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**Doing a Windows 10 or 11 Repair Install or In-Place Feature Update Using the Windows ISO File**

Before doing any major change, of any sort, to a Windows system (or any system) you should take a system image backup of what you have before you start. That’s beyond the scope of this tutorial.

*This technique works for doing an in-place upgrade to Windows 10 from Windows 7 or Windows 8.1* as well as doing a repair install or In-Place Feature Update on a Windows 10 or 11 system.

**The only difference between a Repair Install and an In-Place Feature Update** (or Windows Upgrade from earlier Windows) **is whether the ISO file you use is the one for your currently running version**, in which case you’re doing a repair install, or the ISO is for a newer version, in which case you’re doing an In-Place Feature Update if the machine is running Windows 10 or an In-Place Windows Upgrade if it’s running Windows 7 or 8.1. Note well that an in-place Windows Version upgrade is only possible from Windows 7 or 8.1 to Windows 10. There is no in-place upgrade from any earlier version of Windows to Windows 11.

**A Repair Install or In-Place Feature Update/Upgrade preserves your user data files and installed apps** (both from the Windows Store and installed applications) provided you do what is mentioned in Step 9. This is what should be the default, but *always* check!

1. Navigate to the [Windows 10 Download Page](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10) or [Windows 11 Download Page](https://www.microsoft.com/software-download/windows11) then activate the *Download* button under the category *Create Windows XX Installation Media* to download the Windows Media Creation Tool (MCT) (or the ISO, directly, for Windows 11, that’s a new option). The naming convention for the tool is MediaCreationTool9999.exe, where the 9999 will actually be the Windows Version number for which media will be fetched. If you are working with Windows 11, *and* you chose to download the ISO file directly, go directly to Step 5.
2. Fire up the MCT, and when asked whether you want to update this machine now or create installation media for another machine, choose the latter option.
3. You will next be asked whether you want the MCT to create bootable USB media, or just get the ISO file. Choose the ISO file option. You will be presented with a Save dialog for where you wish to place the ISO file. Once that location is selected the download will begin, and this tends to take a while unless you have a very fast internet connection.
4. Once the download is complete, first select the ISO file in File Explorer.
5. Bring up the context menu for the selected ISO file by hitting SHIFT+F10 or right clicking.
6. Choose *Mount* from the menu options presented.
7. The ISO will now be mounted as a virtual DVD drive and you will be presented with a File Explorer window that displays its contents.
8. Locate setup.exe and fire that up.
9. Answer the prompts as needed. *When you get to the step where you are asked what you wish to keep, be certain the Files and Apps option is selected*. This is the default, but **always** check.
10. The process of doing the repair install/in-place update will now begin in earnest. This typically takes quite a while to complete. Once it is up and running you can enable Narrator (WinKey + Ctrl + Enter) if you wish to have screen reader feedback regarding what’s going on. It may be a few minutes before you can get Narrator to activate.
11. Now you will wait for the process to complete itself. Your machine will generally restart several times over the course of the repair install/update.

Note: You can copy an ISO file just like any other file, so if you need to work on more than one machine you can create a copy of the ISO file on a USB thumb drive or SD card to place on the other machine(s) you wish to work on.