

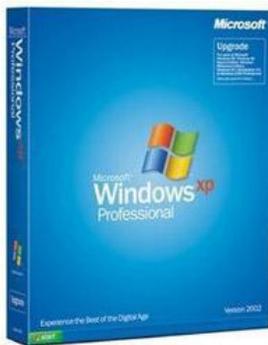
## [How to have a smooth Windows XP re-installation](#)

February 25th, 2009, 9:55 am · [1 Comment](#) · posted by [Tamara Chuang, a.k.a. The Gadgetress](#)



*Stump the PC Club is a free tech-advice column written by members of the **North Orange County Computer Club**, which has been in existence since 1976. Visit the club's site at [noccc.org](http://noccc.org). And don't forget to stop by the Gadgetress' home for the PC Club, at [ocregister.com/link/pcclub](http://ocregister.com/link/pcclub), to find out how to ask a question and read past answers.*

**QUESTION:** I have had windows XP pro running for three years and the computer is sluggish so I decided to start fresh again. I have moved everything I want to save to a portable drive and put in the original disk, but it said the operating system I was running was newer than the one on the original disc I loaded. The message said to do a restart with the CD-ROM in if I wanted to reload the operating system. I did that and at boot up it rebooted from the hard drive. I would like to delete all the old stuff on the HD and apparently windows XP has an option that will allow me to do that. If you could help me with the process, I would appreciate it. ~ George



**PC Club:** George, it's difficult to tell if the original disk that you're referring to is a Windows XP CD or a manufacturer-supplied restore CD. PC companies have not supplied Windows XP CDs for some time but it's possible that this is the situation in your case, based on the message you received. If so, it sounds like you tried to reinstall Windows by inserting the CD while running Windows.

Here's the reason you received the message: Since it is very likely that you have the Microsoft Windows Update enabled, the Operating System on your PC has become more current than the original CD. To see which version of Windows that you have on your system, right-click "My Computer," (usually located on your desktop), select "Properties" and on the "General" tab you will see the version listed such as Service Pack 1, 2 or 3. In that same window, you can select the "Automatic Updates" tab to review your update settings.

The way to avoid this message is to reinstall Windows by booting from the CD. When you insert the CD when running Windows, one of the menu items is "Learn more about the setup process." If you select that option, a window will open that contains tips on a number of subjects including "Configure a computer to boot from CD." This will give you some tips on how to boot from your CD. Also, you may want to call the manufacturer of your PC and ask them how to boot from a CD.

Another method for reinstalling Windows is to use the restore media CD that may have been included with your PC. Using this CD puts your PC in the exact state that it was in when you bought it. This eliminates the need to reinstall drivers. Again, I'd call the manufacturer and ask if this media is available. This media can be available on a CD or DVD.

Reinstalling Windows is not trivial since you usually have to install all of the drivers that support your hardware. These drivers may be available from the manufacturer's Web site. You can also use a driver backup utility such as [Driver Magician](http://www.drivermagician.com), available at [www.drivermagician.com](http://www.drivermagician.com). This will extract and save all of your existing drivers to a location of your choice. The program has a free trial period which will enable you to backup your drivers to an external drive. You must have these drivers available on an external drive prior to reinstalling Windows.

Here are the minimum steps you have to take in addition to reinstalling Windows:

1. Install all drivers
2. Update Windows using the Microsoft Update service. You can also download or order a CD with Service Pack 3.
3. Install an Antivirus program
4. Set up your email accounts
5. Reinstall all of you applications
6. Configure all of you Windows settings

This is a daunting task but it can be done with a little patience and a lot of planning. - *Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his blog at [edwardns.blogspot.com](http://edwardns.blogspot.com).*