

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Simple method to bypass MacOS admin password](#)

Bastille - October 12, 2026, 1:23 pm

Resetting a Forgotten macOS Password Using Terminal

A quick guide covering older Intel Macs, modern macOS versions, FileVault and Apple Silicon.

I recently bought a few second-hand iMacs, and out of curiosity, I wanted to see if I could bypass the login passwords on the ones that hadn't been factory reset.

Did you know that macOS has a built-in password reset utility that can be launched directly from Terminal, without booting into your regular user account ? It's called `resetpassword`, and it's been available since OS X Lion (10.7). It's a useful feature for recovering access to your own Mac or helping someone who has forgotten their local account password. The operation is even easier than resetting admin password on Windows with the `cmd.exe` / `utilman.exe` tools ([YouTube link about this procedure](#))

However, the process has changed quite a bit over the years, especially with FileVault, Apple's T2 security chip and Apple Silicon.

1. Which macOS versions support it?

Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard and earlier: Password recovery generally relied on installation media or other legacy recovery procedures.

OS X 10.7 Lion to OS X 10.11 El Capitan: The `resetpassword` utility is available through Recovery Mode. On an accessible, unencrypted volume, resetting a local password was generally straightforward.

macOS 10.12 Sierra to 10.15 Catalina: The utility remains available, but FileVault and account recovery settings can affect the procedure.

macOS 11 Big Sur and later: The utility still exists, but modern security mechanisms may require additional authentication or recovery steps.

Apple Silicon Macs: Password recovery remains possible through Apple's recovery environment, but it does not bypass FileVault or Activation Lock.

2. Boot into macOS Recovery

On Intel Macs:

Spoiler ([Click to View](#))

Shut down the Mac.

Turn it on and immediately hold Command (?) + R.

Release the keys when the Apple logo or recovery screen appears.

Wait for macOS Recovery to load.

On Apple Silicon Macs (M1, M2, M3, M4, etc.):

Spoiler [\(Click to View\)](#)

Shut down the Mac.

Press and hold the power button.

Keep holding until Loading startup options appears.

Select Options, then Continue.

Depending on the Mac's configuration, Recovery may ask you to select an administrator account or provide authentication.

3. Open Terminal

Once you're in macOS Recovery:

Open the Utilities menu.

Select Terminal.

Enter the following command:

Code resetpasswordThen press enter

This launches Apple's graphical password reset assistant.

4. Reset the account password

If the startup volume is accessible and the recovery requirements are satisfied, the utility will guide you through the available options.

Depending on the macOS version, you may be able to:
Select the affected user account.

Set a new local account password.

Use your Apple Account for recovery.

Provide a FileVault recovery key.

On some older Intel Macs without FileVault, selecting the user and setting a new password may be sufficient.

On newer systems, additional verification may be required.

Follow the instructions displayed by the recovery assistant, then restart the Mac.

5. What about FileVault?

FileVault encrypts the Mac's startup volume.

If FileVault is enabled, resetting the account password does not automatically give you access to encrypted data.

Depending on the system, you may need an authorized recovery method, such as a FileVault recovery key or Apple Account recovery.

Without the required recovery credentials, the encrypted data may remain inaccessible.

6. What about the Apple T2 chip and Apple Silicon?

Modern Macs use hardware-backed security mechanisms that significantly change the recovery process.

Intel Macs without T2:

Older systems with FileVault disabled generally offer the simplest password recovery process.

Intel Macs with T2:

Hardware-backed storage encryption and startup security protections introduce additional restrictions.

Apple Silicon Macs:

The recovery process is integrated with Apple's modern security architecture.

The resetpassword utility may still be available, but it cannot simply bypass all authentication or encryption protections.

7. Does this bypass Activation Lock?

No.

This is probably the most important distinction.

A local macOS account password and Apple's Activation Lock are completely different things.
Local account password: Controls access to a macOS user session.

FileVault: Protects the contents of the startup volume through encryption.

Activation Lock: Links supported Mac hardware to an Apple Account through Find My.

Even if you successfully reset a local password, Activation Lock can still prevent the Mac from being activated or reused.

The legitimate removal methods involve the associated Apple Account, the previous owner removing the device from Find My, or Apple's ownership verification process.

8. What happens to the login keychain?

One important detail that's often overlooked:

Resetting a macOS account password does not necessarily reset the password protecting the existing login keychain.

As a result, macOS may ask for the old password to unlock saved credentials.

If the original password is unavailable, you may need to create a new login keychain.

This can mean losing access to previously stored passwords and secrets.

9. Official documentation

Apple provides official instructions for recovering forgotten login passwords:

[Apple Support – If you forgot your Mac login password](#)

Sum-up

The resetpassword utility is a useful recovery feature, especially when dealing with older Macs.

However, the ability to reset a password depends on more than the operating system version.

FileVault, the Mac's hardware generation, account configuration and available recovery credentials all matter.

On older Intel Macs without FileVault, password recovery could be remarkably straightforward.

On modern Macs, Apple's security architecture makes the process more restrictive.

And remember: resetpassword is not an Activation Lock bypass.

Have you ever used this method to recover access to an older Mac? Did it work without requiring

the original password?

Wake - October 12, 2026, 2:22 pm

Been looking into bypasses and getting round Windows passes recently nice to see some for Mac, I daily drive a MacBook and never knew this feature was available, my next step was looking into some Mac bypasses so this is 100% being bookmarked I will be doing a deep dive and more research on this when I have time. Thanks for the quality upload!

Bastille - October 12, 2026, 2:32 pm

(Oct 12, 2026 02:22 PM)Wake Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Been looking into bypasses and getting round Windows passes recently nice to see some for Mac, I daily drive a MacBook and never knew this feature was available, my next step was looking into some Mac bypasses so this is 100% being bookmarked I will be doing a deep dive and more research on this when I have time. Thanks for the quality upload! Thanks ! I'll do my best to produce HQ/relevant threads during the event, I'm not fond of LQ posting.

This "flaw" is crazy, but there are now other mechanisms you can't easily bypass (such as Activation Lock)