

Windows Survival Guide

Introduction

This guide provides instructions on how to survive most PC disasters. None of these lists are exhaustive but provide enough information to resolve most issues.

1. Steps to take to help prevent malware and other attacks.
2. What tools you need in case you need to recover from a non-working or compromised PC.
3. What steps to take to recover a non-working PC.

First – what steps to take to help prevent attacks

- Don't click on any links in an email message unless you specifically requested them
- Keep your anti-virus up to date
- Keep Windows up to date
- Avoid file sharing sites
- Be careful what sites you visit to download software
- This is sort of an advanced tip. Create a second user with limited rights on your PC and use this account for normal activity. If you are interested, read the info [here](#).
- Purchase CryptoPrevent for \$15 and install it to prevent Crypto Attacks. The license is good for a lifetime and can be installed on multiple PCs. I've been using it for several years.

Second - tools you should have before trouble strikes

Instruction for creating these tools are included below.

1. A Windows Recovery Drive – see instructions below
2. A Password Reset disk if you use a Local Account see how [here](#). If you use a Microsoft Account, you should know how to reset your password if the need arises. Click [here](#) for the link.
3. An external hard drive
4. A method of backing up your data
5. Recovery Media if you elect to use Macrium Reflect for creating backup images
6. A backup image stored on an external hard drive
7. It's a good idea to have a portable browser on a flash drive in case your PC's browser gets corrupted. Firefox Portable is available [here](#).
8. Learn how to boot your PC from a flash drive. Read more [here](#) to learn what key to press during the boot process to boot from a USB drive. Scroll down to find your brand. If you can't find the info there you should search Google. For example, the info on my Surface Pro 4 is [here](#).

Third – recovering from a non-working PC

Let's assume that one of the following happens:

- Your PC will not boot
- Your PC gets infected with Malware or a Virus
- Your PC boots but your screen locks up or your Start button no longer works
- Some other nasty problem that interferes with your PC's normal operation

What are your options?

Method	Notes
1. Try the Windows 10 System Restore	This assumes that you have it enabled. Only resolves a few problems. You can read more here .
2. Attempt to repair it yourself	This assumes that you have the knowledge and tools. Could take a few hours if PC is seriously infected or if Windows has become corrupted.
3. Call a computer technician	This could cost \$100 to \$200 but is frequently worth it.
4. Take your PC to the Microsoft store or BestBuy	This could cost \$100 to \$200 and you will be without a PC for up to a few weeks. You may lose some data unless you backed it up previously.
5. Use the Windows 10 Reset Feature	This will restore Windows 10 to a clean, working state but you must reinstall all your software assuming you still have all the disks. Read more here .
6. Restore your PC from an image that you created previously	This takes all of 10 to 20 minutes and your PC will be restored to a previously working condition with your programs and data intact.

Best option

Obviously, Method 6 above is the best option if you've created a backup image of your PC. Here are various methods for doing this.

Method 1 – use the built-in Windows 10 disk image creation tool

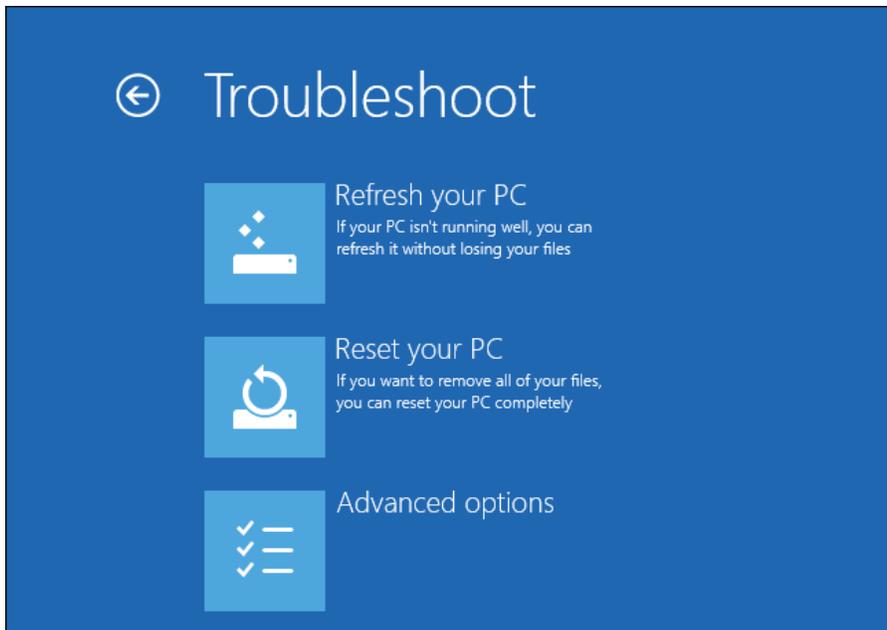
Here are the steps:

1. Create a Windows Recovery Drive
 - a. Connect an 8 Gigabyte flash drive to a USB port. Note – all data will be erased
 - b. Open Windows 10 Settings by pressing the Windows key and tapping the I key on your keyboard or by clicking the Start button and clicking the Settings icon ()
 - c. Type Recovery into the Search box at the top and select Create a recovery drive.
 - d. Place a check in Back up system files to the recovery drive and click Next. In some cases you will need to uncheck this to proceed. Either way will work.
 - e. Place the flash drive in a safe place with a label
2. Create a backup image
 - a. Connect an external hard drive
 - b. Open Windows Settings
 - c. Type backup into the Search box at the top
 - d. Select Backup and Restore Windows 7 (this does work on Window 10)
 - e. In the windows that opens click Create a system image on the left. Windows will look for a USB external hard drive
 - f. Click Next two times
 - g. Click Start backup

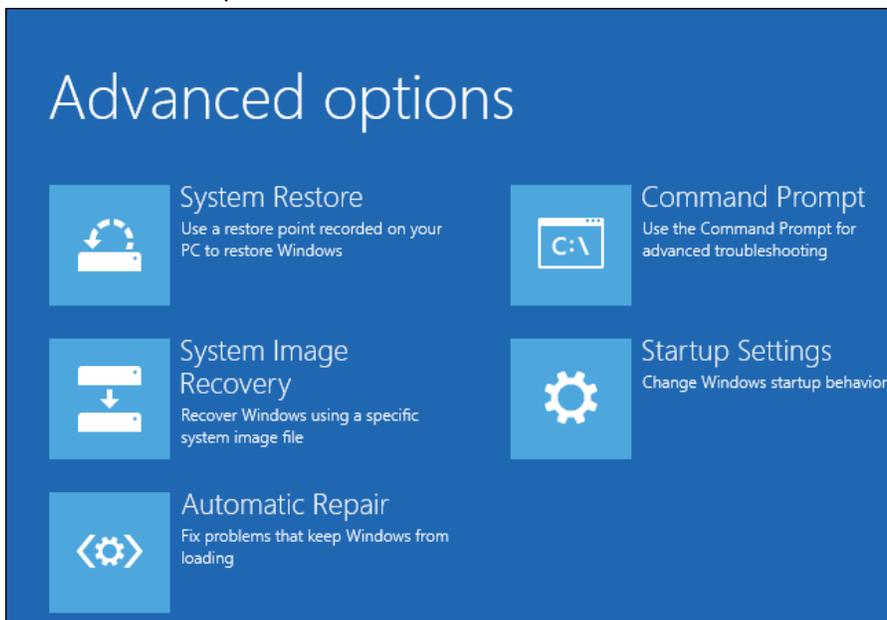
Notes:

If you ever have a problem with your PC, you can boot it from the Recovery Drive that you created in Step 1 above. To proceed, connect your external drive with the backup image and boot from the recovery drive.

You will see the following.



Select Advanced options.



Select System Image Recovery and browse to your external hard drive containing the backup image.

Note - you should create a new backup image periodically, especially after you install any new software or after a Windows update.

You can backup multiple times to the same external drive and backup multiple PCs to the same drive.

Method 2 – use Macrium Reflect free

Macrium Reflect Free is available at <http://www.macrium.com/reflectfree.aspx> and the paid version (\$69) is available at <http://www.macrium.com/product/7/macrium-reflect-v6-home-edition.aspx>. The paid version includes File and Folder backup – you can see the feature differences [here](#).

Here are the steps:

1. Download and install either version
2. Connect an 8 Gigabyte flash drive
3. Run Macrium Reflect
4. Click Other Tasks on the menu and select Create Rescue Media and click Next until it recognizes your flash drive and click Finish.
5. Next, create a backup image by following the instructions in the online manual available [here](#).
6. If you ever need to restore your PC, just boot from the Rescue Media and choose the backup task.

Backing up your data

What do we need to back up?

- Our data includes Documents, Pictures, Favorites, Contacts, etc.

Note: Even though you create a backup image, you still need to back up your data periodically.

Backup choices

- Local backup to external hard drive. See choices below
 1. Use Windows File History – see document [here](#)
 2. Use 3rd party software like Macrium Reflect (not too many free programs available)
 3. Manually do it yourself (not a good idea since it's not automated)
- Off-site backup in case disaster strikes
 4. OneDrive 5 GB free or GoogleDrive 15 GB free.
 5. Carbonite, Crashplan (\$5 to \$6 per month)
- External hard drive, store away from your PC to prevent it from being hacked into.