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Computer Does Not Boot to Microsoft Windows 7

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Article Summary:	This article describes troubleshooting computers that are powering up correctly and passing the Dell BIOS screen at boot-up, but do not successfully boot to Microsoft Windows

Table of Contents:

This article is for Microsoft Windows 7: **Click here to change the Operating System**

Step 1:	**Verify the Computer Finishes Initial Power-Up (POST)**

In many cases a computer will not attempt to hand off control to the operating system. If you power the computer on and you see a Dell logo screen with a bar at the bottom, and that bar fills up completely and disappears, then your computer has successfully completed POST.
Click Here if Your Computer Does Not Complete POST

Step 2:	**Check for Specific Error Messages**

Dell has information on some specific error messages at startup. Refer to the following links for more information:
HAL.DLL is missing or corrupt
NTLDR or NTDETECT is missing or corrupt
Loading PBR for Descriptor generated after POST
A BLUE SCREEN or STOP error has occurred
If the error message is not listed above, try searching for additional solutions on

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the Web.
Describe your problem, including any specific error messages, in the field below and click on your preferred search engine.

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| Step 3: | **Run a Computer Diagnostic** |

To run PSA Diagnostics, turn on the computer and tap the **<F12>** key several times at the Dell logo screen. This will start the One-Time Boot Menu.
Select **Diagnostics** to start the diagnostic assessment of the computer hardware. This test takes approximately 5 minutes.
If you receive an error from the PSA diagnostics, refer to the Dell Hardware Diagnostics page for further assistance:
Click Here to Troubleshoot Diagnostic Errors

| Step 4: | **Boot the Computer into Safe Mode** |

1. Start the computer.

2. Tap <F8> on the keyboard immediately after the Dell logo screen disappears until you see the Windows Advanced Options Menu on the screen.
   (If the Windows Advanced Options Menu does not appear, restart the system and try again.)
3. Select Safe mode and press <Enter>.
4. Log on as the administrator or as a user with administrative access.

If your computer does not boot to Safe Mode, select from the following options to troubleshoot. Otherwise, proceed to Step 5.
I cannot boot the computer to Safe Mode
I cannot get to the Advanced Options Menu

| Step 5: | **Check for Recent Changes** |

If you are able to successfully boot to Safe Mode, check your computer to see if any new software or hardware was recently installed. If so, try uninstalling those programs or hardware from your computer.

| Step 6: | **Unplug All External Devices** |

A piece of hardware may be interfering with the normal boot process of

Windows. Try unplugging all devices from your computer, including:

- Printers
- Scanners
- Media Card Readers
- Small Media cradles (iPod, PDA, MP3 player, etc.)
- Digital Cameras and Video Recorders
- USB storage devices
- CDs or DVDs from all optical drives

The only devices you should leave attached to your computer are your monitor, mouse and keyboard, if the computer is a desktop.

Step 7:	**Use Startup Repair to Restore Critical Windows Files**

Startup Repair is a Windows 7 recovery tool that can fix certain problems, such as missing or damaged system files, that might prevent Windows from starting correctly. When you run Startup Repair, it scans your computer for the problem and then tries to fix it so your computer can start correctly.
To learn more about using Startup Repair to restore critical Windows files, click the link below:
How to Run Windows Startup Repair

Step 8:	**Use System Restore to Revert to a Previous State**

1. Restart the computer.
2. Tap <F8> during startup until the **Windows Advanced Options** menu appears.

   > ✍ **Note:**
   >
   > If the **Windows Advanced Options** menu does not appear, restart the computer and try again.

3. Press <Down Arrow> until **Repair Your Computer** is highlighted, and then press <Enter>.
4. In the **System Recovery Options** window, click to select your language, and then click **Next**.
5. Log in as a user with administrative rights, and click **OK**.
6. From the **Choose a recovery tool** menu, click **System Restore**.
7. In the **System Restore** window, click **Next**.
8. Click the **Show restore points older than 5 days** checkbox for a complete listing of restore points.
9. Click to select a restore point.

> **Note:**
>
> Attempt to restore from the most recent restore point. If this fails to correct the problem, try the next most recent restore point until you find a restore point that resolves the issue. You will need to reinstall any software installed after the selected restore point.

10.
Click **Next** and then click **Finish**.

11.
Click **Yes** in the confirmation window.

12.
Click **Restart** after system restore successfully completes.

13.
If you encounter any error messages during the restore process, follow the on-screen instructions to correct the error.

Step 9:	Use Clean-Boot Troubleshooting to Isolate the Software Issue

A program or application may be interfering with the normal boot process of Windows. Microsoft has created a detailed process for isolating a startup program that is causing Windows to not boot correctly. Click the link below to being the troubleshooting process:
How to troubleshoot a problem by performing a clean boot in Windows Vista or in Windows 7

Step 10:	Restore the Operating System to Factory Settings

If clean boot troubleshooting cannot identify the issue, it may be necessary to restore your computer to factory settings. To restore your computer's operating system and software to the original factory settings, launch the link below:

Launch the Microsoft Windows Reinstallation Guide

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