

Modifying PC BIOS setting to load from a bootable CD/DVD/USB

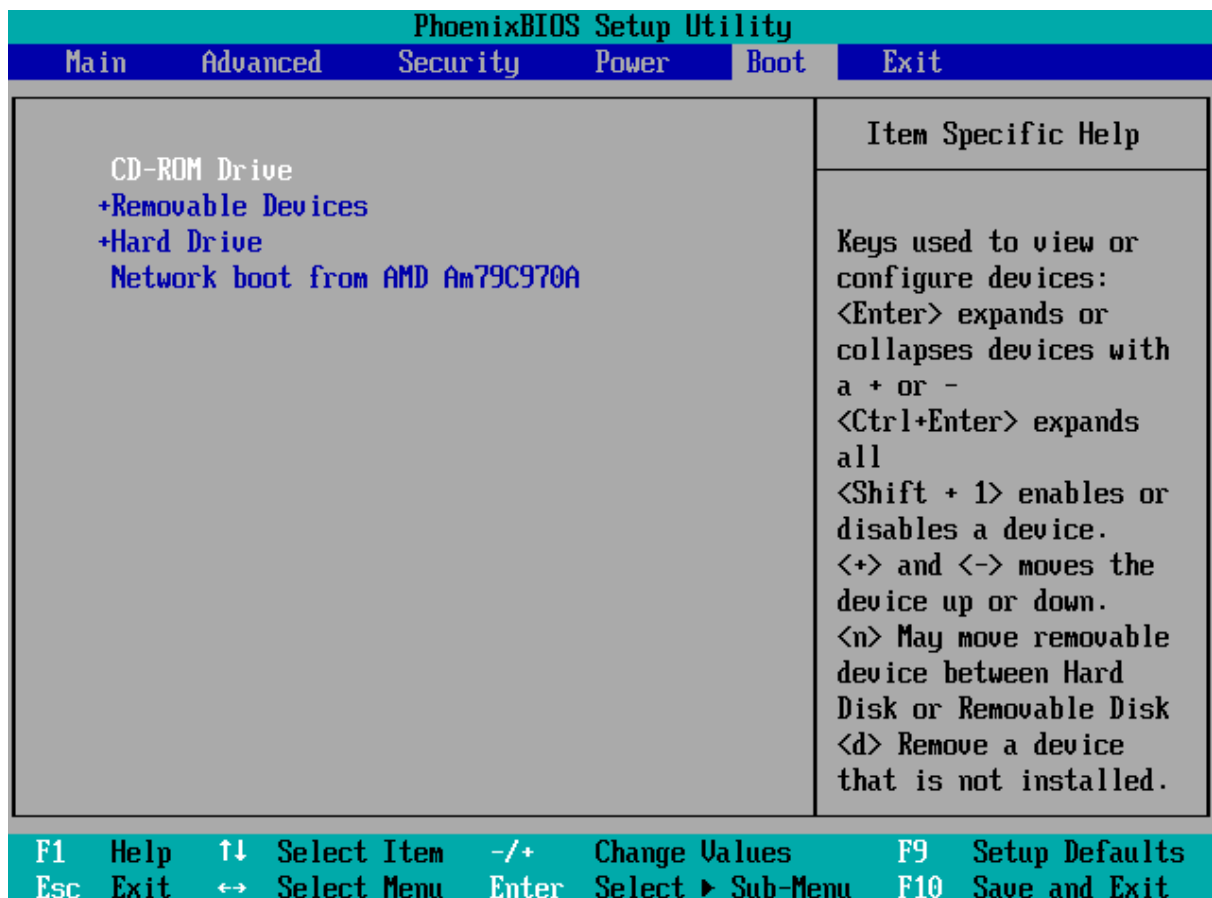
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1 General information

In order to load from your bootable drive, you may need to adjust your computer's BIOS settings to make the boot device (CD, DVD, or USB) first on the list of devices. This is the routine to follow for that:

1. When booting the computer, press the **Del** key to enter the BIOS menu. Some versions of BIOS use other hotkeys; those could be **F2**, **F10**, **F11**, **ESC**, etc. The hint is normally displayed at the bottom of the boot screen.
2. Enter the BIOS, then on the menu find the item that's in charge of the initial boot devices. Edit it to make the CD/DVD or USB first on the list. See the screenshot below.
3. Make sure to have saved the changes and then reboot the computer.



2 Setting up BIOS, questions and answers

Q: My computer's BIOS has several items for booting from USB devices: USB FDD, USB ZIP, USB HDD, USB CDROM. Which one should be selected?

A: Different BIOS manufacturers set up the initial boot different ways. In the majority of cases, to boot from a regular flash: on old motherboards you would need to select the USB ZIP option; on new ones - USB HDD.

Q: I think I did it right way: I put my CD first in the list, saved the BIOS settings, but my PC still loaded my old OS from the hard drive. What should I do?

A: Just remove other devices (including the HDD) from the list. This tweak helps sometimes.

Q: The application takes too long (sometimes up to 10 minutes) to boot from USB media.

A: That indicates that the device runs over the slow USB protocol, 1.1. First, the storage device must support the 2.0 specification. Second, the USB port in the motherboard where you plug the storage device must support the 2.0 specification. And third, you must enable the USB 2.0 support in the BIOS.

Q: The computer wouldn't boot from USB devices at all. When attempting to boot - either black screen or the 'no operating system' error message.

A: Try finding the 'Legacy USB storage detect' option and make it 'Enabled'. In the boot options, you should have only one USB device. If you have two or more USB devices plugged to the computer (eg. UPSes, printers, scanners, modems, etc.), leave only one bootable USB disk. Unplug the USB device from the computer, turn the computer off, plug the USB device to a different USB port, turn your computer on and attempt to boot again. If that didn't help - update your BIOS. Also there is a chance that your motherboard doesn't support booting from USB devices or doesn't support the file system used on this USB storage device.

Q: All kinds of driver, registry load, etc. errors occur when booting from CD or USB.

A: Maybe your computer does not have sufficient memory. Some Operating Systems on a bootable CD may need 1 GB RAM or even more.

Q: Can't get into my BIOS. A password required.

A: An unpleasant surprise can watch for you when you try to modify the boot device settings in BIOS. The matter is that some hardware manufacturers, sellers or previous owners of the PC may have set their own passwords for accessing BIOS. In other words, in order to modify BIOS settings, you would need to enter that password, which usually is not possible to find out.

Some versions of BIOS allow resetting their settings by pressing a certain key on the keyboard; normally that's Ins. For some type of AMI BIOS it is a Ctrl+Alt+Del+Ins combination. On AWARD BIOS, the key is to be pressed and held down until the computer is turned on. That will load the default settings. However, this option is to be used extremely carefully, as it resets all other settings of the BIOS.

Also, there are universal back-door passwords. They are provided below for many popular versions of BIOS. If you don't know it, BIOS type and version is normally displayed for a few seconds during the initial boot of the computer at the bottom of the screen.

If none of the universal passwords has worked out, you can take advantage of the method described in many motherboard user manuals: simply reset BIOS settings by shorting the respective jumper. It is normally located near the large CMOS battery. If the motherboard doesn't have a CMOS battery, find the microchip with the Dallas or Odin marking; the jumper must be somewhere nearby. Simply removing the CMOS battery doesn't always help, as the BIOS microchip can live for several hours without the power. Also, you are highly discouraged from shorting the CMOS itself for resetting BIOS settings, as that may cut the battery life essentially.

On the Net, you can find a number of software solutions for recovering passwords and resetting BIOS. For example, cmospwd and killcmos. You are highly discouraged from resetting all BIOS settings in laptops. That may lead to the complete halt of the system.

3 BIOS back-door passwords

Some back-door BIOS passwords that can be used to bypass the password restriction.

BIOS manufacture	Back-door passwords
AWARD BIOS 2.50	AWARD_SW, 01322222, j262, TTPTHA, KDD, ZBAAACA, aPAf, lkwpete, t0ch88, t0ch20x, h6BB
AWARD BIOS 2.51	AWARD_WG, HLT, BIOSTAR, SWITCHES_SW, 256256, j256, ZAAADA, Syxz, ?award, alfarome, Sxyz, SZXY
AWARD BIOS 2.51G	HEWITTRAND, HLT, biostar, HELGA-S, bios*, g6PG, j322, ZJAAADC, Wodj, h6BB, t0ch88, zjaaadc
AWARD BIOS 2.51U	condo, biostar, CONDO, CONCAT, 1EAAh, djonet, efmukl, g6PG, j09F, j64, zbaaaca
AWARD BIOS 4.5	AWARD_SW, AWARD_PW, PASSWORD, SKYFOX, award.sw, AWARD?SW, award_?, award_pc, ZAAADA, 589589
AWARD BIOS 6.0	AWARD_SW, HLT, KDD, ?award, lkwpete, Wodj, aPAf, j262, Syxz, ZJAAADC, j322, TTPTHA, six spaces, nine spaces, 01355555, ZAAADA
AMI BIOS	AMI, SER, A.M.I., AMI!SW, AMIPSWD, BIOSPASS, aammii, AMI.KEY, amipswd, CMOSPWD, ami.kez, AMI?SW, helga s, HEWITT RAND, ami', AMISETUP, bios310, KILLCMOS, amiami, AMI~, amidecod
AMPTON BIOS	Polrty
AST BIOS	SnuFG5
BIOSTAR BIOS	Biostar, Q54arwms
COMPAQ BIOS	Compaq
CONCORD BIOS	last
CTX International BIOS	CTX_123
CyberMax BIOS	Congress
Daewoo BIOS	Daewuu, Daewoo
Daytec BIOS	Daytec
DELL BIOS	Dell
Digital Equipment BIOS	komprie
Enox BIOS	xo11nE

BIOS manufacture	Back-door passwords
Epox BIOS	Central
Freetech BIOS	Posterie
HP Vectra BIOS	hewlpack
IMB BIOS	IBM, MBIUO, sertafu
Iwill BIOS	iwill
JetWay BIOS	spooml
Joss Technology BIOS	57gbz6, technology
M Technology BIOS	mMmM
Magic-Pro BIOS	prost
MachSpeed BIOS	sp99dd
Megastar BIOS	star, sldkj754, xyzall
Micronics BIOS	dn_04rjc
Nimble BIOS	xdfk9874t3
Packard Bell BIOS	bell9
QDI BIOS	QDI
Quantex BIOS	teX1, xjlbj
Research BIOS	Col2ogro2
Shuttle BIOS	Col2ogro2
Siemens Nixdorf BIOS	SKY_FOX
SpeedEasy BIOS	lesarot1
SuperMicro BIOS	ksdjfg934t
Tinys BIOS	tiny, tinys
TMC BIOS	BIGO
Toshiba BIOS	Toshiba, 24Banc81, toshy99
Vextrec Technology BIOS	Vextrex
Vobis BIOS	merlin
WIMBIOS v.2.10 BIOS	Compleri
Zenith BIOS	3098z, Zenith
ZEOS BIOS	zeosx