How to create a bootable USB drive

Create a bootable USB drive for macOS X versions including El Capitan, Yosemite, Mavericks, Sierra, High Sierra, and Mojave.

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INTRODUCTION

Create a bootable USB drive for macOS X El Capitan, Yosemite, Mavericks, Sierra, High Sierra, and Mojave.

(The process is also described in the Apple Support page https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201372)
Step 1 — How to create a bootable USB drive

- Launch the App Store on your Mac.
- Search for the macOS version you want (this option is only on macOS High Sierra and lower)
- Click Get or Download

ℹ️ If you have previously downloaded this version of macOS using the current Apple ID account, you might find it in the "Purchased" tab.

ℹ️ If you're using a Windows machine, you'll need to borrow a macOS machine, go to a Apple Retail Store and download it there or use a Hackintosh
Step 2

- After the downloading process is complete, close the App Store. The installation window should appear afterwards.

- Click the "Install macOS (whatever version you have downloaded)" menu at the top left of the screen, and select "Quit Install macOS (whatever version you have) ."

Step 3

- Insert your **USB drive** into your Mac's USB port.

- Open Finder to find your USB or if your Finder preferences have been set, you can find it on the Desktop.

⚠️ Your USB drive will be completely erased in the following steps. Make any backups of your data beforehand.
Step 4

- Launch Terminal.

  You can either use Spotlight or navigate to "Utilities" inside of Applications within Finder and double click Terminal.

Step 5

- In Terminal, type one of the following commands, depending on your version of macOS. (The name of the version of macOS, is the one you want to install on the key and downloaded.)

  Instead of "/Volumes/MyVolume", type the name of your USB drive. Type everything else exactly as you see it (or better yet, copy and paste it from here).
- **For El Capitan**: `sudo /Applications/Install OS X El Capitan.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume --applicationpath /Applications/Install OS X El Capitan.app`

- **For Yosemite**: `sudo /Applications/Install OS X Yosemite.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume --applicationpath /Applications/Install OS X Yosemite.app`

- **For Mavericks**: `sudo /Applications/Install OS X Mavericks.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume --applicationpath /Applications/Install OS X Mavericks.app`

- **For Sierra**: `sudo /Applications/Install macOS Sierra.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume --applicationpath /Applications/Install macOS Sierra.app`

- **Other versions including High Sierra and Mojave**: see the next step.

ℹ️ If you did not download the file from the App Store, you must modify the file path after "applicationpath".
**Step 6**

- **For High Sierra**: `sudo /Applications/Install\ macOS\ High\ Sierra.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume --applicationpath /Applications/Install\ macOS\ High\ Sierra.app`

- **For Mojave**: `sudo /Applications/Install\ macOS\ Mojave.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume`

- **For Catalina**: `sudo /Applications/Install\ macOS\ Catalina.app/Contents/Resources/createinstallmedia --volume /Volumes/MyVolume`
Step 7

- After correctly entering the command with the name of your USB drive, press the [return] key.

- Enter the macOS administrator password.
  
 ⚠️ Your password will not be displayed.

- Press [return].

- Check the name and path of your USB key. If it looks correct, press the [Y] key, then press [return].

ℹ️ The bootable drive creation will begin. Please wait until the process completes.
Step 8

When Terminal indicates the process is "Done," the creation of your bootable drive has succeeded.

- To boot off the USB, first make sure the Mac is off and then press and hold the [option] key when you hear the chime/turn it on.

Nice work! You're done.