

Checking the Product ID

During the installation of Windows XP Professional, you are prompted to enter a 25 digit Windows XP Product Key, which Windows XP promptly converts it into the system's product ID. Because of security concerns about piracy, Microsoft does not provide a tool that allows you to view the Product Key (or CD Key) that was used to install the operating system. However, Windows XP Service Pack 1 ships with a list of the two product IDs that are created by the pirated product volume license product keys. (The Product ID can be found by right clicking **My Computer** and choosing **Properties**) To determine eligibility for the update, Service Pack 1 compares the Windows XP product ID on the system to this list. The comparison and the list reside locally on the users PC and no information is sent to Microsoft as part of this process. Service Pack 1 for Windows XP will fail to install on installations of Windows with one of the following **product IDs**: **XXXXXX-640-0000356-23XXX** and **XXXXXX-640-2001765-23XXX**

The following message will be displayed if installation fails for this reason:

Service Pack 1 Setup Error The product key used to install Windows is invalid. Please contact your system administrator or retailer immediately to obtain a valid product key. You may also contact Microsoft Corporation's Anti-Piracy Team by emailing piracy@microsoft.com if you think you have purchased pirated Microsoft software. Please be assured that any personal information you send to the Microsoft Anti-Piracy team will be kept in strict confidence.

How to change your Product ID in Windows XP

If the product ID matches the invalid keys above, you may need to change the key (re-enter a valid key) in order to install Windows XP service pack 1, and to make sure your environment is legal. You could completely re-install Windows XP Professional or you can try the method below. (Please backup your system before attempting this.) **This workaround is only for the corporate editions of Windows XP Professional using a compromised or illegitimate key.** Windows XP Home Edition and retail versions of XP Professional are not affected by Service Pack 1. Although this procedure may work with other versions of XP, we have only tested it on the corporate edition (volume license version) of Windows XP Professional.

>>>>> WARNING <<<<<



This article contains information about modifying the registry. Before you modify the registry, make sure to back it up and make sure that you understand how to restore the registry if a problem occurs.



Backup your Registry/System State

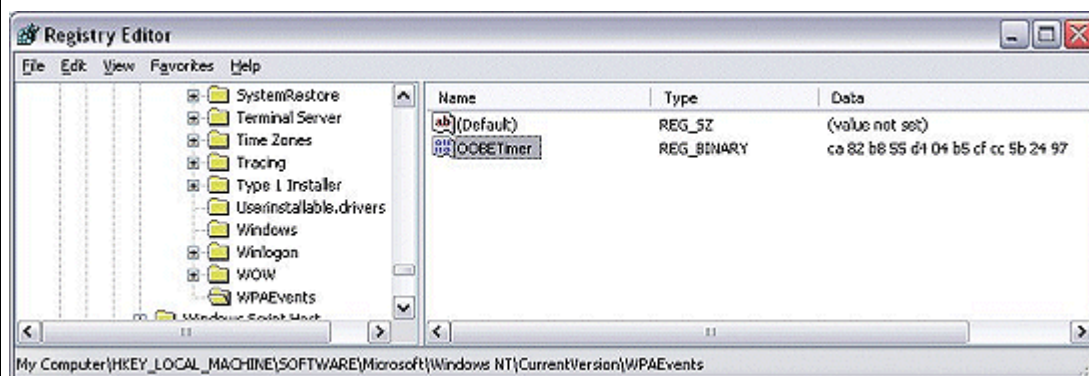
- Backup your system state by clicking **Start > Run >** and typing **ntbackup >** Click the **Advanced Mode** button in the Backup Utility Wizard. >Click the **Backup** tab, then in **Click to select the check box**

for any drive, folder, or file that you want to back up, select the **System State**.

- As an alternative, you can backup just the Registry by clicking **Start > Run >** and type in **Regedit** From within the Regedit screen, right click **My Computer**, choose **Export**, name the file whatever you choose, and click **Save**

To change the product ID

- Log in as the local Administrator
- Click **Start > Run >** and type in **Regedit**
- Browse to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\wpaevents



- In the right pane, right-click **OOBETimer**, and then click **Modify**
- Change at least one digit of this value to deactivate Windows
- Click **OK** and close **regedit**
- Click **Start > Run** and type in: "%systemroot%\system32\oobe\msoobe.exe /a"
- Click **Yes, I want to telephone a customer service representative to activate Windows**, and then click **Next**
- Click **Change Product Key** (at the bottom)
- Enter your valid Corporate Product Key
- Press **Update** and close the window.
- If you are returned to the previous window, click **Remind me later**
- Restart your computer

Verify the change

- After the workstation restarts, click **Start > Run**
- Type in: "%systemroot%\system32\oobe\msoobe.exe /a" without the quotes.
- Make sure the dialog box says 'your copy of windows is already activated'

If you performed the above steps incorrectly, or used an invalid key, your system may not be able to boot. Use the F8 key to boot to the last known

good configuration and retry with a valid key.

Troubleshooting

If you tried the above steps and nothing happens:

- Make sure you are logged in with the local administrator account, not just an account with Administrator privileges.
- Try replacing the %systemroot% variable with the actual drive letter that your actual directory path, especially when dual booting, or if the system path is on a drive other than C:\
 - On a normal Windows XP installation, your systemroot should be **C:\windows** so the command should be **C:\Windows\system32\oobe\msoobe.exe /a**
 - On systems upgraded from Windows NT/2000, the systemroot directory may be **C:\Winnt** so the command should be **C:\winnt\system32\oobe\msoobe.exe /a**
- Make sure you include a space between **.exe** and **/a** in the command:
 - **Correct - C:\winnt\system32\oobe\msoobe.exe /a**
 - **Incorrect - C:\winnt\system32\oobe\msoobe.exe/a**
- Product keys for XP Home Edition and retail versions of XP Professional will not activate a corporate or OEM version of XP Professional. The algorithms are different.
- If you do not have a valid installation key for Windows XP, **DO NOT** e-mail us asking for a key, keygen or crack.

Scripting the process

Microsoft has provided sample scripts for remotely updating the Product ID on multiple machines in [KB Article Q328874](#)