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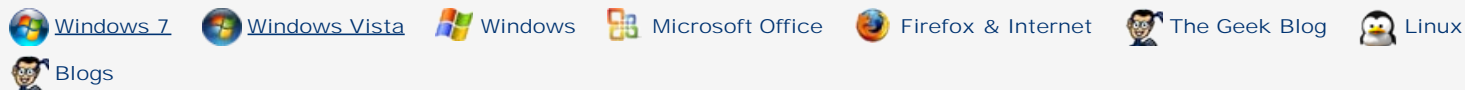**Windows 7**   **Windows Vista**   **Windows**   **Microsoft Office**   **Firefox & Internet**   **The Geek Blog**   **Linux**   **Blogs**

# Enable the (Hidden) Administrator Account on Windows 7 or Vista

Many people familiar with prior versions of Windows are curious what happened to the built-in Administrator account that was always created by default. Does this account still exist, and how can you access it?

The account is created in Windows 7 or Vista, but since it's not enabled you can't use it. If you are troubleshooting something that needs to run as administrator, you can enable it with a simple command.

Note: You really shouldn't use this account for anything other than troubleshooting. In fact, you probably shouldn't use it at all.
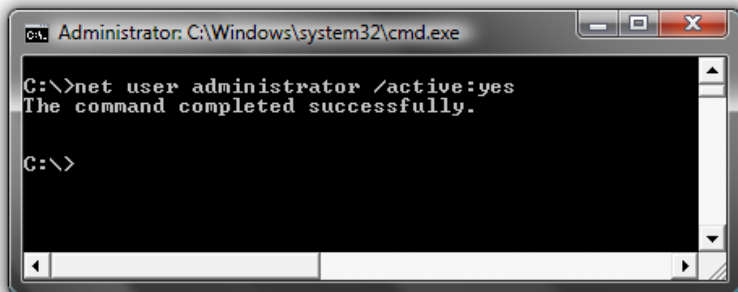
Enable Built-in Administrator Account

First you'll need to open a command prompt in administrator mode by right-clicking and choosing "Run as administrator" (or use the Ctrl+Shift+Enter shortcut from the search box)
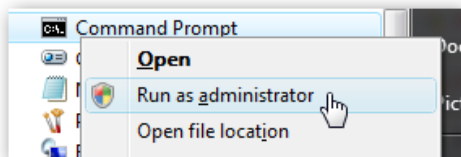
Now type the following command:

```
net user administrator /active:yes
```

You should see a message that the command completed successfully. Log out, and you'll

MEET THE AUTHOR

now see the Administrator account as a choice. (Note that the screenshots are from Vista, but this works on Windows 7)
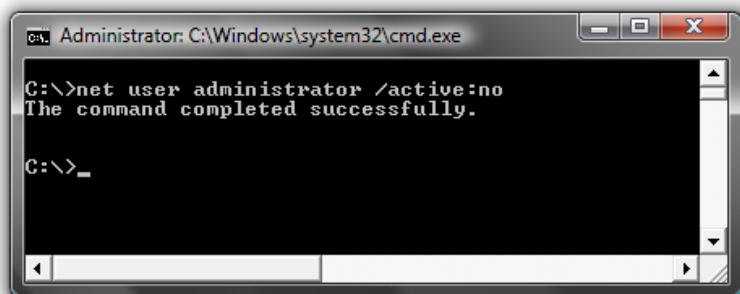
You'll note that there's no password for this account, so if you want to leave it enabled you should change the password.

Disable Built-in Administrator Account

Make sure you are logged on as your regular user account, and then open an administrator mode command prompt as above. Type the following command:

```
net user administrator /active:no
```


The administrator account will now be disabled, and shouldn't show up on the login screen anymore.

This article was originally written on 01/5/08

Tagged with: System Administration, Windows 7, Windows Vista

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Chuma
January 5, 2008 1:04 am

What is the difference between the Administrator Account and the regular account? I guess what I'm trying to say is: what can administrator account do that regular account (with UAC turned off) can't do?

Trebor
January 5, 2008 10:59 am

Ive always been told you have to capitalize *Administrator*. Anyway thats how Ive always done it. Ive been using this for months (here come the attacks from the UAC fanatics).

Greg
January 5, 2008 1:15 pm

Isn't this a potential major flaw?

If someone leaves their guest account enabled and you log in, can you then activate the hidden Administrator and thus have admin rights?

Dan
January 5, 2008 4:11 pm

"Isn't this a potential major flaw?"
No. If i remember then somebody has to set a password for the Administrator user when they first install Vista. On some OEM versions I think the Administrator password is automatically set to the password of the initial user. I do not think guest accounts can run UAC because they are not users that can run it.

Sean O'Hara

📅 January 7, 2008 8:35 am

What is the difference between the Administrator Account and the regular account? I guess what I'm trying to say is: what can administrator account do that regular account (with UAC turned off) can't do?

Probably nothing, but I'd rather get there through legitimate system options than registry hacks, which is the only method I've seen for disabling UAC.

On some OEM versions I think the Administrator password is automatically set to the password of the initial user.

So what happens with all the people who get a new Vista machine and don't bother to set a logon password?

Chuma

📅 January 7, 2008 8:39 am

Probably nothing, but I'd rather get there through legitimate system options than registry hacks, which is the only method I've seen for disabling UAC.
I disable UAC all the time without registry hacks. I thought there was an option in control panel somewhere…

Phoenix

📅 January 8, 2008 1:16 pm

Wonderful

shinto

📅 January 27, 2008 8:01 pm

I want to login to hidden administrator from welcome screen can u help me?

andyp114

📅 February 4, 2008 1:12 pm

administrator password can be changed from command prompt as far as i know: type: net user administrator *
then it asks for the new password, a confirmation of the new password then says comand completed successfully.

Mary Schmokel

📅 February 6, 2008 11:23 am

well, when I go to the command prompt, it defaults to "C:\USERS\[username]>" and I cannot use the command. The system response is :

"System error 5 has occurred"
"Access denied"

I do not have an administrator log on icon at start up and there is no file for it when I use "Start" "Explore"

did I delete the administrator user account or something?

How do I fix it?

Thanks!

ladonna

📅 February 7, 2008 6:42 pm

I am getting the same error message as "Access denied"

Paul

This link may help explain some of the security issues for above comments, though it's for mapped drive access:
http://support.microsoft.com/kb/947235

If you don't really need to do this, I'd suggest that you don't. Security is a tough thing to manage. I suspect that if you follow the registry edits at the link, then you'll be able to change the Administrator's password using "net user administrator *"

I also don't have a user file structure for Administrator and it doesn't show in the user list, but it's there. From the command prompt just type "net user" and Enter. To make it show up during startup I think you can type "net user administrator /active:yes" and Enter.

Good luck.

Ray

The Administrator account is the one used by safe mode.

Conway

A hidden administrator account? That's just sick…

Kirk M. Schafer

Several people asked about the difference between the built-in administrator account and the administrator created on Vista setup. Unless you are a very experienced user (more than 5 years in serious technical support) and require very specific access privileges, then the default account should be fine–you will know if you need the built-in administrator when, no matter what you do, you cannot perform an operation–and you will know immediately that this is the problem. Yes, there is a difference, and no, you shouldn't normally have to worry about it.

Kirk M. Schafer

To answer other comments, above:

User names are not case-sensitive for Windows logins, therefore you may type both Administrator and administrator. You can even type AdmINisTRatOR if you wish. In passwords, however, case does matter.

The built-in administrator has more privileges than the automatic administrator, regardless of UAC. In fact, it has a dangerous amount of privileges, and you should not use it– especially on a new OS with all-new security concerns–unless you know exactly why you need it.

Greg asked about the "guest" account and Dan answered about the administrator account. The guest account is disabled by default, and the (disabled) administrator is not available for the password to be set. Further, to acquire pseudo-administrative privileges sufficient to enable the built-in administrator, you'd have to be know a pseudo-administrator's password. Therefore, unless one gives the guest account administrator privileges, assuming the security policies hold appropriately, this is not an issue.

I am currently typing this message on a (fixed) Vista Business machine while configuring two new Vista Premium machines. I cannot speak for some OEM's setting the built-in password to be the same as the first-created user, since I have not yet run into this, but all three of these machines failed to do so — it was blank. I would be…disappointed if some

OEM's did this, by the way…because that would make these machines a little bit difficult to support.

UAC is indeed accessed through Control Panel. Start | Control Panel | User Accounts | User Accounts (yes, again) | Turn User Account Control on or off. You may, however, want to wait for the official release of SP1 in a few weeks; they've apparently addressed nuisance factors in UAC.

People who don't set logon passwords find that they cannot, for example, create schedule tasks, use file sharing appropriately, and/or access their computer from a network. These aren't necessarily bad things, but it's a little non-intuitive if you don't realize what's happening.

For the person who wants to login to the hidden administrator…was the article unclear? Follow the instructions carefully and you should be fine. If you are trying to "break in" to the built-in administrator from an account that does not have administrative privileges…why don't you have access to an appropriate account?

For those of you receiving "access denied" errors, you may not be starting the command prompt properly. Many times these problems can be resolved by taking a closer look at the instructions and trying again.

On previous versions of Windows, starting in Safe Mode was one of the easiest ways to reveal the built-in administrator, but on Vista, if the account is disabled you cannot use it to access safe mode. While this may lead some of you to conclude that "if my account ever gets corrupted I'd like that administrator around," a better solution would be to create a second administrator and only login to it once (to setup the profile), then have the discipline to use it only when something bad happens to your main account. You can then enable the built-in if you absolutely need it, but you'll probably get all the privileges you need from your backup account.

I believe the comment about setting the password at the prompt is accurate, and with that, I think that's all of them. Good luck, folks.

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tim   March 16, 2008 7:44 am

i did this and got a system 5 error has occurred access is denied , error message,

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Andrew   March 18, 2008 10:15 pm

To resolve the "access denied, system 5 error", simply run the command prompt as an administrator.

(Right-click Command Prompt, then click Run as Administrator.)

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cari   March 21, 2008 11:15 am

thank you so much! this fixed all my problems! i was never able to install updates because i wasnt the administrator, and now my computer is running great! thanks again!

James The G   April 6, 2008 7:30 pm

I know about this super Administrator but i need the normal administrator password to get to the super Administrator. I think it might be because the only account i can access is guest but is there any solution please help.

Helen   April 13, 2008 12:45 am

Hi

I've got Windows Vista Business and the only account I have is an account which has guest privilege only – meaning I can't use Run As Administrator, nor can I install anything … Everytime I try run as Administrator it wants a password – which I don't have …..
HELP????

Ron

If I do a "right" click and do "Run as" for the command prompt I am unable to enter a password!!
Please please please help!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Mike

You know how the WindowsXP Log-in window had a function where you could key in ctr+alt+del twice, and have a different login window come up where you could type in the administrator account? Does Vista have anything like this – so instead of going in and manually changing it all the time, could I access a hidden login window, type in the Administrator details and login?

Hannah

Ugh, I'm having a problem. For some reason (I didnt even know it was possible) my only administrative account has been deleted. I had an additional account set up for my dad, but it has limited privelages. This is currently the only account I can use. When ever I need to do something that requires a password from the administrator, it still pops up, but it dosn't give me the option of typing in a password. Is their anyway I can recover my missing account, or activate the hidden administrator account without running the cmd as administrator.

fernando

how can i get the administrator account to show up only in safe mode?

Johan

This total saga has turned out to be nothing but a total bloody joke for me. Here's my story. I tried to setup Vista's Admin Account using the following link:

[mod removed]

Anyhow all that part went well and after this I logged off and clicked on the Administrator icon in the start up screen. Now on the start up screen I got an option to log into my previous user account in which works when I enter the password in, but when I applied the password I appled to the changes on how its layed out in the above link, Vista just totally refused it and would not allow me in, no matter how many times I put the password in.

I even tried the reset password option using a USB Flash Drive and that did not help.

I mean to simply put it, I've setup a Vista Admin account, followed the proper steps and made up a password but sadly when I try to login to Vista under Administrator it all fails.

Microsoft I am very dissapointed and if worse comes to worse and I got to call MS tech support i will not pay a cent to you lot, you made the error you fix it up, simple as that.

Kirk M. Schafer

!! IMPORTANT NOTE !! — Especially for Johan, and anyone else passing through…If you

use that *other* link (or any other erroneous!! set of instructions out there) where you are told to type:

C:\> net use administrator activate:yes

*** YOU WILL SET THE ADMINISTRATOR'S PASSWORD TO "activate:yes" *** and I suspect that you will pay for support, because (and this is not meant to be harsh) this is your mistake–you followed bad instructions, and while that might be someone's else's mistake first, it is your responsibility to check the instructions, and it is your responsibility to read the comments.

In the comments in Johan's link. Arno Lips says: "step 6 is wrong", corrects it improperly, leaves out what happens if you don't correct it, and in the final case it was never fixed by the author–which should be a red flag. Many, many documents on the Internet also have this step, and it is going to cause you problems. For people with bad spelling / careless fingers, anything you type there will be accepted, so if you mis-spelled that last parameter…yikes! Your options are now limited to fairly complex password reset tools (since you will have no reset disk for administrator), making the same typo again or–for most people in this situation–reinstall.

If you do not care to learn about the problem, skip this paragraph, though I highly suggest you read it if you're already playing in the command prompt and you didn't realize the instructions were wrong. At a prompt, if you type "net user /?" you will be shown the help for the "net user" command. Note that the parameter after the user name–if specified–is the password. In Windows, special command instructions almost always exhibit a forward slash (/). (Aside: Linux/Unix utilities ported to Windows frequently use dashes "-", and you usually get to their help by typing "command –help"). Without the forward slash, you are providing data for the **normal** operation of the command, which at that position sets the password, not "alert net user to a special option." This is case-in-point my earlier comments about knowing what you're doing–this means asking the question "what will this command do" and if you don't know, looking for how you can know.

So, while step 5 at techexams.com sets the password (and it should be clear to replace "password" with your own), so does step 6. Unfortunately, even if you added the forward slash, the command should probably be "/active:yes" (as it is–and works–in this article) instead of "/activate:yes". Don't take my word for it, however–check me. This article works for me, but your mileage may vary.

I'll leave off with a couple comments. This may not be true for James' article at techexams.com, but many sites "scrape" their news from other sites in order to get traffic. True or not, the fact that it has not been updated despite comments to the contrary is a bad sign.

Secondly, don't change your password at the prompt, and NEVER change the password for a user you are not currently logged-in-as. The problem with the first activity is typos (too bad net user does not default to *, and if you don't know what I mean, I encourage you to learn about it), and the problem with the second is that you cause the account to permanently lose access to all files with special permissions, especially if they are encrypted. The correct way to set the password for an account is to login as the account to change, press Ctrl-Alt-Delete. and choose "Change Password" (the wording varies by OS). You will be required to enter your old password once and your new password twice, and it is the only appropriate way to change passwords for the overwhelming majority of Windows users.

At the risk of too much typing, hopefully the above is more helpful than not.

The Geek   May 20, 2008 11:01 am

@Kirk

Thanks for the very helpful comment. I removed the link to the other site, just to make sure that nobody reads that and gets the wrong information.

And to everybody else reading… it's very important to type things correctly… typos can screw things up pretty badly!

Kirk M. Schafer   May 20, 2008 11:51 am

Agreed and emphatic second. Thanks for writing a good and concise article.

A zmi

I have a question on how to install any software in my PC office without inform the administrator cause the window(2000)will ask me to run it in administrator window.

Tee

Hannah – try this

Use "Offline NT Password & Registry Editor" to either unlock the Administrator account or promote another user to the local administator group to regain access to your locked Windows Vista PC.

Download it (free), burn to CD, reboot from the CD and follow the prompts.

Dan

I tried to get a command prompt using "Run As Administrator" to type in the net user stuff so that I can uninstall a program, but I can't get the prompt to go to a C:\. It won't get out of C:\windows\system32, I can't get to the root directory.

Any ideas?

Kirk M. Schafer

Dan, unless something is wrong, "net user" is in the path, i.e., it doesn't matter where you are in the file system when typing it. To answer your question, however, to change directories (folders), you use the "cd" command. In this case, you would type "cd \" (no quotes), where "\" indicates the root directory for Windows hard drives.

Drew

nice. . . .thanks for the help!!!

Qibili

I Love the comments.You are forgetting one situation of activating the admin acc.Imagine being lock to the guest acc (u deleted other accounts bt nt admin & guest) & u wnt activate da admin acc but cnt coz no gpedit in RUN & cnt modify the registry either.Well this is the nytmare Iam facing.On my xp pro, I disabled the admin acc wit the 'net usr /actv:no' command.The reverse cmd is resulting in error 5.Help, wat shud I do?Thnx 4 readin'

Kirk M. Schafer

Qibili, you can infer from the comments that guest does not have appropriate privileges to escalate to administrator, regardless of what you've done to the other accounts, but if that's not clear–this is me saying it.

The unfortunate reality of disabling the administrator…which you're not supposed to be able to do as one with escalated rights "must" exist…is that if you truly have no users with even partial administrative rights (the right to re-activate, for example)…you're typically

hosed. An expert can help you reset the administrator account–and I have even done this remotely–but with people I have personally authenticated.

The fact of the matter is, the tools that enable you to reactivate the administrator without permission overwhelmingly allow you to crack the system. Since this borders on "how to break into a computer," it's an ethical matter; especially in a public forum. If you seriously need to do this–Google is your friend–keeping in mind that some of us are paid to (or simply for fun) set traps for people who shouldn't be doing what they're doing. You can hire an expert who can meet you face-to-face to do it for you (might cost you $50), contact your system manufacturer (who will probably tell you to reinstall), or verify your identity so that, e.g., we don't get sued for helping you break into a corporate network. You may have a legitimate need…but cracking a system–even if you say it's yours–is for good reason usually met with silence (above, elsewhere, etc). There is a more responsible solution if you explore the alternatives.

postmanpat

September 9, 2008 9:11 am

u have to have admin to used the Command Prompt but i messed up my pc and now i need admin to get it back right i chaged the privvalegs by assidend now i cant doeny thing i cant go on my pc C: dive it says access is denid and it needs admin to open up just a bout evrything plez help and repliy a.s.a.p thks

joey

September 16, 2008 11:48 am

i'm trying to solve this…
But…
the result is "net" is not recognized as a internal or external command,
operable program or batch file.

why????

Kirk M. Schafer

September 16, 2008 3:27 pm

Joey, you may wish to visit the howtogeek forums. There could be several causes for the error, e.g.: invalid path, corrupted file system, insufficient permissions, domain policy, and so forth–and comment streams just aren't effective places for computer help. From the header of the comment box: http://www.howtogeek.com/forum/

Neal

September 25, 2008 5:34 pm

I was browsing some vista newsgroups about admin passwords and read this thread in there and followed the link here.

I think this is a very handy back-up admin tool that should be used by people who know there good ol dos commands. It is true that you can access thepasswords in otherways even with guest privledges BUT that should be left to someone who knows EXACTLY what they are doing and willing to take the responsability for HACKING the system they are trying to fix.

I am definately putting this link into my admin account for when I go "playing" with my settings and mess things up horribly.

joey

October 18, 2008 4:00 am

i am trying to access the admin profile like you said but i get the error "system eror 5 has a occured" what do i do to fix this

Tim

Reading the responses show how new a lot of these folks are especially those who don't know anything about DOS. Unlocking the hidden Administrator profile will let you modify areas that you would normally get "Access Denied" in your pseudo-administrator profile. Plus it will let you modify all the folders in the Windows folder that you could not do before, such as applying a patch to 'certain software'. If you are a newbie, I would not recommend doing this except for those who know how to type the DOS command without making a mistake (if you screwed up, you should stop what you are doing, you do not need to go there).

Tim

If yo do get the profile working, I would definitely drop a password on the profile and do not let anyone access it.

Shade

Hello everyone, i saw all your comments on enabling the administrative account on vista, I have actually done mine and it worked perfectly fine.
Kirk M.Scheffer, i love your answers in the questions, it shows you really haveexperience on how vista works, if you could give me your mail addy, so that i could contact you if i have any challenges with my Vista, here is my email "slimdamsel7@yahoo.com", expecting yours.

Dennis

I am trying to uninstall Quicktime for itunes as I get an error message which takes me to Apple. They recommend to uninstall Quicktime and then re-install. I am set up as an Adminstrator but when i select to uninstall i get an error dialogue box which says 'the System Administrator has set policies to prevent this installation". What is going on?

Sami

My comment is 'sort of' a question.

If I would want to access the "run as administrator" under an .exe file I right-click, properties and go to compatibility tab. The privilege level is grayed out. But when I right-click the .exe it has the option "Run As Administrator." Is that the same thing?

Honestly, that's the only reason why I was considering messing with the 'hidden' admin account hoping it would let me run programs under administrator.

My login account is currently set to have administrator privileges though…

I'm running Vista Basic and have SP1 installed if you need that information.

David

This does not work for me. The admin account is disabled, and I can ONLY log in as a regular user. Even with i do right click – Run as Administrator, it says access denied. I've tried opening the Local Users console from Administrative Tools as Administrator, but it also says access denied..

What else can I try?

Craig

This title is very misleading. The administrator account is not hidden. It is just disabled by default.

If you right click my computer, manage. goto local users and groups, users, you can see it right there just like any other user.

You can also go to the groups folder, doubleclick administrators to see what users on the computer are administrators as well.

Kirk M. Schafer

*** Dennis: "problem with QuickTime":
. A Google search returns relevant results, e.g., http://www.appdeploy.com/messa.....asp?m=8872. As your setup isn't clear and the amount of information required to help you isn't really suited for the comment stream of an apparently loosely-related article, you may wish to visit the HowToGeek forums, a link in the comment box (below).

*** Sami: "Run as…":
. The "Run As Administrator" option can be greyed out for several reasons, e.g., disabling UAC, using the "wrong" tab, and interaction with what's called the application manifest. The following link may be helpful: http://support.microsoft.com/kb/922708–but you may be better served by the HowToGeek forums.
. On Vista, setting your account to have "administrator" privileges effectively yields "standard" user rights, with the option to run programs with elevated privileges. To put this another way, under Vista you're still not running as the administrator you've come to expect, even if you're using "Run As Administrator." You may wish to jump down to my response to Craig.

*** David: "Doesn't work for me…":
. I strongly suggest you try the forums, which are better suited for this type of in-depth support.

*** Craig: "Misleading…":
. While I don't feel the author's title is misleading, I admit I'm looking at it from an expert perspective.
. In XP, group membership was sufficient to determine your privileges–you just added yourself to the appropriate group and everything happened under those privileges. A "user" could use shortcuts to "run a program as admin" but this was mostly ignored by "users always logged in as administrators" who simply preferred the convenience of not knowing why this "extra work" is critically important–or that Vista tried to address this. While it gets complex once networking is involved–especially with the use of domains–the gross result is that your feedback is correct under this model.
. In Vista (unfortunately) the administrator we initially see…isn't. While I remark to myself that the process you describe may be release-dependant, i.e., Home vs. Business or a function of corporate domains, more to the point: this is where the exact terminology matters. A user can appear to be a Vista "administrator" but lack the privilege escalation available to the "built-in administrator." In fact, Vista runs administrator tasks under the context of the currently-logged-in user–with multiple access tokens–UNLESS the user is NOT a member of the Administrators group, when the context used is the account used when authenticating with UAC. This is a critical security point, and enabling the built-in administrator is what the article is telling you how to do (think XP's security model). While this may initially seem misleading, what's happening is that this falls into the realm of highly-specific nomenclature, and my point is this: Many users don't recognize a difference and would either fail to find this article, discard it as irrelevant, or find it too technical (which is the risk I carry in my own comments). The author has to make this easy-to-find while at the same time trusting the average visitor won't get themselves in trouble. It *is* important to recognize the difference, because it *is* necessary to enable and use the "built-in administrator" in rare cases–but it's a risky move. It's why I keep coming back here to strongly caution non-expert users to be careful with this procedure, and to seek help on the HowToGeek forums when they need it.

*** To wit, the "hidden (disabled), i.e., built-in, administrator" and the administrator stuff we can all get to in user management…are NOT the same thing.

*** Finally, while this isn't the only reason to install it, Vista Service Pack 1 adds an option

for prompting (UIAccess) that does not exist in the initial releases of Vista.

Louis

Dear Mr. Schafer,

I created the super administartor account but was unable to log in. Thinking I must have typed the password incorrectly, I went into the administartot account and changed the password for the super administartor account, and then was able to log in to the latter. This surprised me since I assumed that the 'super' account wouldn't be changeable by another.

But I wonder, if someone has a Vista OS and no administrator account, what would stop someone from establishing a password-protected administrator account and a password-protected super administrator account and getting complete control of the computer?

Take care.

Louis

Kirk M. Schafer

Louis, that's an astute observation. With physical access to the machine, the appropriate knowledge, and readily-available tools, the answer is: nothing. It's an improvement on XP–where one only needs the ability to sit in front of a computer–but once administrator access is available, all files on the system (even explicit denies) can be seized. This isn't a sky-is-falling comment–it's part of my job description–but it's said to show why we're forced to have at least one administrator aside from the "super admin"…why we need to protect it properly…and why to be careful creating extra admin accounts.

The behavior of the account with an "unset" password is not surprising; it protects the computer from trivial public (e.g., wireless) network attacks. Finally, I hope all readers will be careful changing passwords on other accounts. Windows will usually warn, but it is possible to lose access to data if done inappropriately.

Ed

I have gone through the first ste[. it says "The command has been completed successfully" however when i log out the acount isnt there. i have tried it again and again and i still have the same problem.

how do i do it know?
thanks

Ed

ignore my previous comment i was typing it in wrong.
however know i have the administrator account i cant log in. i have tried most of the passwords that are suggested on here but none of them wrong. whats the password or who do you get around it?

mukhtar

can anyone access my pc running vista but my HD is not shared from my network as ai am logged in as user and anybody can acess as administrator??
please help

Lee

i had the same problem my default admin user account had a set password and i couldnt log in.
just log in with your normal user account and go to users and reset the default admin password…. hey presto.
isnt it fun working with xp's slow brother

Michael C.

thanks! it worked. I'd been trying to solve this problem for days. In XP i was used to running programs that require full administrative rights and was confused when i didn't find it

IRENE D.

To Whom it May Concern:

I have some Download Issues. I was uninstalling my AntiVirus Software, AVG, to be exact. I was unable to get rid of all of it. Therefore, my Computer will not let me install any other AntiVirus Softwares, and I don't know how to resolve this. My Browser Opens up, but I cannot download any files. I have tried to set my Computer to the System Restore, but this does not resolve the issue.

Any suggestions? I have a Windows Vista OS. Thank you. Any Suggestions will help.

Kirk M. Schafer

Irene, without intending to be rude (at all), this is neither a forum nor the topic of conversation; you will surely find better results asking your question on the forums (which is a link immediately above the comment box used to comment on this web page) and choosing (or creating) a top-level topic that matches your request.

Lee's suggestion has a simple caveat: it will work from a pseudo-admin, not a "normal user" — and the risks with resetting an account that isn't yours was covered before. As for Vista's responsiveness…this has a lot of causes–many of which are caused by the manufacturer or end-users who need to spend a little more cash to obtain a machine that runs the OS properly; this is again a topic for the forums.

That said, Ed, Mukhtar, and other "more help" questions–please visit the forums–it's a better venue for additional concerns.

jimmy

well what if i have parents who set up parental controls and they have a admin account set up. They also set up a account for only me. What i would like to do is bypass the parental controls. ie; stay on the computer after the time limits have been up or something like that.

Wayne

Related issue – my niece has a problem with her laptop. It's running Vista and has only ever been set up with a single user account. Recently she found that she was getting frequent 'access denied' messages when trying to access files or run programs. Often she could get by this by doing a right-click and then running as administrator but clearly this is a pain in the …

She asked me for advice (unfortunately she's 140 miles away so we're working via 'phone). We booted into safe mode and she logged into her account and everything was

visible and accessible. Checked user account settings to ensure that her account was not limited and it is admin enabled.

Rebooted back into normal mode and the problem returns. Grrrr!

I'm looking for ideas as to why her account seems 'normal' in safe but then somehow restricted in normal. Any help gratefully received.

Roman
February 11, 2009 3:36 pm

Hi. I'm trying to follow the instructions but instead of getting The command completed successfully message I receive Username not found (or smth like this – I use Russian version of Vista so I'm not sure how it will be in English). Please can anyone help me? I use Vista Home Premium SP1.

Kehrin
February 12, 2009 1:50 am

I've put the cmd shortcut on my desktop but when I click Run As Administrator, nothing happens. Nothing. I can open it normally and type the command and I get "Access Denied" (of course, 'cause I'm not running as an administrator lol). Why will it not allow me to Run As Administrator? There are two accounts on my pc, one labeled Standard, the other labeled Administrator, and I've tried it from both..

shanna
February 13, 2009 9:30 pm

I am having the same problem I have been tryin to install my new canon printer and I keep getting the error message access denied while installing the MP drivers. Canon says my computer is not recognizing me as an administrator and gateway says that i need to reload windows, which may not be a sure fix and i would lose all of my data and software. Is there any other way to get my computer to recognize me as an administrator? I have windows vista home premium and this is so annoying CAN SOMEONE PLEASE HELP ME FIGURE THIS OUT ALL I WANT TO DO IS PRINT

Matthew
February 14, 2009 4:11 am

When I ty it says c:\users\Matthew> then whe i try it doesnt work

crystal
February 16, 2009 4:02 pm

When I ty it says c:\users\kornlover> then whe i try it doesnt work

Karen von H�nerbein
February 17, 2009 7:54 am

Thank you so much for this website hint
I have been so angry and helpless because until today I could not access important program folders,
which I really needed for my work to test simulations for my customers. They are automatically created by the test program and I could not get not copy anything to them or from them I have needed this hint so badly.
This is MY computer and I expect to be able to access anything if necessary. I am really mad at Microsoft for doing this!
Thank you again!
Best wishes
Karen

PCsLoveemHateem

📅 February 18, 2009 2:55 pm

I have a remote PC with employees accessing the internet and then deleting the history. I need internet access for them so that they can get their email. If I set-up an Admin account can i stop them from accessing the internet? Or at least can I stop them from deleting the history. I got one virus already and of course no one did it! If so should I follow the advice above and set-up the hidden admin or do I set-up a regular Amin account and then a user account. I see how to set-up a hidden admin. But how do I set-up a reg. Admin I see it in control pannel on the PC but i want to do it the correct way not just mouse my-way-around.

Catch22

📅 March 6, 2009 3:08 pm

Good article, but there seems to be one situation not covered.

If the MountedDevices registry entry has incorrect volume reference, Vista will fail to load the correct desktop. IN that case, there is no desktop, Start or any visible icons to select and run as administrator.

In this case, you can start a command window by Ctrl+delete | Task Manager | New Task (Run..) | cmd
However, you cannot use the "runas /user:mypc/administrator cmd" command because there is no admin account active. You also cannot start the admin account using the "net user administrator /active:yes"....because that can only be done in a cmd shell that has been started as an administrator!

Is there a way around this?

Morgoth Bauglir

📅 March 10, 2009 10:49 am

Seems to work fine at first glance. Still don't have access to Special Permissions though. Weird.

Elias

📅 March 18, 2009 7:56 pm

I cant find the command prompt in the start menu, but i do have a default programs that when i right click it shows me the option to run as administrator, but when i click that it just takes me to the regular desktop. whats a' goin' on?

Morgoth Bauglir

📅 March 18, 2009 10:24 pm

START –> All Programs –> Accessories –> Command Prompt.
Should be right there.

Charles

📅 March 20, 2009 10:25 pm

Works fine, but didn't seem to have UAC disabled. @Sean to use "Legitimate Settings" (No Run/CMD/Regedit) just open Administrative Tools in the Control Panel and then System Configuration and Click the last tab. There is an option to enable and disable it there. All click no type, so nothing fancy.

karthik

📅 April 3, 2009 4:46 am

if i will try to runas administrator he will ask a password, but the administrative account not

have any password. The administrative account defaultly having any password or not. if it
have password how to find it.

Nikki

I have enabled my hidden administrator account and it says that the command was
successful, however the administrator login is not available when i turn my computer on. It
shows my account and the guest account. How do I log on as the adminstrator?

Morgoth Bauglir

The new "Guest Account" is the Administrator Account, just rename it.

key

i did wat u said above but i still get this message Windows cannot access the specified
device,path,file. You may not have the appropriate permission to access the item and i am
trying to install a program and it wont let me it worked 4 days ago wen i didnt have a
product key wen i do it wont work

Nikki

The Guest Account is not a new account. It was the one that was already on there. It has
limited access.

Whit

I got the Blue screen "windows detects a problem and is shutting down" it did and when it
restarted there was a new user on the screen (i had myself/my wife/and guest profiles
only)THE NEW ONE WAS-{Administrator -uuurrbb-10000000000} not sure the numbers
and letters are right but it was something like that. I was able to log on my user profile and
was able to open user profiles up in control panel. I deleted the new user(uuurrbb-
10000000000) in question and set myself as / Administrator /. Everything runs fine I did
Scans and it all works. Where did that come from and did deleting it mess anything up?
Thanks Whit

Mareen

is there not any option for logon to vista by typing user name and password.
this option is present in XP if we disable welcome screen from control panel in change the
way users logon/logoff tab.

luke

whenever i type the command in it comes up with accses denied. what do i do??

Matt

When I try to start the command prompt it asks for the admin password but my admin pass
was changed without me knowing so how do I run it in administrator????

Max

Help!I clicked on "Run as administrator" The cmd opened, but it doesn't say "Administrator" at the top, and if you type all that things, it just say:
System error 5 has occured.
Access denied.
How to fix this????? Pleeeaaaseee heeellpepppppp!!!

Whit

I did a system restore. I had to reset the password on admin(vista) and everything runs fine. If you have system retore run it. If you don't have a password when you set yourself as system admin. when it asks for one to do a function /defrag or whatever,just click the enter/aplly/continue what ever your choise is and it will preform the function. that will happen if you are the administrtor but don't have a password set up, it still asks but again if you don't have a password just click continue.

proudmarinemom63

OK I seriously need help. MY administrator account was disbled. My password is not working and parental controls is limiting me to ask administrator password. I purchased the windows pasword unlocker and ran it. It says my admistrator has to be enabled to reset. I cant enable without administrator password. Then I tried Offline NT Password & Registry Editor. Now I have a guest account that asks for a user name and password. I dont have a user name and password. I am so stumped. Darn Vista sucks big time. This is a relative new laptop (3 months) my sons. He did not make a backup disk. The only account I can open is my sons and practically everything I do asks for that darn administrator password. HELP!!! Im $29.99 down and counting.

Chris Bellis

A really helpful article and string of comments which finally explained why I was having so much trouble installing Microsoft updates. I assumed as a user with admin privileges that I could "run as administrator" or even "take the ownership of the file" from the context menu and all would be fine to install the exe update file. In reality only logging in as the super admin and installing from there has allowed me to install many of the microsoft and Adobe updates. This article explains why. I might add "Super" to the label so that I know the difference, or perhaps "junior" to the user context menu entry. I should add when I made a mistake on another matter and had to use system restore, my password protected super admin account lost its password protection and became freely open from the welcome screen as it had been when I first enabled it using the DOS command. In some ways it's a fairly dangerous, rather over privileged, account to be so readily available for all and sundry who might care to sit at your computer.
Thanks for the article.

proudmarinemom63

Thanks but no help. I actually aleady tried this. It asks for administrator password to run as administrator. I dont' have the administrator password. So is there another way to enable the administrator or to erase the password?

astygmatyk

It's certainly important to avoid typos.. Amazingly nobody talks about

importance to create the back-up image (drive image) with your complete
installation. Personally I keep at least two.. One with the optimized
OS installation and second with all the major software that I'm using..
Typos or no typos, things get screwed.. And over time performance gets degraded. Rather
than using a variety of doubtfull "healing" software, not
to mention the background running antivirus programs that slow your performance… have
a drive image copy or two… That way not only you
need not be afraid of wildest experiments with say your registry
or paranoic about catching a real virus killer.. If things stop working,
you can always restore your machine to a previous ship-shape in about
20-40 min…
Periodically upgrade your drive image and you should be fine for the
remainder of time…

Tracy
May 12, 2009 12:29 pm

My daughter has a laptop with Vista. Someone put a password on the computer and now
when she turns her computer on it asks for a password. We tried to re-install the OS but
when Disk 1 starts running the system tells her she has to enter a password. How do we
re-install the OS without the password?

Nick
May 12, 2009 4:48 pm

after i do all that. how do i get the password to the administrator account back on.

Shail
May 15, 2009 9:51 am

net user administrator /active:no

^^^^Here "/" is NOT Required:)

---

attaway
May 19, 2009 6:27 am

thanks for the admin reavealed. but the important thing to me isn't just revealing admin
account but how to use it to rescue a lost password situation like in WinXP where one can
hit the ctrl+alt+(del *2). is there any way like such with vista or 7 ?

---

attaway
May 19, 2009 6:31 am

thanks for the admin reavealed. but the important thing to me isn't just revealing admin
account but how to use it to rescue a lost password situation like in WinXP where one can
hit the ctrl+alt+(del *2) from LOG-ON PAGE. is there any way like such with vista or 7 in a
situation where the admin account hadn't been reavealed?

SH
May 24, 2009 7:19 pm

Pls advise how to enable the view actives report for account user.

Melissa
June 2, 2009 9:37 am

I started out with the same problem, not being able to find/acess this administrator account.
I took my computer to the place I bought it and they said something happened to my user
profiles…I got a virus or had a system failure and I'll never be able to install another

program again. GREAT! If this is the case, can this even be fixed? Or is my brand new computer toast? Any suggestions would be appreciated!

Igor
June 27, 2009 3:31 pm

when i do that its says acess denied what do i do

Igor
June 27, 2009 3:32 pm

and also to run as administrator i need a password so… what do i do

Aaron Lowndes
July 3, 2009 6:45 pm

I get `the username could not be found` error 2221. yes i have run cmd as an administrator as instructed. any thoughts?

Kukkuu
July 9, 2009 5:39 am

Here is a pickle:

Your Vista is a member of domain, your administrator account is disabled, you remove your comp from domain (to add it to another domain), you reboot your comp and there is no administrator login. How are you able to login to anything without administrator login showing up? (and now since you are not a member of the old domain, there either)

Dwight Stegall
July 24, 2009 5:55 pm

The Administrator disabler you have above does not work.

net user administrator /active:no

it has to be

net user administrator administrator /active:no

saman
July 26, 2009 4:00 am

how to enable admin account vista

Doris
July 28, 2009 11:25 am

How can resolve the problem: `the username could not be found` error 2221. I already read the Kukkuu comment above.

Dennis
August 10, 2009 11:14 pm

i have done what u said to be done about the command promt but while trying to access the "Run As Administatior" it still needed a password to even enter that specific command. what can i do now?

Peter Hernandez

📅 August 12, 2009 6:42 am

i did what u said but it says System error 5 has occurred access is denied what does it mean and how do i fix it??

John

📅 August 20, 2009 2:48 am

Cheers mate, this has just helped me get out from deep shit

James

📅 September 19, 2009 3:07 pm

I bought a new tower for my computer and moved. My girlfriend at the time was there and asked if she could use it and Being nice I said yes. We broke up and I got my computer back, but she has passwords in place so I can't even load games onto my computer and she was the administrator, what or how can I get around the passwords and use my computer?

Alexander

📅 September 25, 2009 1:36 pm

Hey. This post seems very helpfull, but my problem is abit worse. Somebody had fiddled with the windows controls on our pc, and now for some reason, we only have 2 standard user accounts, and NO administrator accounts. Whenever a download has to be made, it keeps opening the administrator box for the password in order to continue. Only 1 problem ; there is no box to type the password in (probably because there is no admin accounts). Also, on 1 of the accounts for some reason, most of the programs keep getting blocked 1 by 1, and you cannot unblock them. If i try opening anything with "run as admin" it will give me a box for the password, but there is nowhere to type anything. Ive never had a problem like this, please help if you can. There are NO viruses what so ever on the PC. Have scanned 2 times with 2 different programs.

thanks

Jamie

📅 October 4, 2009 2:44 pm

Hi all. I have read this post but been very non technical I am either missing the soulution or its just not in here but my problem is as follows…

I got my son a loptop and whilst in his user profile which was set as the default account i change the account name to his. I then created another two users profiles whilst still logged in his profile (one for me and my wife). I made mine an admin user and my wifes a standard user. I then removed the admin rights for the user account i was logged in as (my sons). When i then logged off and returned to the user profile menu after start up I could only see my sons and my wife's accounts. Yet when i try to do anything that requires admin approval i get a pop up box with my account name and a request for the password i set. Now i know 1 million% the password i used to set up the admin account but it doesnt accept it, so therfore i now have no way managing anything that requires admin access.

I have googled and looked for a solution and this thread seems to be the closest I can find that may have people reading that may know a solution. Can anyone help? I notice no one has posted anyresponses to questions here for a while so would appreciate any help!!

Miodrag

📅 October 18, 2009 4:22 am

Very good totoriali instructions, you helped me with Ubuntu, Thanks 😃

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What Is That Process?

svchost.exe	wmpnscfg.exe	Wfica32.exe
jusched.exe	rundll32.exe	Mobsync.exe
dwm.exe	wfcrun32.exe	conhost.exe
ctfmon.exe	lpoint.exe	Dpupdchk.exe
wmpnetwk.exe	ltype.exe	Adobe_Updater.exe