

## How to Get Rid of Old Computers

### How to Wipe Your PC Before Getting Rid of it

Before you trash, sell, or give away any old computer the very first thing you should do is permanently wipe the hard drive so that nobody can recover personal information which could be used to access your bank accounts or steal your identity. So how can you do this?

#### Format Your Hard Drive

Formatting your hard drive before getting rid of an old computer is no longer enough to prevent somebody from recovering data from it! This is no longer an effective method of safeguarding your data. As our level of technological sophistication advances, so does the ease with which we recover data from old computers. There are services and software that a person with no computer knowledge can employ to recover data from a formatted hard drive at a very reasonable price, a small drop in the bucket when compared to the profit margins in identity theft.

#### Disk Wiping Software

(ex: Symantec System Works, Safe Erase, File Shredder)

Many software manufacturers offer products that are supposed to irrevocably wipe your computers hard drive. If you're willing to purchase software to wipe your hard drive so you can give or throw it away make sure you do your homework and ask what the program actually does. Most of the programs will repeatedly erase and overwrite your hard drive, which does make recovery of your data more difficult, but not impossible. Don't take the salesman's word without doing your homework.

#### Physically Destroy the Hard Drive

Physically destroying your disk drive is currently the best method of protecting your data. Software solutions that work today may not be effective tomorrow as our technology advances at breakneck speeds. The price of computer hard drives plummets more each and every day making this a very feasible option as your computer's hard drive comprises less than 10% of the total value of your PC.

Understand that crushing, burning, or otherwise physically destroying your hard drive is not fool-proof, data can and has been recovered from drives that have been mashed beyond recognition, but the more thoroughly thrashed the drive is, the harder and more costly it is to attempt to recover any previous data. If you decide to take this route, disassemble the drive with a screwdriver, remove the ceramic disks, wrap them in a towel to protect yourself from shards and then thoroughly smash them with a hammer.

#### 5 Ways to Dispose of Your Old PC

1. Donate it! Surprisingly, this isn't as easy as it used to be as many schools and charities are swimming in old, obsolete computers. If your old PC is new enough to still be useful, chances are you can find someone who wants it. Here's some places to try: \* Your local schools. \* Advertise it for free in your local craigslist. \* Post it on a bulletin board at a local college. \* Drop it off at your local salvation army or goodwill store's donation center.
2. Sell it! Advertise it in your local classifieds, Ebay, or Craigslist.com. Look through any place you attempt to sell first to make sure your not competing against people who are giving away comparable or better stuff.
3. Recycle it! Look up "Recycling" in your local phone book to find places close by that will take your old hardware.
4. Trade it in! Some computer companies such as HP, Gateway, and Dell will take your old, worthless hardware off of your hands for free when you buy a new PC through them.
5. Reuse it! Reconfigure an old computer to play music and movies, rip all of your CD's and DVD's onto it and hook it up to your home theatre. Video cards with RCA or S-Video outputs can be had for less that \$20 making this very affordable.

Know of more ways to safely dispose of old PC's? Add them to this page using the form below. Please don't throw your old computers and monitors into the trash; they contain materials that are destructive to the environment.

## About the Author

If you wanna know [how to get rid of old computers](#) and other things... [How To Get Rid Of Stuff](#) is the site that will help you!

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