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Thread: [How to safely reformat & bad reasons to reformat](#)

bulby13 - December 5, 2013, 6:01 pm

Hello,

I see that some people don't reformat securely and reformat for frivolous reasons. In this thread, I will not only teach you bad reasons for reformatting, but how to securely reformat.

I strongly advise backups before performing any of the steps below

NOTE: Please don't complain if you "know all this already". It's for newbies, not professionals.

Firstly: these are the bad reasons.

Bad

- Malware removal (unless if it's malware like Salty/CryptoLocker, even then, think before reformatting).

- To get a boost by reinstalling Windows:

Windows wear&tear can be easily repaired by running tools such as:

TFC (Temp File Cleaner)

AdwCleaner and JRT (Junkware Removal Tool)

CCleaner (by Piriform)

- Paranoia

- For fun / to impress your friends about your skills (Just joking!)

- To restore system files without first running sfc /scannow

- Some more reasons

If you have a valid reason, you have to know that when data is deleted, it is only marked as free and any programs wishing to use that space overwrites it.

Vsauce explains this:

[Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5s4-Kak49o>]

For clarification:

For example: let's say that there is a sector. When you delete a sector, it's putting the data for sale and any data that wants to reside in it can.

Based on that, anyone with right tools can read free space and recover data that was deleted. But, if it was overwritten, the overwritten data is recovered, which will be useless.

Of course, destroying your HDD is the best way, but not everyone wants to shell out \$100 on a new Hard Drive. So, you will need to overwrite "free data".

Before, backup ALL your data, or at least backup:

Photos

Crypto-currency wallets

Personal Info

Passwords

Other stuff.

Then, "Delete" than overwrite.

Here are some tools with overwrite:

CCleaner (Tools -> Drive Wiper)

Eraser (<http://eraser.heidi.ie/download.php>)

1 pass is usually enough, but 3 for security, and 7 for "just in case". 35 is really unneeded.

Now, you can safely reformat and reinstall the OS or sell your computer

Why is this important:

Spoiler ([Click to View](#))

Criminals buy computers to steal personal data and they also go to computer dumps to steal personal data.

Thanks for reading!