

Forcing the Reset of Passwords on Non-Domain Systems

Reset the Administrator Password

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Q: We inherited a PC. We can reset the PC password, no problem. But how do we reset the password to access Safe Mode?—*Ted Searle*

A: If I understand correctly, you can log on as a user but you do not have the Administrator password. As long as you can log on with an account that has Administrator-level privilege you should be okay. In XP, click *Start*, click *Run* (in Vista, just use the Search field), enter *control userpasswords2* (don't forget the 2 at the end).

In the dialog that appears is a panel titled Password for Administrator. Click the *Reset Password* button in this panel and assign a new password that you'll remember but that a malefactor or a [virus](#) won't guess.

If that button is disabled, check the box at the top that says, *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer*. That will enable the button. After changing the Administrator password, close the main User Accounts dialog by clicking *Cancel* rather than *OK*. That way, your change to the "Users must enter..." check box won't actually change anything.