

(re) Formatting Win 98 / ME Hard Drives

NB – these notes are provided for your guidance only. QD Design accept no responsibility for any loss of data or damage to your hardware whilst using these instructions. If you don't feel you have a suitable skills level to attempt this, then please do not try.

You will need:

- Windows CD (98 or ME)
- Product code key
- Startup floppy disk (though if you are doing a full install rather than an upgrade you can boot directly from the CD – so long as your PC supports this). You can make a startup disk by going to Settings > Control Panel > Add / Remove programs > Startup Disk.

This step through assumes that drive C will be the sole hard drive and that it will be formatted without any logical dos partitions.

A. 'F Disk' the existing disk

1. Insert the startup floppy into the computer and the Windows CD into the relevant drive.
2. Check function of boot disk. Boot to a DOS (A:\>) prompt and type in DIR X: (where X is the CD drive letter). If it reads to CD then go ahead if not, then retry creating the startup disk.
3. Turn off PC and restart with the startup disk in the floppy drive. When asked select "Start computer WITHOUT CD ROM support", press enter.
4. At the command prompt type in '*fdisk*' and press enter.
5. When asked "do you wish to enable large disk support?" – YES and press enter.
6. Select FAT32 if this comes up as an option.
7. From the next menu select....."Delete partition or logical dos drive", press enter.
8. If you have a logical dos drive (D:) from the next menu select....."Delete Logical DOS Drive(s) in the extended dos partition" and press enter.
9. Next remove the "Extended DOS Partition".
10. If you do not have a logical dos drive select"Delete primary DOS Partition" press enter.
11. If the partition has a Volume Label, enter it when asked, if not, leave blank and press enter to continue. Confirm that you want to proceed and press enter.

B. Create partitions on hard drive

This assumes that only a primary dos partition is to be created.

1. Reopen FDISK by performing steps 3 - 5 above if you are not already in it.
2. Select "Create DOS partition or Logical DOS drive" and press enter.
3. Select "Create Primary DOS Partition" and press enter.
4. Say YES when asked "Do you wish to use the maximum available size for Primary DOS Partition".
5. Press ESC to exit FDISK and go back to the command prompt.

C. Format the Hard Disk

1. Restart the PC with the startup disk and again choose to "Start computer without CD Rom support".
2. At the command prompt type in format c: /s and press enter (this transfers the system files to your designated drive).
Note Win ME users cannot use the /s command and should use format c: and then use the sys.com command to transfer system files.
3. You will be warned that *all data will be lost*. Press Y and then enter to format the C: drive.
4. After formatting has completed you will be asked for the volume label – this is optional – leave blank if there isn't one.

D. Reinstall Operating System

Your hard drive should now be formatted and partitioned.

1. Reboot again with the startup disk and this time select "Start up with CD Rom support"
2. Insert the Win 98CD ROM into the drive.
3. At the command prompt, type X: where X is the drive letter for the CD drive.
4. Setup performs a routine check of the system and once completed follow the various stages to install the operating system. You will need the product key code during this phase.

E. Software updates and Drivers

1. Windows will now be as it was the day the CD left the factory (i.e. full of bugs, security flaws and Y2K glitches). Go to www.microsoft.com and select WindowsUpdate.
2. Let the system scan the machine and then sit back for a good few hours of downloads and updates.
3. Do likewise for any applications and hardware drivers that may need updating.