

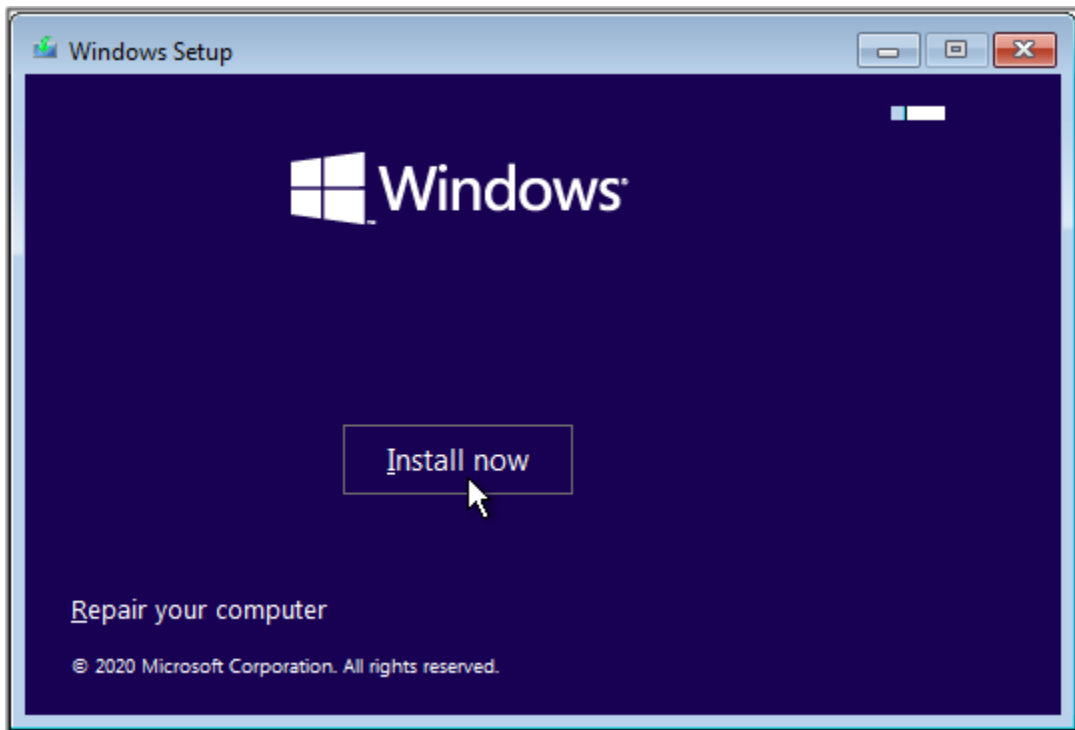
## Updated: A textbook-perfect Win10 reinstall

### Three essential preparatory steps

1. Make a full backup of your current setup. Archive all drives, all partitions — *everything* and *everywhere* on the PC
2. Gather all the activation/unlock keys and codes that Windows and your other software may require for later reinstallation. Save these keys/codes in a safe location, off the drive you'll be working on.
3. Create a bootable installation flash drive DVD that contains the current Win10 reinstallation and setup files.

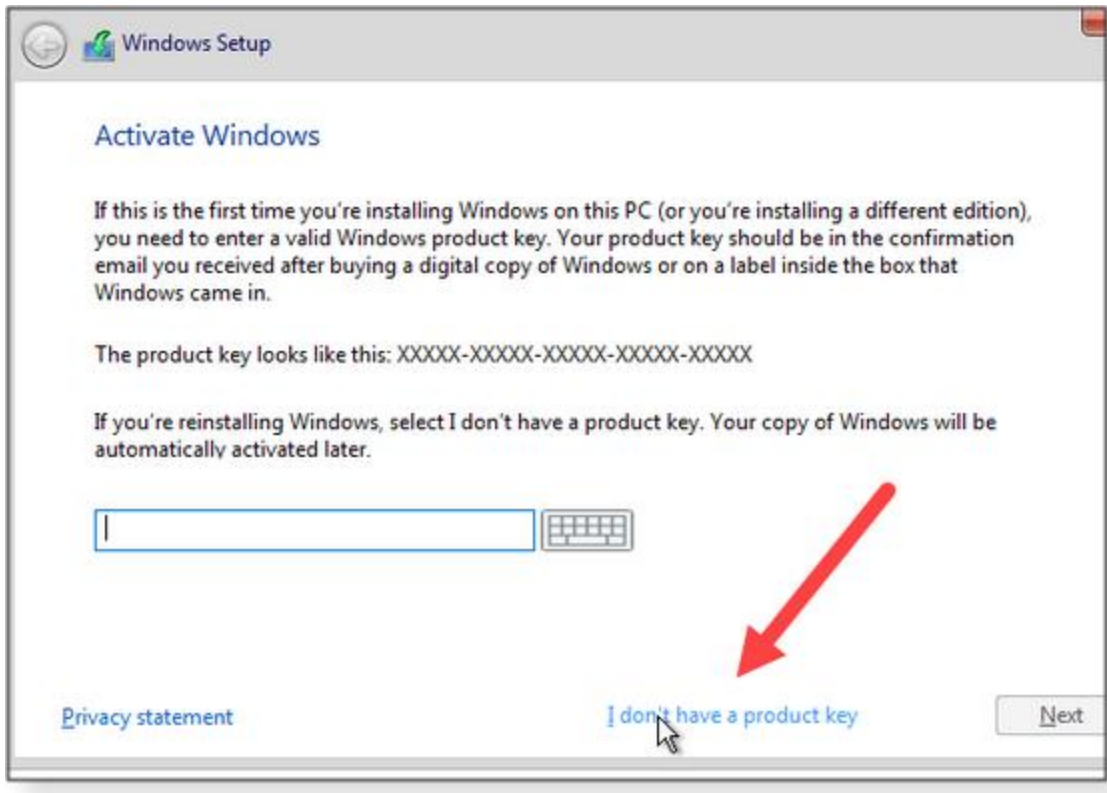
### The reinstall process — step by step

1. Boot your PC from the newly created flash drive or DVD.
2. When your PC successfully boots from the flash drive/DVD, the Windows setup program will automatically launch.
3. The first screen is routine: select your preferred language, time and currency formats, and keyboard layout. On the second screen, simply click **Install now**.



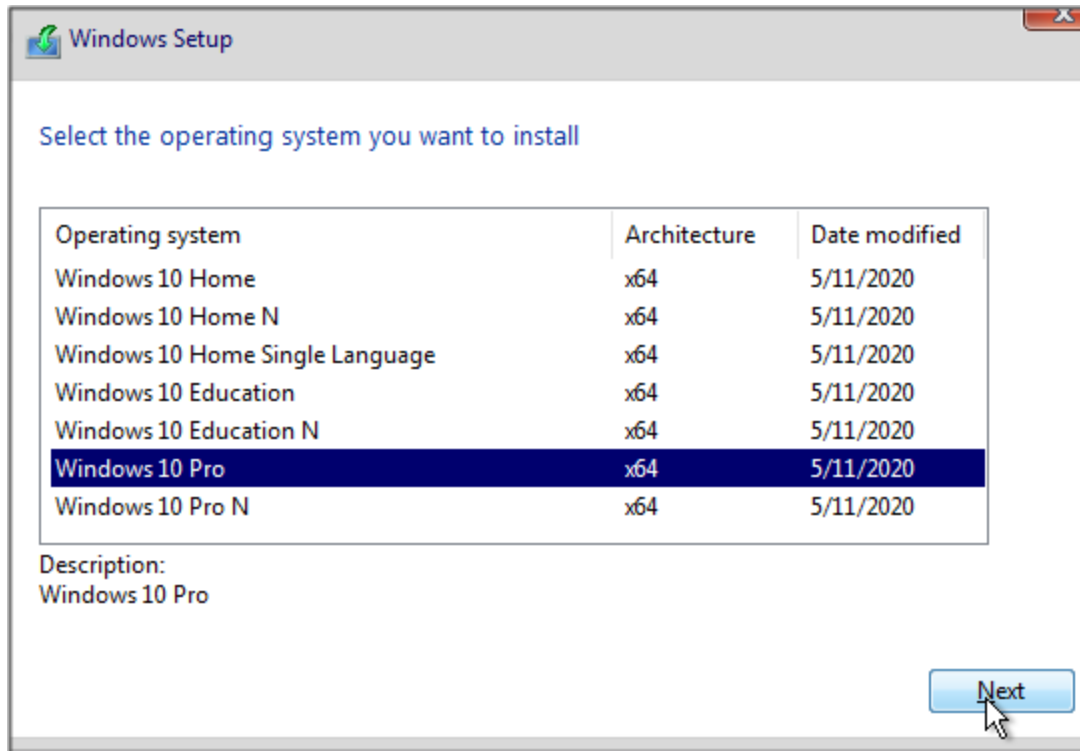
4. After a moment's churn, an *Activate Windows* dialog screen will open. Click the **I don't have a product key** link, even if you actually do have it.

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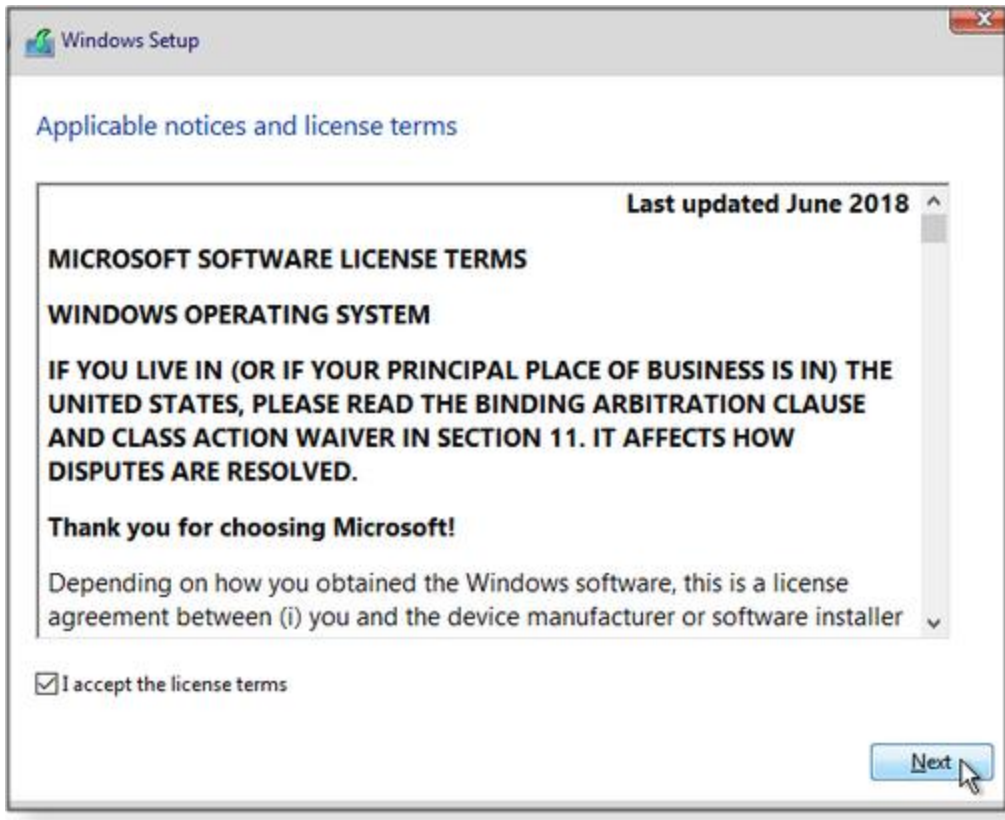
5. When the *Select the operating system you want to install* screen opens, select the Windows version and edition that match what you're about to replace, and click **Next**.

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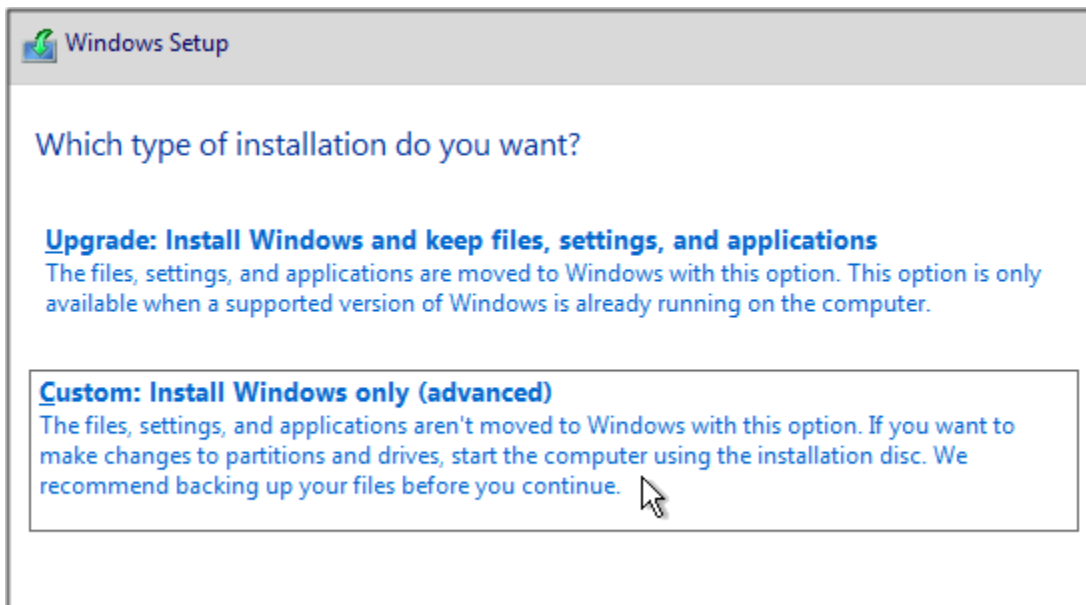


6. Next, you'll see the usual licensing dialog screen. Check **I accept the license terms** and then click **Next**.

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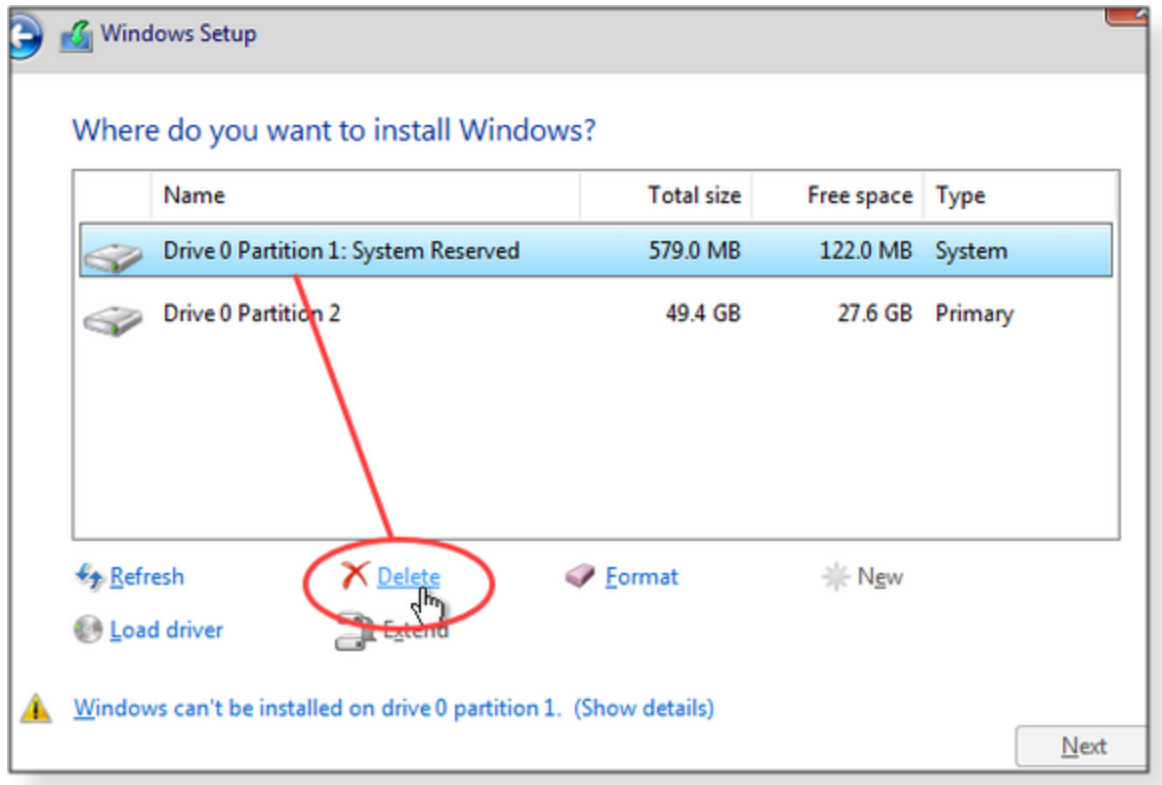


7. The *Windows Setup* screen that follows licensing asks *Which type of installation do you want?* Click **Custom**



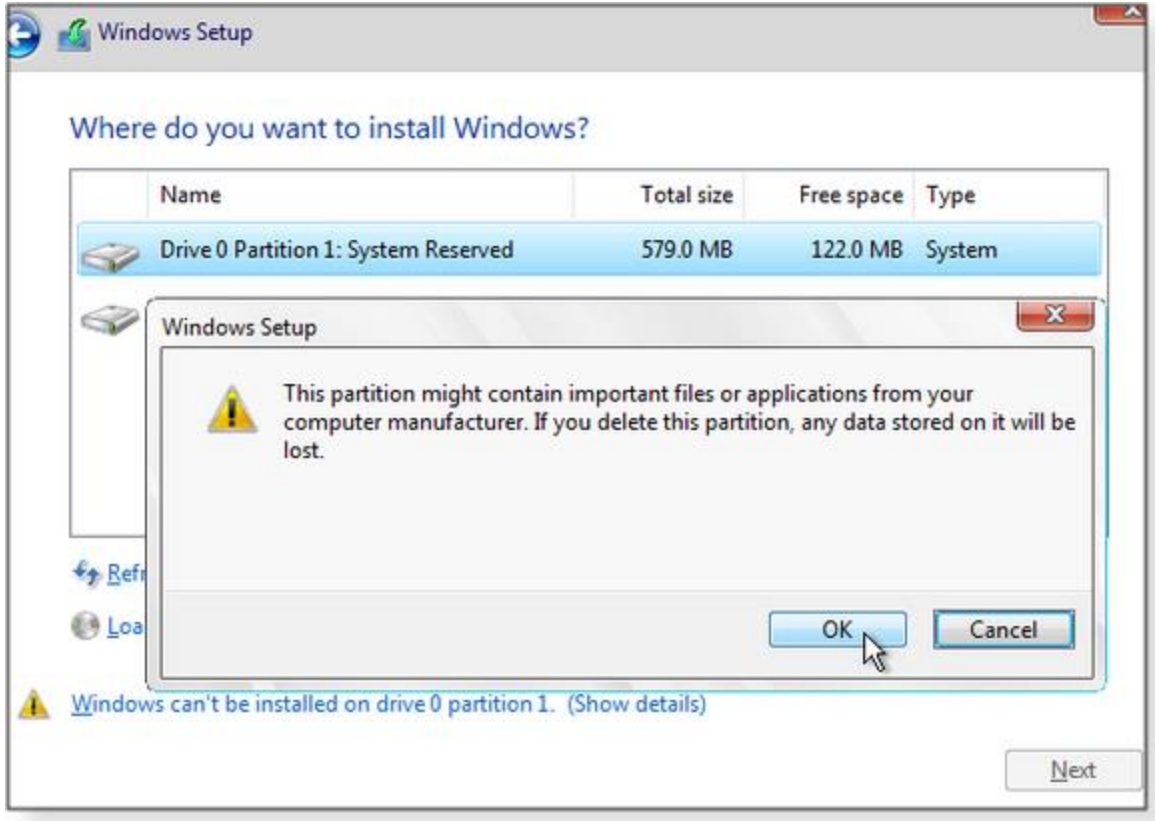
8. Next, the *Where do you want to install Windows* dialog screen opens, displaying a list of drives and partitions.
9. One by one, select and delete all partitions on the drive that will contain the reinstalled Windows.

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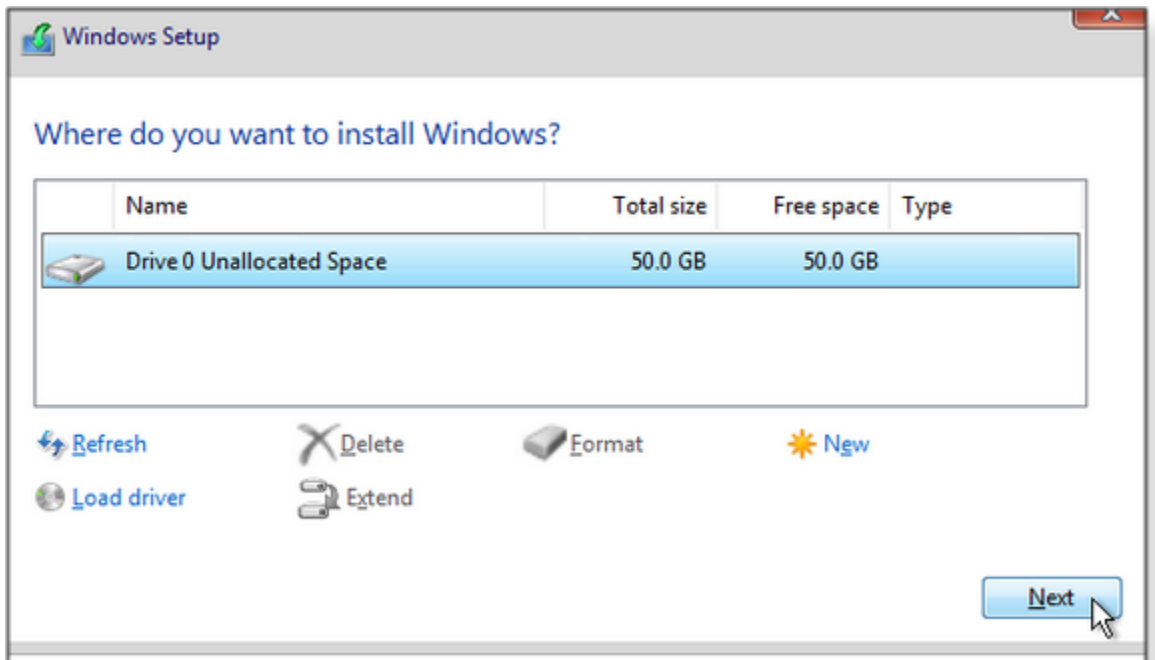


10. As you delete the old partitions, you'll see several confirmation dialog boxes warning that you might be wiping out important files and data. Click OK.

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11. Continue until all partitions have been deleted from the former Windows drive — and the entire drive is marked as *unallocated space*.



12. Click **Next** and let the setup process automatically create and format the necessary partitions in the correct sizes, placements, and order that Windows prefers. No user input is required.

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13. Click **Next**, the setup process will copy and install the required files from the flash drive or DVD to the newly formatted disk space.
14. After several minutes of file copying and preparation, the Windows install sequence begins.
15. Follow along in the usual way, entering information (such as your Microsoft account sign-in) when requested and choosing options (Cortana, various privacy selections, and so forth) as desired.
16. You can then add whatever third-party drivers your PC might need.
17. You're then ready to install your apps and user files.

When you're done, you'll have a lean, clean, fully refreshed setup with absolutely nothing needlessly carried over from the old!

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## A tried and tested post-reinstall setup process

### 1) Verify Windows protection

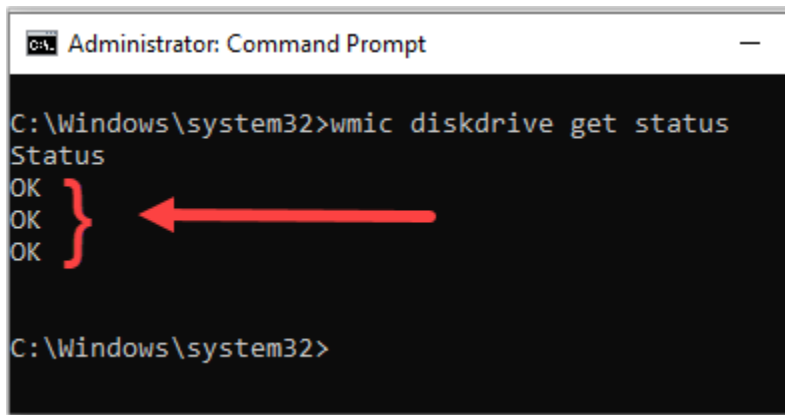
As soon as your PC has finished its initial setup — with Windows still running and you signed in to your regular Microsoft account — open **Windows Security**.

Check the various categories for any warning icons.

### 2) Verify hard drive health

Open a Command window as an administrator. Run this command:

**wmic diskdrive get status**



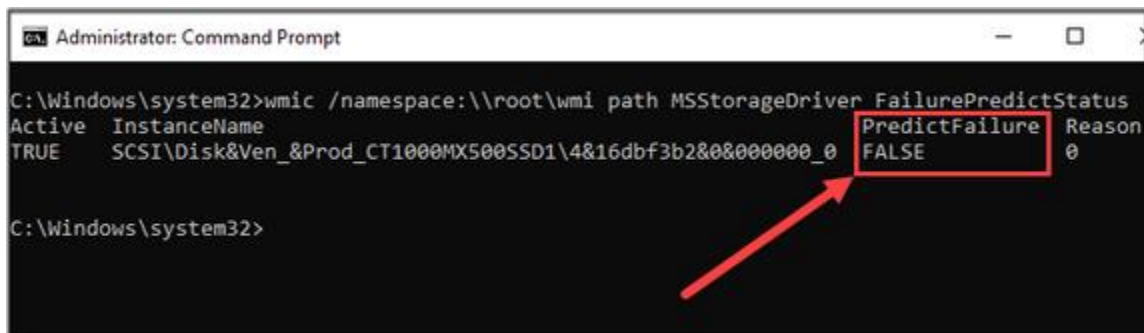
```
Administrator: Command Prompt
C:\Windows\system32>wmic diskdrive get status
Status
OK
OK
OK
C:\Windows\system32>
```

If you see anything other than “OKs,” visit your drive maker’s support site for additional diagnostic tools, repairs, or replacement. Do not proceed until all are “OK”.

Run the following command:

**wmic /namespace:\\root\wmi path MSStorageDriver\_FailurePredictStatus**

In the returned data, look for a column labeled **PredictFailure** — a healthy disk will be flagged **FALSE**, meaning no failure has yet been predicted. (See Figure 3.)



```
Administrator: Command Prompt
C:\Windows\system32>wmic /namespace:\\root\wmi path MSStorageDriver_FailurePredictStatus
Active InstanceName PredictFailure Reason
TRUE SCSI\Disk&Ven_&Prod_CT1000MX500SSD1\4&16dbf3b2&0&000000_0 FALSE 0
C:\Windows\system32>
```

If your disk’s SMART system predicts failure (i.e., the command returns **TRUE**), **do not proceed**.

### 3) Run Windows Update



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### 4) Enable System Restore

### 5) Install essential third-party drivers and software

### 6) Add important (but nonessential) low-level software

When your system's requisite and foundational drivers/software are set up and working properly, you can move on to system-wide services — apps and drivers for peripherals such as printers, scanners, mice, keyboards, touch screens, and so forth. Now's the time to also add drivers for specialized setups such as disk caches.

### 7) Make a full backup

Do an image backup and label it for possible use later "Clean OS"

Enable **File History**

Set up **OneDrive**

Bottom line: Whatever backup/restore tools you use, now's the time to set them up.

### 8) Restore your personal apps and data

Reinstall apps in the normal way.

Restore your user-data files from wherever you stored them prior to the Windows reinstall.

### 9) Back up, clean up, and health-check the system

Run another full backup. Label appropriately. "OS + apps + data"

Run the Windows Disk Cleanup app

Run a third-party cleaning tool such as **CCleaner** to get rid of extraneous installation files

Run Win10's built-in **Health report**

Most likely, all health-report items will be tagged with "No issues." If that's the case, you're done!

Congratulations: Your Win10 PC is now set up as well as it possibly can be!