Apple laptop: Prepare to set up

Resetting your Apple computer to make it safe, and ready to start afresh.

A second-hand Apple computer, whether purchased or given to you by a friend or family, needs to be reset before you can use it safely. Resetting the computer erases all the previous owner's files and personal information, and lets you set up the computer as if it were brand new.

What you will need

To follow every step of this course, your computer must have the latest edition of the operating software, which is **macOS Catalina**. However, if your computer is using an older version of the operating software, you will have an opportunity to update to macOS Catalina after completing the *Prepare to set up* and *Set up* courses. For more information about macOS, refer to the *Apple laptop: Security and privacy* guide.

For their security, the previous owner should complete the steps on **page 5** of this guide before permanently passing their computer to you. You will need the previous owner to help you with some of the steps in this course, so make sure they're close by.

You should also check that your computer is connected to mains power, switched on and showing the **Sign-in** screen. The mouse and keyboard should also be connected properly.

First steps

Because your computer is switched on, it should be showing something on the screen. If the screen is black, your computer might have gone to sleep.

Gently press the **Space bar** on the keyboard to wake it up. If nothing happens, briefly press the power button to turn your computer on. Don't hold the power button too long, or you might restart the computer by accident!

If the screen asks you to choose a country, your Apple computer has already been reset, and is prepared for setting up. You can skip ahead to the course called *Apple laptop: Set up* to finish setting up your computer.

If you see a **Sign-in** screen with the previous owner's details, you will need to reset. To continue, you will need the previous owner's password, so make sure they are standing by to help with this. Without their password, you won't be able to reset the computer.
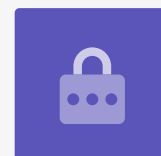

Make sure your mouse and keyboard are connected properly before commencing the Reset

When they have entered their password or PIN, the screen will change to the **Desktop**, and you can continue.
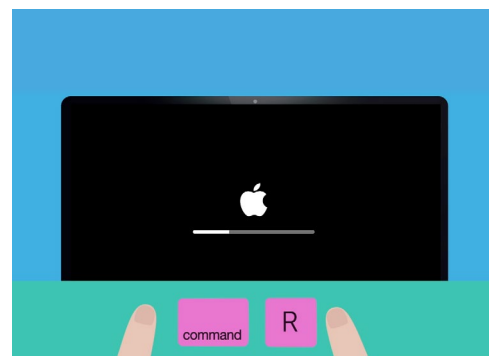
It's best never to share PINs or passwords with others, so ask the previous owner to enter theirs onto the Sign-in screen for you. After the reset, you can create your own password or PIN to secure your information.

Starting the Reset

To start the **Reset** process:

1. Click the **Apple icon** in the top left of the screen.
2. Find **Restart** in the list, and click on it.
3. A box will appear asking if you're sure, but don't click the blue **Restart** button just yet.
4. Find the **command** and **R** keys on your keyboard.
5. You'll need to hold down both of these keys at the same time immediately after clicking **Restart**, so practise pressing them now.
6. Now click **Restart**.
7. When the screen goes black, immediately hold down the **command** and **R** keys at the same time.
8. The screen will turn back on and show the **Apple logo** and a progress bar. Take your fingers off both keys now.
9. After a moment you'll see the **macOS Utilities** menu.
10. If you see the **Sign-in** screen again, the Restart didn't quite work. Don't worry, you can try again, but you'll need the previous owner to enter their password again.
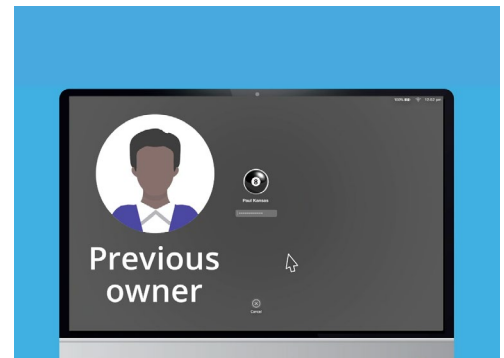

You have successfully restarted your computer when you see the Apple logo

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Erasing the previous owner's data

When you can see the **macOS Utilities** screen, look for **Disk Utility** and click to highlight it. Then click **Continue**.

1. The **Disk Utility** menu will open.

2. Look on the left-hand side and click **Macintosh HD**. HD stands for hard drive and is where all the information on your computer is stored.

3. We're going to delete the previous owner's files, accounts, and applications. This is the last chance for the previous owner to back up their files, so check they are ready for you to proceed. When you're ready, click **Erase** at the top of the menu.

4. A box with some information about your computer will appear. Leave the information as-is, and click **Erase** again.

5. The **Erase** process should take about a minute to complete. When it's finished, click **Done**.
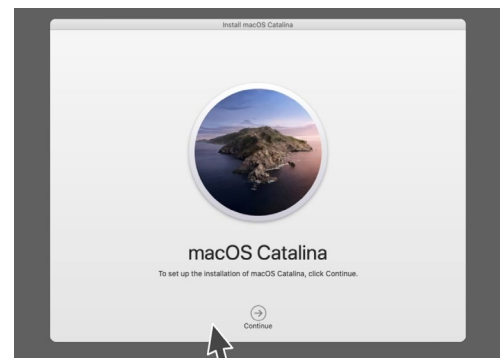

Before erasing the hard drive, check that the previous owner has made a backup of their files

Performing the reset

The erase process deleted the previous owner's files and applications, but it also erased your computer's operating software. You will need to reinstall it for your computer to work.

1. The **Disk Utility** menu will still be open. Close it by clicking on the red dot in the top left.

2. Now click on **Reinstall macOS**.

3. Click on **Continue.**

4. You'll see the **Install macOS** screen. Click **Continue** again.

5. Apple's **Terms and Conditions** will appear. You can read the terms and conditions, and then click the arrow above **Agree**.

Your computer's operating software needs to be reinstalled after you erase the hard drive

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6. Click **Agree** again to continue.

7. On the next screen, check that Macintosh HD is the only option, and click the arrow above **Install**.
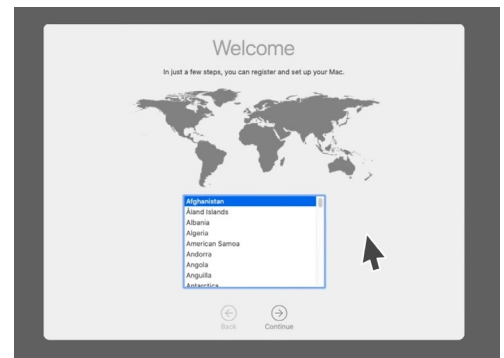
The **Reset** process begins.

Finishing up

It may take the computer around 30 minutes to complete, depending on how much data and information has to be erased.

You don't need to do anything until the **Reset** is complete.

Once you see the **Welcome** screen, asking you to choose a country, your computer is reset, and ready to set up in the next course *Apple laptop: Set up*.

The Welcome screen tells you that the Reset is complete and that your computer is ready to set up

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Protecting the previous owner's security and information

Before permanently passing their computer to you, the previous owner should take a few steps to protect their security and information. If you plan to give away or sell your computer in the future, these steps will help to ensure the new owner can't access any of your personal information.

1. **Make a backup**. Creating a copy of all the files, applications and settings on their computer and saving it to a hard drive will make setting up their new computer easy.

2. **Deauthorise the computer**. This will make sure you can't access the music and other content the previous owner has purchase from Apple and, because there is a limit of five authorised computers for each Apple ID, allows the previous owner to authorise a new computer.
   Steps: From the **iTune**s or **Music** app, click **Account**, then **Sign out** to sign out. Next, select **Account** again, then **Authorisations** and **Deauthorise this Computer**. The previous owner will need their Apple ID and password to complete the steps.

3. **Sign out of iCloud**. iCloud is Apple's way of storing files, such as photos, online. It's also a way of keeping important information like calendar appointments synchronised across different devices.
   Steps: From the **Apple** menu, click **System Preferences** then, **Apple ID** and choose **iCloud** in the side panel and **Turn off Find My Mac**. Next click **Overview** and **Sign out**. If your computer shows **iCloud** in **System Preferences** instead of **Apple ID**, click on it then click **Sign Out**.

4. **Sign out of iMessages**. This is a service for sending text messages between Apple computers, smartphones and tablets. Signing out of iMessage ensures that the previous owner's messages don't pop up on your computer.
   Steps: From the **iMessages** app, click **Messages**, then **Preferences**, then **iMessage** and **Sign Out**.
   Once the previous owner has completed these steps, the computer is ready to reset.