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How to turn on automatic logon in Windows

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For a Microsoft Windows 2000 version of this article, see [310584](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310584) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310584/>).

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Important This article contains information about how to modify the registry. Make sure to back up the registry before you modify it. Make sure that you know how to restore the registry if a problem occurs. For more information about how to back up, restore, and modify the registry, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[256986](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/256986/) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/256986/>) Description of the Microsoft Windows registry

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SUMMARY

This article describes how to configure Windows to automate the logon process by storing your password and other pertinent information in the registry database. With this feature, other users can start your computer and use the account that you establish to automatically log on.

IMPORTANT: The autologon feature is convenient; however, this feature may be a security risk. If you set a computer for autologon, anyone who can physically obtain access to the computer can gain access to all of the computer's contents, including any network or networks it is connected to. Additionally, when autologon is turned on, the password is stored in the registry in plain text. The specific registry key that stores this value can be remotely read by the Authenticated Users group. This setting is only recommended for cases in which the computer is physically secured and steps have been taken to make sure that untrusted users cannot remotely access the registry.

Use Registry Editor to turn on automatic logon

Warning Serious problems might occur if you modify the registry incorrectly by using Registry Editor or by using another method. These problems might require that you reinstall your operating system. Microsoft cannot guarantee that these problems can be solved. Modify the registry at your own risk. To use Registry Editor (Regedt32.exe) to turn on automatic logon, follow these steps:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **Run**.
2. In the **Open** box, type Regedt32.exe, and then press ENTER.
3. Locate the following subkey in the registry:

**HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows
NT\CurrentVersion\Winlogon**

4. Double-click the **DefaultUserName** entry, type your user name, and then click **OK**.
5. Double-click the **DefaultPassword** entry, type your password, and then click **OK**. **NOTE:** If the **DefaultPassword** value does not exist, it must be added. To add the value, follow these steps:
 - a. On the **Edit** menu, click **New**, and then point to **String Value**.
 - b. Type **DefaultPassword**, and then press ENTER.
 - c. Double-click **DefaultPassword**.
 - d. In the **Edit String** dialog, type your password and then click **OK**.

NOTE: If no DefaultPassword string is specified, Windows automatically changes the value of the **AutoAdminLogon** key from 1 (true) to 0 (false), disabling the AutoAdminLogon feature.

6. On the **Edit** menu, click **New**, and then point to **String Value**.
7. Type **AutoAdminLogon**, and then press ENTER.
8. Double-click **AutoAdminLogon**.
9. In the **Edit String** dialog box, type **1** and then click **OK**.
10. Quit Registry Editor.
11. Click **Start**, click **Shutdown**, and then type a reason in the **Comment** text box.
12. Click **OK** to turn off your computer.
13. Restart your computer. You can now log on automatically.

Notes To bypass the AutoAdminLogon process and to log on as a different user, hold down the SHIFT key after you log off or after Windows restarts.

Registry change will not work if the "Logon Banner" is defined on the server either by a Group Policy

object (GPO) or by a local policy. When policy is changed to not impact server, the feature works as expected.

An interactive console logon that has a different user on the server changes the DefaultUserName registry entry as the last logged on user indicator. AutoAdminLogon relies on the DefaultUserName entry to match the user and the password. Therefore, AutoAdminLogon may fail. You may configure a shutdown script to set the correct DefaultUserName entry for AutoAdminLogonAs. For more information, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:

[119364](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/119364/) (<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/119364/>) AutoAdminLogon loses DefaultUserName

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Datacenter Edition (32-bit x86)
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Enterprise Edition
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Standard Edition (32-bit x86)
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Web Edition
- Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 Premium Edition
- Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 Standard Edition

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