

## Re: Hard Drive Formatting'

**Source:** <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.security.misc/2002-02/0657.html>

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**Date:** 02/23/02

From: Jeremy Bishop <[requiem@org.praetor](mailto:requiem@org.praetor)>

Date: Fri, 22 Feb 2002 17:30:10 -0800

John J Breen spake thus:

> *Hey,*  
> *Concerning Hard Drive Formatting, What is a secure way to destroy all*  
> *information on a hard drive so that it is unrecoverable. I heard from*

Thermite.

> *many sources that the only way is to physically destroy the hard*  
> *drive. I heard from other sources there are ways to format the hard*  
> *drive so that the information is unrecoverable. Anyone ever hear of*  
> *something like format /u that overwrites all binary digits with 0. Let*  
> *me know of any useful links you may have.*

Most disk wiping software does something like this. This will make it unreadable by software, but you can still examine the platters directly. The writing head does not alter every magnetic domain, just most of them.

Analogy: You have two rubber stamps, one of the letter A and the other of the letter B. You then stamp the same spot with one or the other. It would be possible, by looking closely, to tell what the underlying stamps were.

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"Life is anything that dies when you stomp on it."

-- Dave Barry

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- **Next message:** [Ross Oliver: "Re: dumb++ security"](#)
- **Previous message:** [blah: "Re: Bluetooth war driving?"](#)
- **In reply to:** [John J Breen: "Hard Drive Formatting"](#)
- **Next in thread:** [Albert P. Belle Isle: "Re: Hard Drive Formatting"](#)
- **Messages sorted by:** [\[ date \]](#) [\[ thread \]](#) [\[ subject \]](#) [\[ author \]](#) [\[ attachment \]](#)