

# Computer Solutions

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## Reformatting a hard disk drive

Reformatting a hard disk should be considered an action of last resort if, for instance, virus and spyware threats have caused irreparable damage.

Before reformatting a hard disk, sit back have a cup of tea and consider your options and remember that EVERYTHING WILL BE LOST!

If either you do not have a complete back-up of the whole of the hard disk or are not 100% sure you may recover ALL your files the best option is to install the Windows operating system and your software onto another hard disk drive. In this way, for the cost of the hard disk drive, all your files will be safe.

If getting another hard disk drive is not an option, before reformatting make sure you have copied every file you may want onto, say, CD. This includes not only the obvious My documents (or wherever you keep your personal files) but also emails, faxes, the Windows Address Book and any other file you think you may require. Often things that are used everyday are taken for granted and forgotten about - until they're lost for good.

You will need to make sure that you have all hardware drivers etc. (e.g. motherboard, monitor, printer, scanner) and all your software CDs. You will also need a product key for certain software. Make a list (running order) of all the things you need to do (this will ensure that the process is well thought out before starting and avoids the "if only I'd thought of that" moments.

You will need to set aside several hours to do the job. Only when everything is in place should you start the reformat and software re-build (and hope that it'll be all OK)

It is highly recommended that Windows, anti-spyware, anti-virus and anti-intrusion software is updated immediately after being installed and before installing any other software. Installing and updating Windows, antispyware, antivirus anti intrusion software and other software may take several hours end to end but needs sporadic attention. Please be aware that you are vulnerable until updating is completed.

You will now have to remember how all the software was configured and it may be several weeks before everything is working really smoothly again.

It should be only at this point that your original hard disk drive should be re-connected and scanned for spyware and viruses before transferring any files across to you new hard disk drive.

Good luck!

**If you have any further queries on this subject please contact me.**

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