

I lost track of the author of this one. -ed.

WIN98: NO INSTALL CODE!

If you have accidentally misplaced or lost your Windows 98 Setup CD-ROM (or your Win98 Product Key code), there is still a way to (re)install Win98 on your computer, without knowing the 25 digit Product Key.

This method applies to ALL Windows 98 Gold (final) releases: Full, OEM and Upgrade.

WARNING: This workaround requires you to modify the copyrighted code of a file by using DEBUG! Be aware that this procedure is illegal in the United States and Canada, and voids your Microsoft warranty! Do it at your own risk!

I have NOT tried this, so DO NOT send me e-mail about it!

NECESSARY STEPS:

1. First copy the entire \Win98 folder from your Windows 98 Setup cd-rom to a temporary directory on your hard disk, provided you have enough room (170 MB).
 2. Use the DOS based EXTRACT.EXE tool (located on your Setup cd-rom in \Win98) to copy PIDGEN.DLL to a directory on your hard drive, by running this command from any DOS prompt:

```
EXTRACT D:\WIN98\PRECOPY1.CAB PIDGEN.DLL
```

I presumed that D is your cd-rom drive letter. Change if different on your machine.

3. Run DEBUG (filename DEBUG.EXE, located in C:\Windows\Command) from any DOS prompt to modify PIDGEN.DLL, by typing the command lines below EXACTLY as shown (case insensitive), including the SPACES, and then pressing the Enter key after EACH line:

```
DEBUG drive:\folder\PIDGEN.DLL
```

```
E 1ED7
```

```
E 1EDF
```

```
W
```

```
Q
```

Typing "E 1ED7" and respectively "E 1EDF" above (no quotes) will generate two new DEBUG lines:

```
xxxx:1ED7 39. 8B
```

and respectively:

```
xxxx:1EDF 39. 8B
```

Press Enter after each one.

NOTE: If you have a hex editor, you can patch the offset 1DD7h and 1DDFh from bytecode 39h to bytecode 8Bh.

No further DEBUG segment adjustments are necessary, because Pidgen.dll is less than 64 KB in size.

The "W" line (no quotes) tells DEBUG to write the changes to the file (generates a message like: "writing xxxx bytes"), and then "Q" quits (exits) the command line debugger, returning to the DOS prompt.

4. Now run Setup from the folder where you copied the Win98 installation files. When prompted to type the serial number of the Product Key, type any letters or numbers except all zeroes. If everything goes well, your modified Pidgen.dll file will be used instead of the original one from Precopy1.cab. Also, you will not be asked to insert a "proof of upgrade" disk if you are installing the Win98 Upgrade release, and if there is no older Windows/WFWG installation found on any of your hard disks/partitions:

- Windows/WfWG 3.xx setup floppies, or

- Win95/OSR2.x setup cd-rom. Win98 Setup searches specifically for these Win95 setup files: WINSETUP.BIN, PRECOPYx.CAB and WIN_95xx.CAB.

This tip should work with Win98 NEW installs and REinstalls as well.

If you are trying to (re)install the Win98 OEM (full) release, you might need to perform a few extra steps:

5. When Setup is almost completed, your computer will reboot.

6. When the Win98 GUI comes up, it will ask for the Product ID.

7. Cancel and shut down Windows.

8. Reboot and hit F8 (or Ctrl) at the "Starting Windows 98..." screen.
 9. The MS-DOS mode Startup Menu will show up. Select "Safe mode" (option 3).
 10. When the Safe mode GUI comes up, click the Start button, click Run, type Regedit, and press Enter.
 11. Highlight the "ProductId" string, found under this Registry key:
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion
 12. In the right hand pane, double-click on "ProductId".
 13. Typical format of Win98 "ProductId" string:
XXXXX-XXX-XXXXXXXX-XXXXX
- Type in any characters (letters and/or numbers), only don't type 25 zeroes for the entire serial number!
14. Close Regedit.
 15. Reboot again in Normal mode to complete the install.
- Done.