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Article by How-To Geek

## [Wipe, Delete, and Securely Destroy Your Hard Drive's Data the Easy Way](#)

By How To Geeks

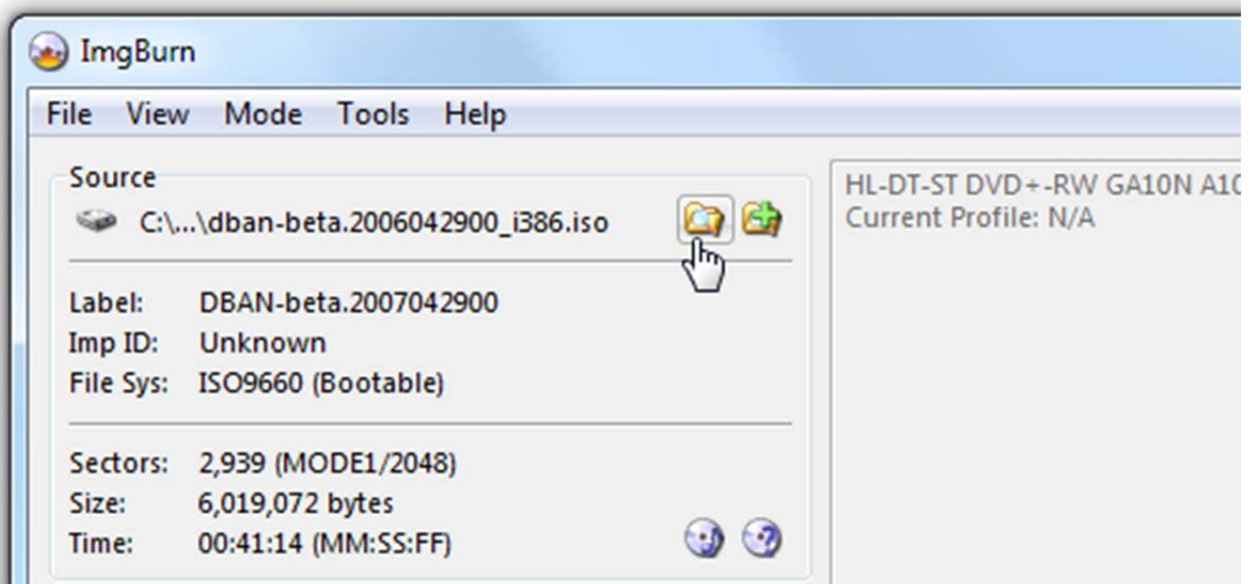
Giving a computer to somebody else? Maybe you're putting it out on Craigslist to sell to a stranger—either way, you'll want to make sure that your drive is completely wiped, scrubbed, and clean of any personal data. Here's the easy way to do it.

If you only have access to an Ubuntu Live CD or thumb drive, you can actually use that instead if you prefer, and we've got you covered with a full guide to [securely wiping your PC's hard drive](#). Otherwise, keep reading.

### Wipe the Drive with DBAN

Darik's Boot and Nuke CD is the easiest way to permanently and totally destroy every bit of personal information on that drive—nobody is going to recover a thing once this is done.

The first thing you'll need to do is download a copy of the ISO image, and then burn it to a blank CD with something really useful like Imgburn. Just choose Burn image to Disc at the start screen, select the little file icon, grab the downloaded ISO, and then go. If you need a little more help, we've got you covered with a [beginner's guide to burning an ISO image](#).



Once you're done, stick the disc into the drive, start the PC up, and then once you boot to the DBAN prompt you'll see a menu. You can pretty much ignore everything on here, and just type...

autonuke

```
Darik's Boot and Nuke
-----
Warning: This software irrecoverably destroys data.

This software is provided without any warranty; without even the implied
warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. In no event
shall the software authors or contributors be liable for any damages arising
from the use of this software. This software is provided "as is".

http://www.dban.org/

* Press the F2 key to learn about DBAN.
* Press the F3 key for a list of quick commands.
* Press the F4 key for troubleshooting hints.
* Press the ENTER key to start DBAN in interactive mode.
* Enter autonuke at this prompt to start DBAN in automatic mode.

boot: _
```

And there you are, your disk is now being securely wiped.

```
Darik's Boot and Nuke beta.2007042900
-----
Options
-----
Entropy: Linux Kernel (urandom)
PRNG: Mersenne Twister (mt19937ar-cok)
Method: DoD Short
Verify: Last Pass
Rounds: 1

Statistics
-----
Runtime: 00:00:29
Remaining: 111:26:48
Load Averages: 1.66 0.42 0.14
Throughput: 23278 KB/s
Errors: 0

SCSI Disk VMware, VMware Virtual S 1.0 80GB
[00.07%, round 1 of 1, pass 1 of 3] [writing] [12373 KB/s]

ATA Disk VMware Virtual I 0000 815GB 00000000000000000001
[00.01%, round 1 of 1, pass 1 of 3] [writing] [10905 KB/s]
```

Once it's all done, you can remove the CD, and then either pack the PC up to sell, or re-install Windows on there if you feel like it.

More Advanced Method

If you're really paranoid, want to run a different type of wipe, or just like fiddling with the options, you can choose F3 or hit Enter at the prompt to head to the advanced selection screen. Here you can choose exactly which drive to wipe, or hit the M key to change the method.

```

Darik's Boot and Nuke beta.2007042900
----- Options -----
Entropy: Linux Kernel (urandom)
PRNG: Merseme Twister (mt19937ar-cok)
Method: Quick Erase
Verify: Last Pass
Rounds: 1
----- Statistics -----
Runtime:
Remaining:
Load Averages:
Throughput:
Errors:

----- Disks and Partitions -----
▶ [wipe] ATA Disk VMware Virtual I 0000 815GB 00000000000000000001
[ ] SCSI Disk VMware, VMware Virtual S 1.0 80GB

P=PRNG M=Method U=Verify R=Rounds, J=Up K=Down Space=Select, F10=Start

```

You'll be able to choose between a bunch of different wipe options. The Quick Erase is all you really need though.

```

Darik's Boot and Nuke beta.2007042900
----- Options -----
Entropy: Linux Kernel (urandom)
PRNG: Merseme Twister (mt19937ar-cok)
Method: Quick Erase
Verify: Last Pass
Rounds: 1
----- Statistics -----
Runtime:
Remaining:
Load Averages:
Throughput:
Errors:

----- Wipe Method -----
▶ Quick Erase syslinux.cfg: nuke="dwipe --method zero"
RCMP TSSIT OPS-II Security Level: Low (1 pass)
DoD Short
DoD 5220.22-M
Gutmann Wipe
PRNG Stream

This method fills the device with zeros. Note that the rounds option does
not apply to this method. This method always runs one round.

Use this method to blank disks before internal redeployment, or before
reinstalling Microsoft Windows to remove the data areas that the format
utility preserves.

```

So there you are, easy PC wiping in one package. What about you? Do you make sure to wipe your old PCs before giving them away? Personally I've always just yanked out the hard drives before I got rid of an old PC, but that's just me.

[Download DBAN from dban.org](http://dban.org)

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