

Article ID: 321305 - Last Review: October 29, 2010 - Revision: 8.0

## How to log on to your Windows XP-based computer if you forget your password or if your password expires

### System Tip x

This article applies to a different version of Windows than the one you are using. Content in this article may not be relevant to you. [Visit the Windows Vista Solution Center](#)

This article was previously published under Q321305

**To continue receiving security updates for Windows, make sure you're running Windows XP with Service Pack 3 (SP3). For more information, refer to this Microsoft web page: [Support is ending for some versions of Windows](#)**

### INTRODUCTION

---

If you forget your Windows password or if your password expires, you must reset your password before you can log on to your computer.

You can reset your password, if one of the following condition is true:

- You can log on as an administrator to assign a new password to your account. To do this, try [Method 1](#).

**Note** When we install Windows, it automatically creates an account "Administrator" and sets its password to blank.

- You have previously created a password reset disk for the computer. To do this, try [Method 2](#).

If you do not have a reset disk or cannot log on as an administrator, unfortunately, you may have to reinstall Windows XP and all other programs that were installed on the computer before you can use the computer again. This is for security. Without these safeguards, anyone could reset a password to anyone else's computer and gain access to private information.

### MORE INFORMATION

---

**Note** If you are using Windows XP Home Edition, you may want to try the steps in the following article before you try the steps in this article:

[Forgotten your Windows XP Home Edition password? - Part 1: Introduction](#)

#### **Method 1: Log on as an administrator to reset the password**

The steps to do this differ if the computer is a stand-alone computer or a member of a workgroup of two or more, or a member of a domain. Select the appropriate set of steps from the following to try to log on as the administrator to reset the password.

##### **Windows XP Home Edition or Windows XP Professional Edition**

[Click here to view or hide detailed information](#)

##### **Windows XP Home Edition or Windows XP Professional Edition in a workgroup**

[Click here to view or hide detailed information](#)

##### **Windows XP Professional Edition in a domain**

[Click here to view or hide detailed information](#)

Was this information helpful? Please send us your feedback

### Method 2: Use a password reset disk

To log on to the computer by using a password reset disk, follow these steps. If your computer is or was a member of a domain, go to the "Windows XP Professional in a domain" section and follow those steps.

#### Windows XP Home Edition or Windows XP Professional Edition

[Click here to view or hide detailed information](#)

#### Windows XP Professional Edition in a domain

[Click here to view or hide detailed information](#)

Was this information helpful? Please send us your feedback

## NEXT STEPS

---

If you cannot reset your password, unfortunately, this content is unable to help you further. For your next steps, you might want to ask someone for help, or you might want to contact Support. For information about how to contact Support, please visit the following Microsoft Web site:

[Contact Us](#)

For more information about the password reset disk, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[306214](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306214/) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306214/>) How to create and use a password reset disk for a computer in a domain in Windows XP

---

### APPLIES TO

**Keywords:** kbresolve kbexpertisebeginner kbceip kbpubtypekc kbhowto kbenv kbinfo kbqip KB321305



**Get Help Now**

Contact a support professional by E-mail, Online, or Phone