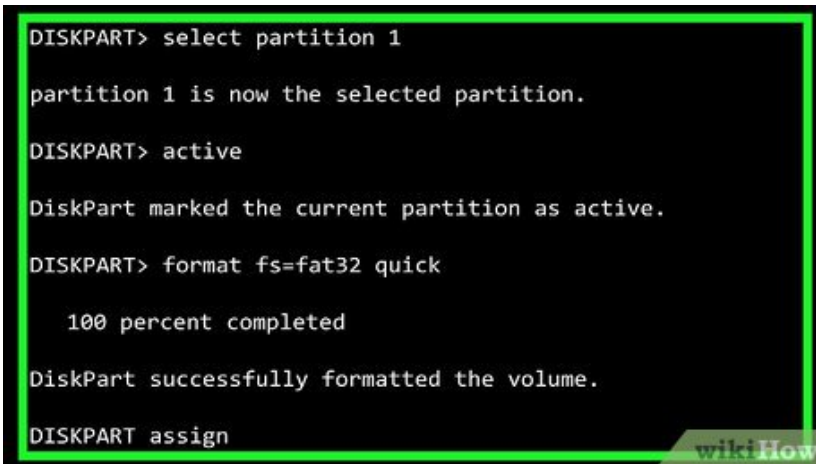


Make sure that you have at least a 4-gigabyte flash drive. Windows needs at least four gigabytes of space for its installation file.

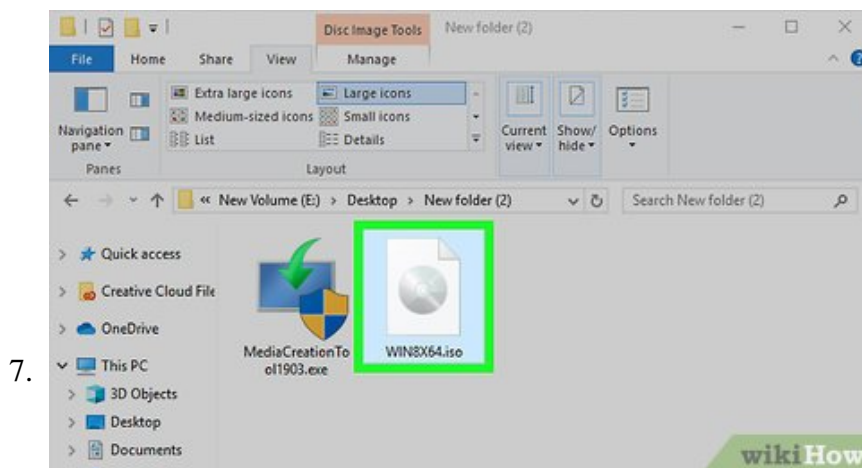
1. Flash drives are fairly cheap; you can get a 16-gigabyte flash drive—four times the space you need—for less than \$10.

Download the Windows disk image. Open the Windows 8.1 download page, scroll down and select a version of Windows 8.1, click **Confirm**, select a language and click **Confirm**, and click either **32-Bit Download** or **64-Bit Download** in the middle of the page. This will prompt the disk image (ISO) file to download.

```
DISKPART> select partition 1
partition 1 is now the selected partition.
DISKPART> active
DiskPart marked the current partition as active.
DISKPART> format fs=fat32 quick
100 percent completed
6. DiskPart successfully formatted the volume.
DISKPART assign
```



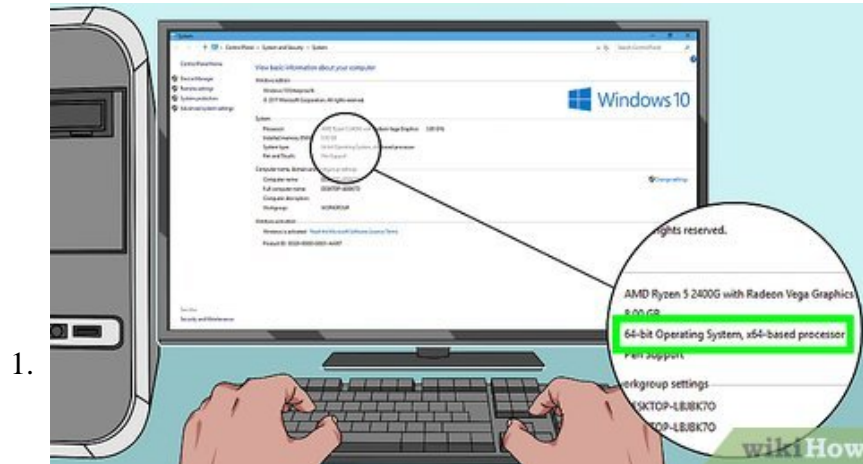
Make the flash drive bootable. If you're installing Windows 8.1, you'll need to use Command Prompt or another bootable USB method to ensure that your computer will recognize your USB flash drive as a software installation location.



Add the ISO to the flash drive. Copy the downloaded ISO file by selecting it and pressing **Ctrl + C**, then open your formatted, bootable flash drive and press **Ctrl + V**. The ISO file will appear on the flash drive after a few minutes, after which point you can proceed with changing your computer's boot order.

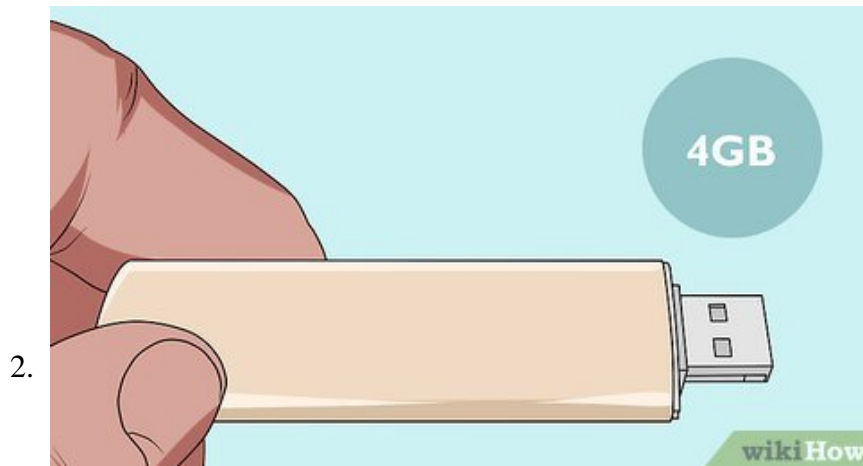
Part 3 of 5:

Creating the Installation Flash Drive for Windows 7



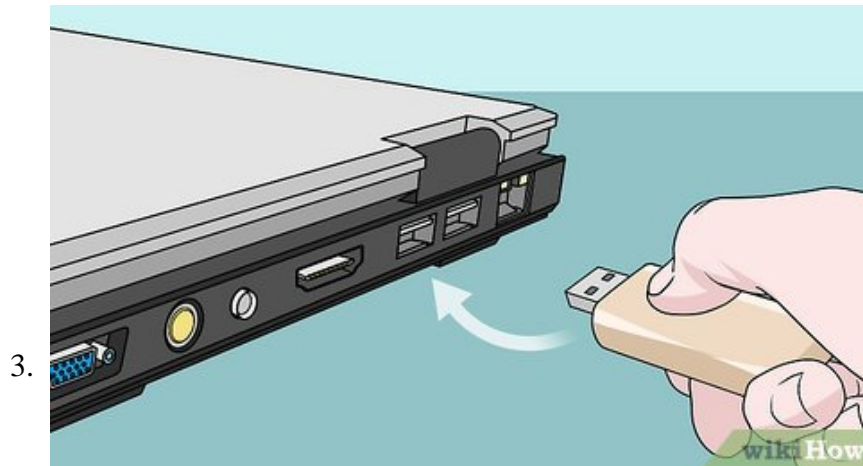
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1. Make sure that you do this on the computer on which you're going to install Windows.

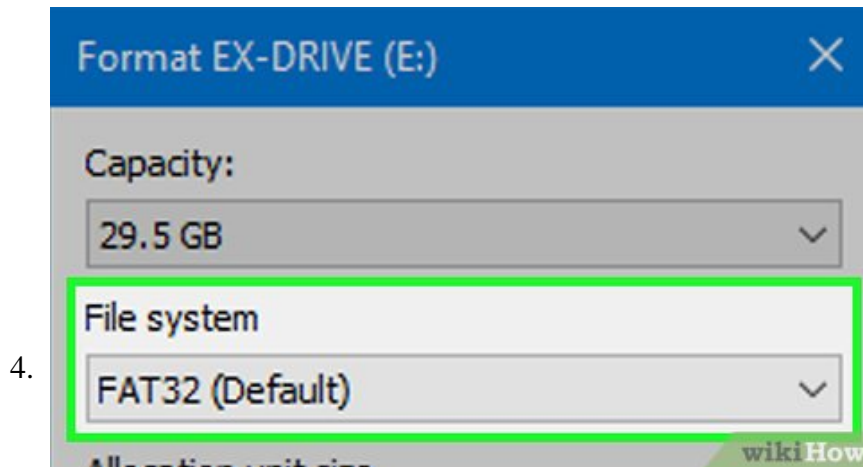


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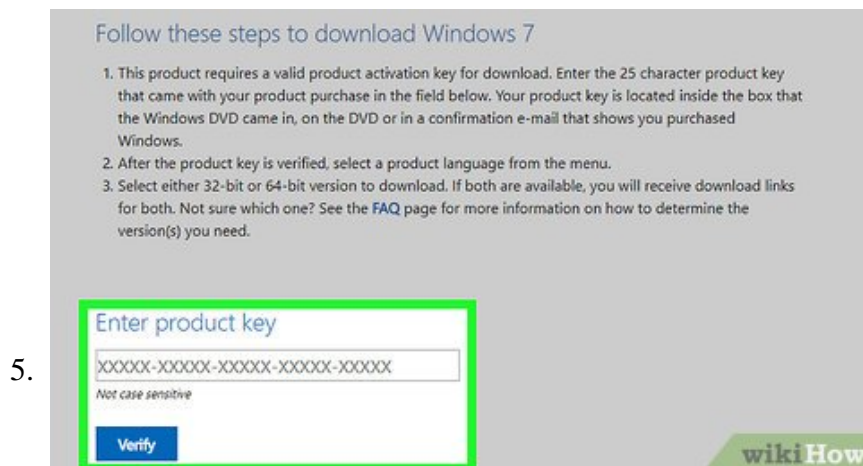


Plug the flash drive into your computer. The flash drive should fit into one of your computer's rectangular USB ports.



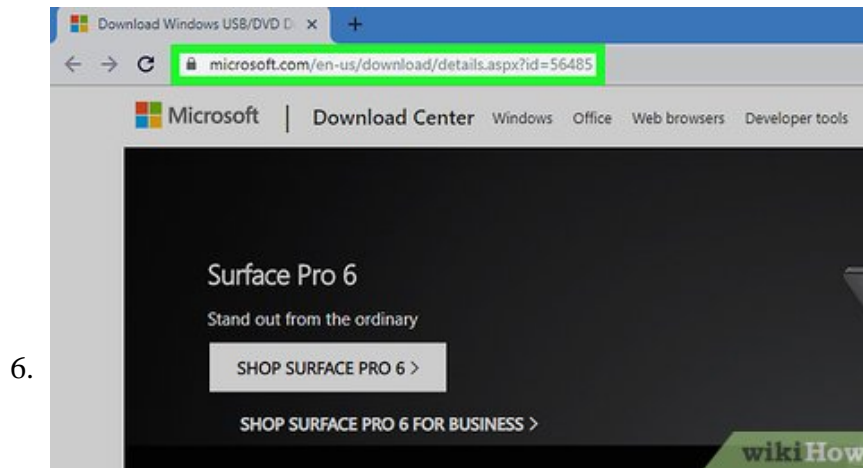
Format the flash drive for FAT32 or exFAT. When formatting your flash drive, click the **File system** drop-down box, then click **FAT32** or **exFAT** in the drop-down menu.

1. Formatting your flash drive will erase everything on it.

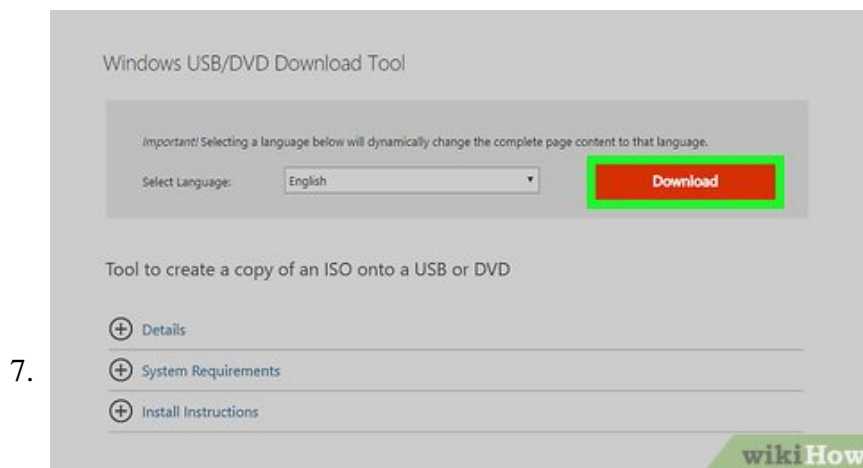


Download the Windows 7 disk image. Open the Windows 7 download page, scroll down, enter your Windows 7 product key and click **Verify**, select a language and click **Confirm**, and click either **32-Bit Download** or **64-Bit Download** in the middle of the page.

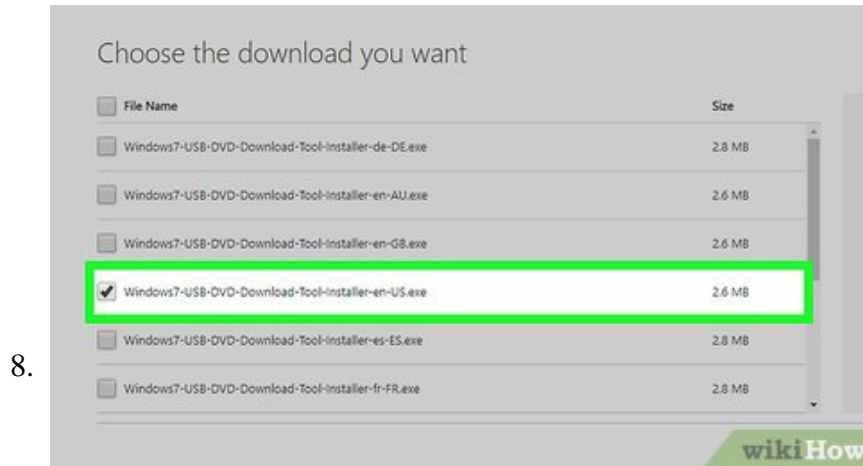
1. If you don't have your Windows 7 product key, you'll need to purchase one before you can download Windows 7.



Open the Windows Download Tool page. This tool allows you to install an ISO file, such as your Windows 7 or 8.1 file, onto a USB flash drive and make the flash drive recognizable to your computer as a software location.

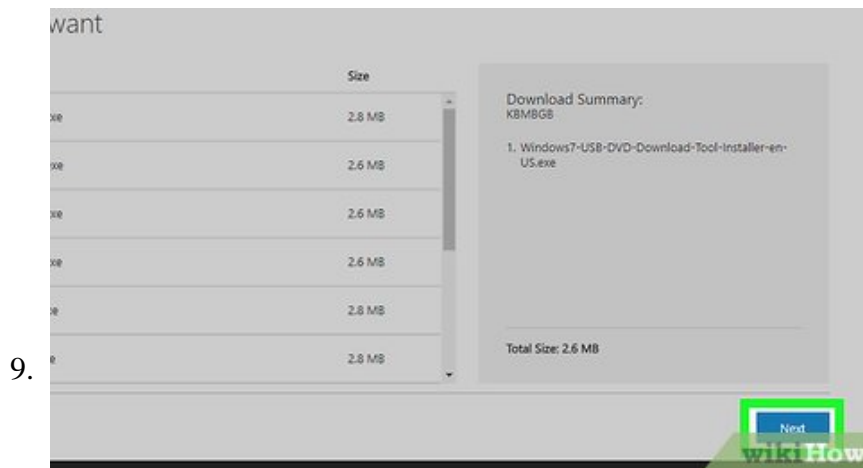


Scroll down and click Download. It's an orange button near the bottom of the page.

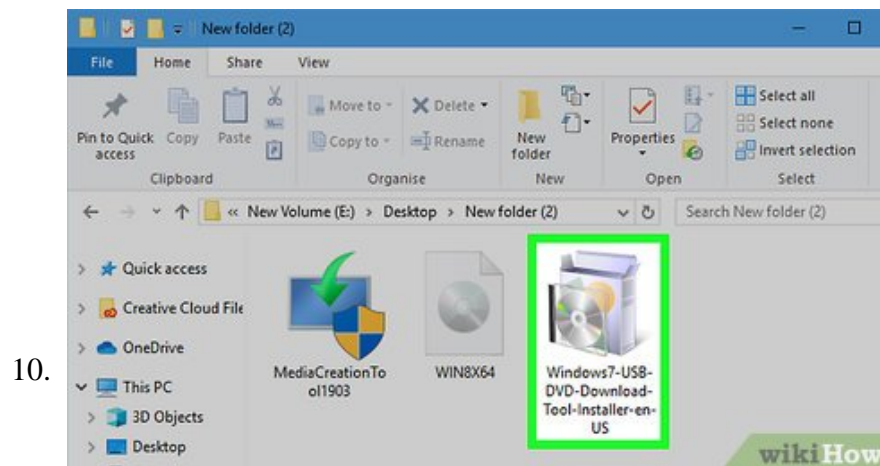


Select your preferred language for the download tool. Check the box next to the version of the download tool you want to use.

1. For example, you would select the tool with a name ending in "EN" for an English version of the tool.

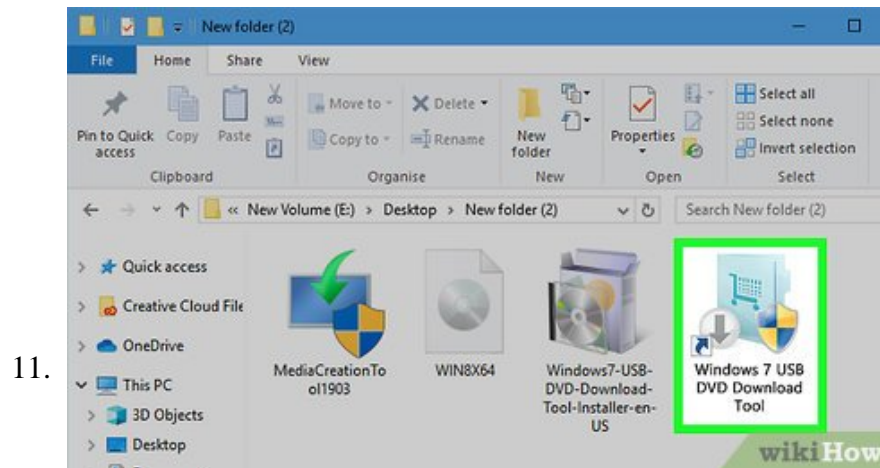


Click **Next**. It's at the bottom of the page.

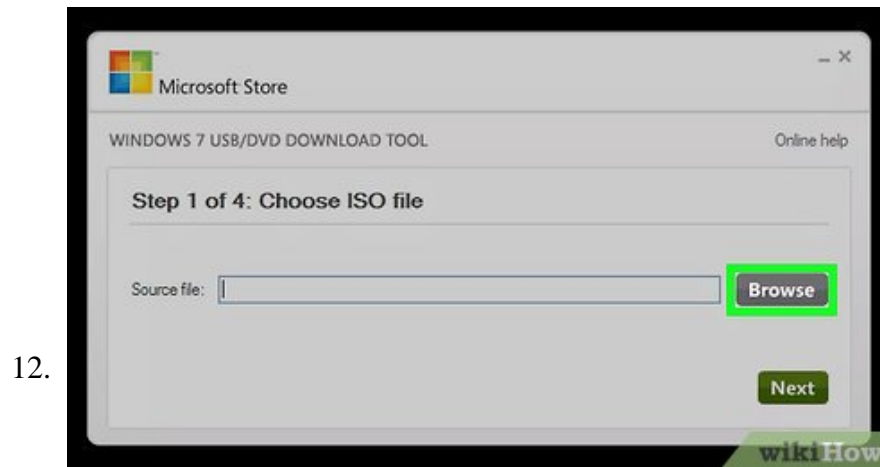


Install the tool. Double-click the setup file you just downloaded, then do the following to complete the installation:

1. Click **Next**
2. Click **Install**
3. Click **Finish** when prompted.

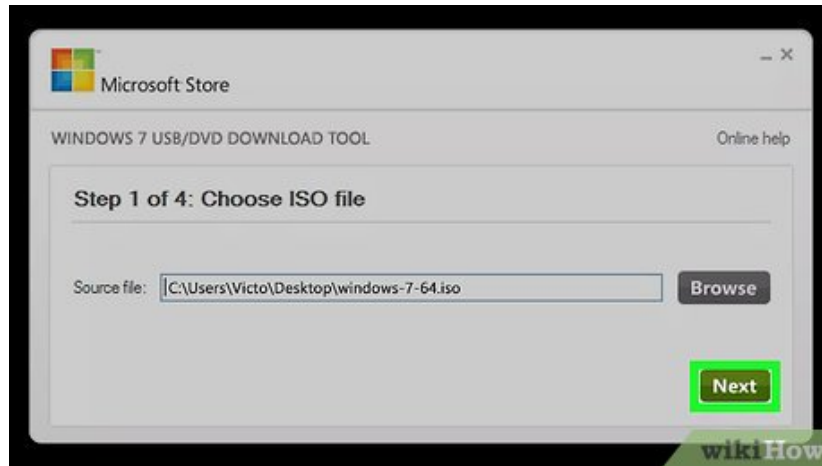


Run the tool. Double-click the Windows 7 Download Tool app icon on your desktop, then click **Yes** when prompted.



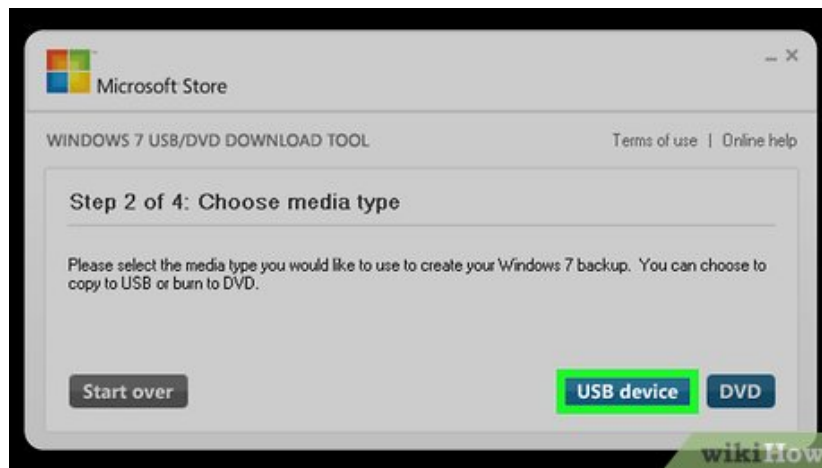
Select your downloaded ISO file. In the window that opens, click **Browse**, then click your Windows 7 ISO file and click **Open**.

13.



Click **Next**. It's in the bottom-right corner of the window.

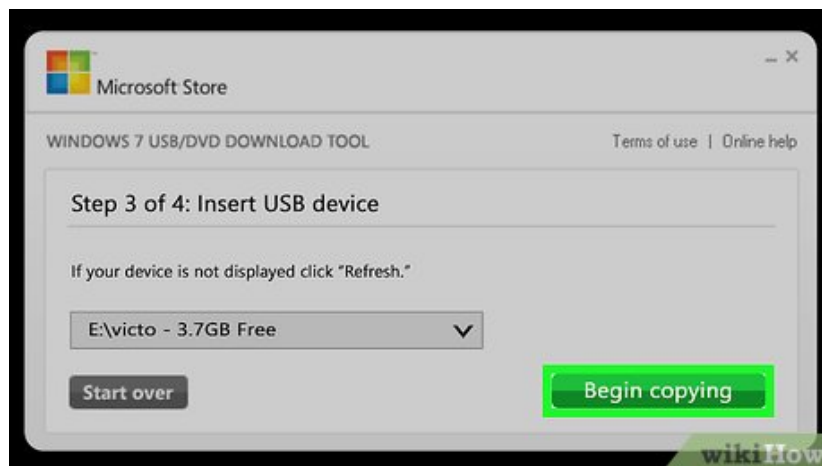
14.



Select your flash drive. Click **USB device**, then select your flash drive in the drop-down box in the middle of the window if you don't see it listed.

1. If you don't see your flash drive appear in the drop-down menu, make sure it's plugged into your computer and then click the **Refresh** button to the right of the drop-down box.

15.



Click **Begin copying**. It's in the bottom-right corner of the window. Doing so will prompt your Windows 7 ISO file to begin installing onto the flash drive.

16.



Allow the tool to run. Once the progress bar in the middle of the window reaches 100 percent, your USB flash drive has successfully been formatted as a Windows 7 installation drive, and you're free to proceed with changing your computer's boot order.

Part 4 of 5:

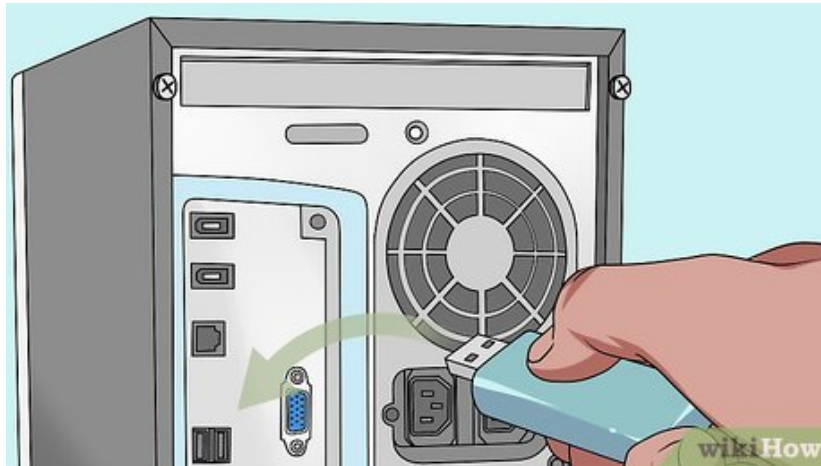
Changing Your Computer's Boot Order

1.



Go to the computer on which you want to install Windows. If you're merely trying to install a new version of Windows on your existing computer, skip this step.

2.

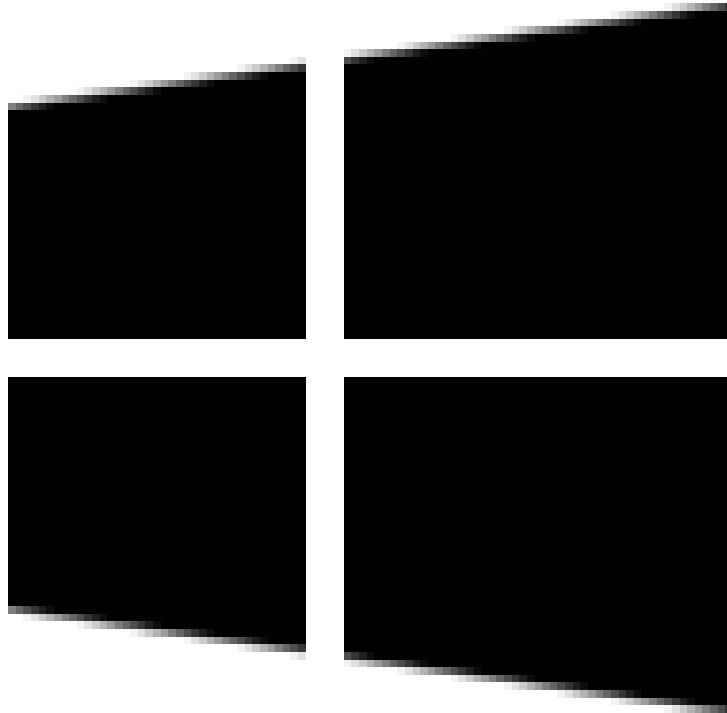


Plug in your USB flash drive. Insert the USB flash drive into a USB port on the computer.

3.



Prompt the computer to restart. Click **Start**



, click **Power**



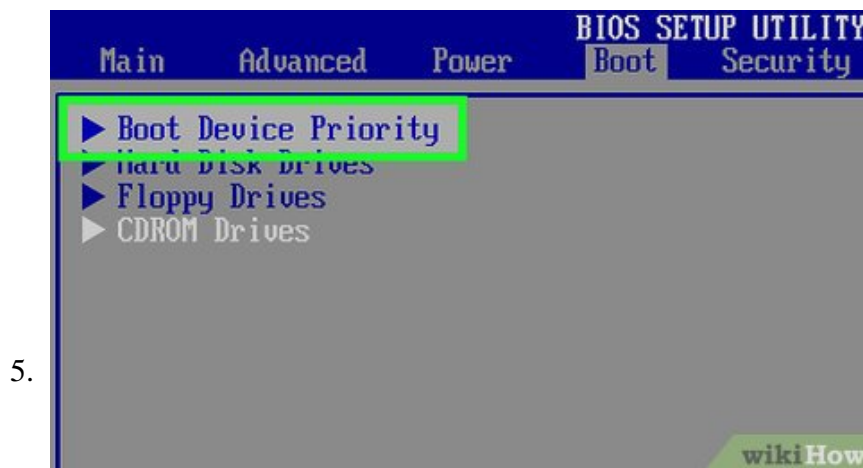
, and click **Restart**. Your computer will begin to restart.

1. If the computer is off, press its power button to turn it on, then move to the next step. If the computer turns on when you open its lid or move the mouse, you'll still need to restart it before proceeding.



Rapidly press the computer's BIOS key. As soon as the computer's startup screen appears (the screen right after the computer shuts down and is beginning to restart), begin pressing the BIOS key. Your computer's BIOS key will vary depending on the manufacturer, but it will usually be one of the function keys (e.g., F2), Esc, or Del.

1. You can check your computer's BIOS key online or in the manual that came with your computer.
2. Many computers will flash a "Press [key] to enter setup" (or similar) message at the bottom of the screen as your computer is starting up. This is the key that you should press.
3. If you miss your opportunity and the computer finishes the restart cycle, you'll need to restart it and try again.

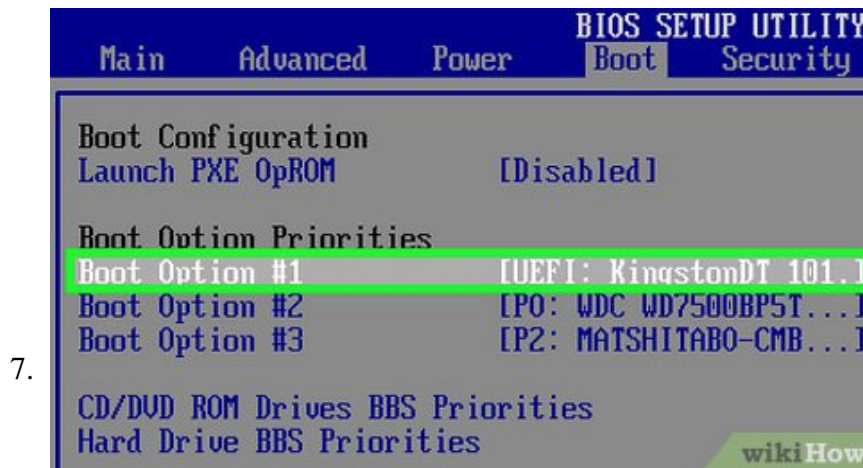


Find the "Boot Order" section. This section is usually in the **Advanced** or **Advanced Options** tab, but each BIOS menu is different. The "Boot Order" section will have a list of different startup locations, including your hard drive's name and your CD drive.

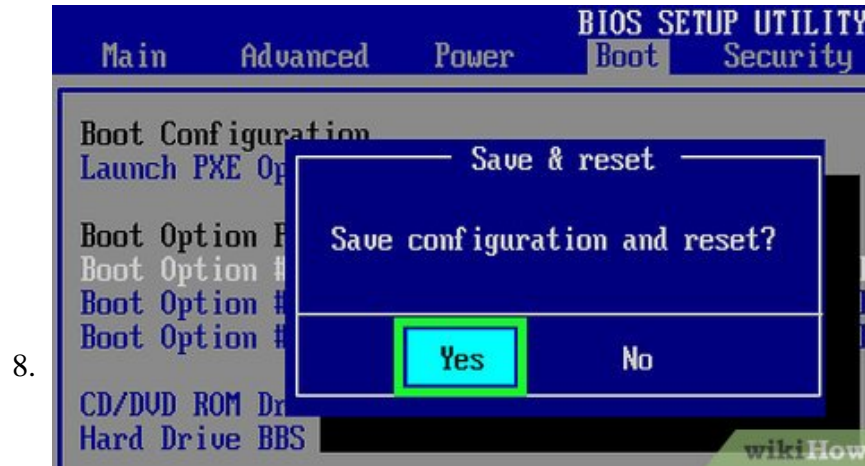


Select your flash drive's name. Using the arrow keys, move the highlight bar down until it's covering the flash drive's name.

1. On some computers, you'll instead select **Removable Storage** or **Removable Drives** (or something similarly titled).

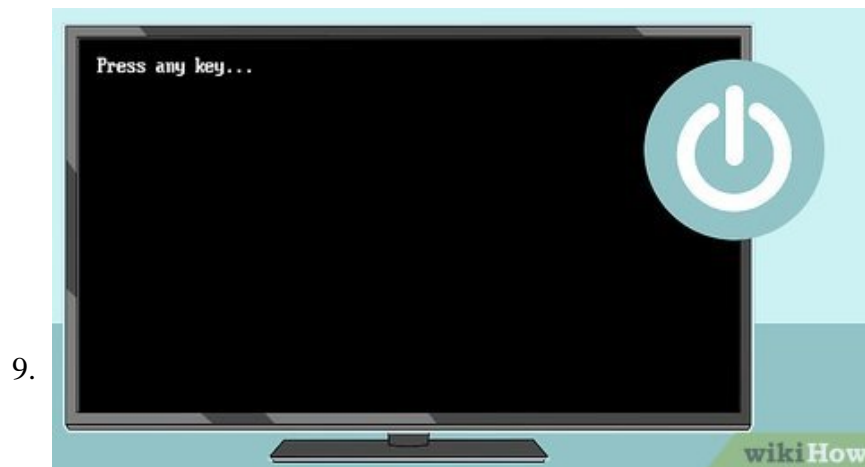


Move the flash drive to the top of the list. You'll usually do this by pressing the **+** key until the flash drive is at the top, but check the legend at the bottom or on the side of the BIOS screen to see if your controls are different.



Save your changes and exit the BIOS. There's usually a key that you can press to do this, so check the legend to see what it is and then press it.

1. You may have to press another key to confirm this decision.



Restart your computer again if necessary. If your computer doesn't greet you with a "Press any key" screen and instead finishes the restart cycle, restart it again to boot from the flash drive. This will launch the Windows setup process.

Part 5 of 5:

Installing Windows



Press any key when prompted. When you see the "Press any key" line of text, press any key on your computer's keyboard to proceed with the Windows installation.



Select a language and region. When the Windows installation window pops up, select a language, region, and any other preferences listed there.

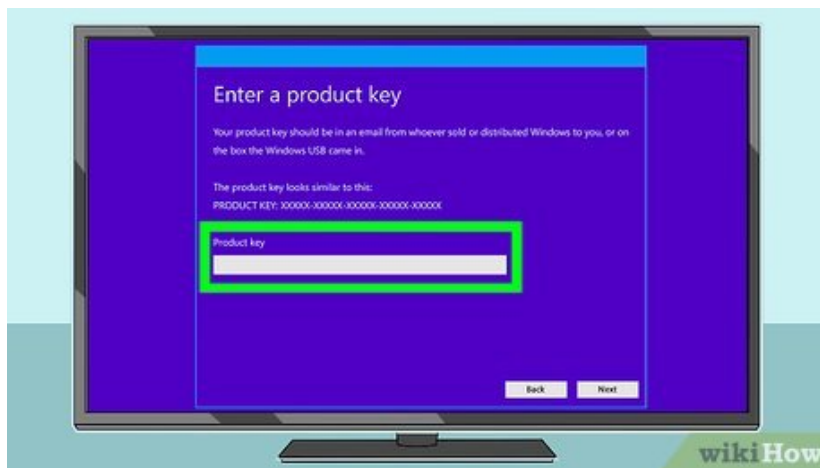
1. You may also be prompted to select keyboard settings here.
2. On Windows 7, you'll check the "I agree" box here instead, then skip ahead to the "Select a partition" step.

3.



Click **Next**. It's in the lower-right corner of the page.

4.



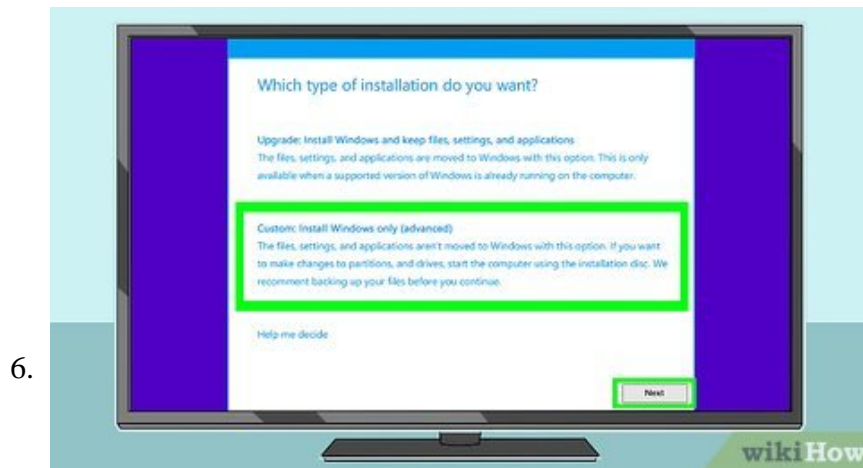
Enter your product key. When prompted, type in the product key that came with your computer or installation disc, then click **Next**.

1. On Windows 10, you must first click **Install now**. You can also skip the product key entry for now by clicking the **Skip** option.
2. On Windows 7, you won't be asked for your product key until after the installation is complete.

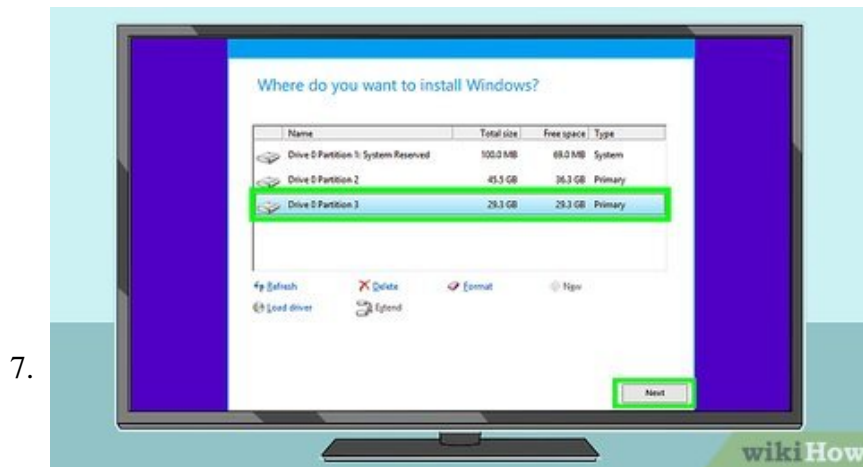
5.



Agree to the terms of use. Check the "I agree" box, then click **Next**.



Select a custom installation. Check the "Custom" box, then click **Next**



Select an installation partition. Double-click the partition on which you want to install Windows, then confirm your choice when prompted. You may also need to select the empty partition and click **Next** to prompt the installation process to begin.

1. On Windows 7, you'll select the partition that you want to use, click **Delete**, confirm the decision when prompted, click the empty hard drive, and click **Next** to begin the installation process.

8.



Wait for Windows to finish installing. Your computer may restart several times during this process, and the installation may take several minutes to over an hour depending on your computer's speed.

9.



Follow any on-screen instructions. After Windows is installed on the computer, you'll be asked to set up a few more preferences (e.g., your language, account name, email address, etc.) before you can begin using Windows.

1. On Windows 7, you'll be asked to enter your product key here.

You finished reading the article "**How to Install Windows from a USB Flash 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.