

Windows 8 Reinstall

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1 Overview

User has a windows 8 computer. It needs a reinstall.

2 WorkLog

2.1 Traps and Things to Beware

First thing was to obtain the key from Windows 8. Control panel - system shows the last 5 digits of the key but nothing else (fuck these guys). A post on wikihow said you could get it from the registry but it wasn't there. Magical Jelly Bean keyfinder was able to read the Windows 8 key. Now I have the key, just need installation media.

Right before starting, I was aware of installing Windows 10, and how you must flash to USB using a special tool (the iso). I looked for the Windows 8 ISO but found only 8.1. Someone mentioned that you can not use the 8 key in an 8.1 install, so right away I was looking only for 8 (which is essentially unfindable). Later on I learnt that you can use any key for 8.1, and then use the official key for 8. Quite amusing that 8.1 even exists. It should be SP1 not 8.1. Why don't keys for 8 work for 8.1? Anti-consumer behavior at its finest.

So I obtained the official 8.1 ISO and installed it to flash using the Windows 7 USB/DVD creator. It is named Win7 but works for 8 (fuck these guys). I tried to run it from a live Win8 session but it failed.

Instead, I ended up booting this toshiba laptop and going to the BIOS (not calling it UEFI, not a chance). This was another obstacle. In Win 8, you must hold down shift when powering down, or go somewhere in the control panel to set it to advanced boot mode or something. All bullshit. Anyways, after you figure that out, if you haven't blown away the recovery partition on the HDD you should be able to use the Toshiba recovery tools, or if not, you can use the USB flash drive. ¹ After the trouble of setting up the USB flash drive, I ended up finding that the Toshiba recovery tools were still there, so I opted for that.

¹I should mention here, that one other thing I tried was the built in Toshiba Recovery Media Creator. This was told to me to be in the search menu (ctrl - c for charms menu, then search, then toshiba recovery) but it was not. Instead I found it in program files. I tried running it, and it failed to format with some cryptic error. This may have just been because this particular windows installation was corrupted somehow, but another thing that failed... Why does anyone use this OS I don't understand.