How to enter Windows 10s Safe Mode

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Sometimes, whether you like it or not, you have to boot into Windows' stripped-down Safe Mode. But with Windows 10, that gets complicated. Windows' Safe Mode provides a simple, stripped-down version of the operating system. The programs that usually load automatically when you boot Windows don't do that here. And Safe Mode only uses the most generic drivers. Thus, Safe Mode can be a big help for diagnosing certain problems. For instance, it's a great place to scan for malware. But the old-fashioned way to get into Safe Mode—booting the PC and pressing **F8** at the exact right moment—seldom works on PCs running Windows 10. These techniques will get you to Safe Mode.If you can successfully boot into Windows, booting into Safe Mode is relatively easy—if you know the trick.

1. Click or tap the Start button, and then the Power button. Hold down the Shift key when you select Restart.

2. In the resulting, full-screen menu , select Troubleshoot>Advanced options>Startup Settings.
3. In the Startup Settings screen, tap the Restart button. The PC will reboot, and bring you to a Startup Settings screen.
**4. Use the arrow keys on your keyboard to select Enable Safe Mode or Enable Safe Mode with Networking.**

But what if things are so bad that you can't successfully boot the operating system? Try booting anyway. If you can get to the login screen, you'll find a power icon in the lower-right corner. The instructions above work there.

But what if you can't get to the login screen? In that case, chances are that Windows is so messed up that it couldn't boot into Safe Mode anyway. But here's a trick that might work: You'll need the **Windows 10 Recovery Drive**, which you should make now, while your PC is still healthy. You'll need a flash drive that you will use only for this purpose. Any files already on that drive will be deleted. To create the Recovery Drive, plug in the flash drive, open Control Panel's Recovery tool, click Create a recovery drive, and follow the prompts.

You might want to test this before you're in a difficult situation: Boot the Recovery Drive and select your keyboard layout. Then select Troubleshoot > Advanced options > Command Prompt. At the command prompt, enter these three lines, making sure to hit Enter at the end of each one:
c:
bcdedit /set {default} bootmenupolicy legacy
exit
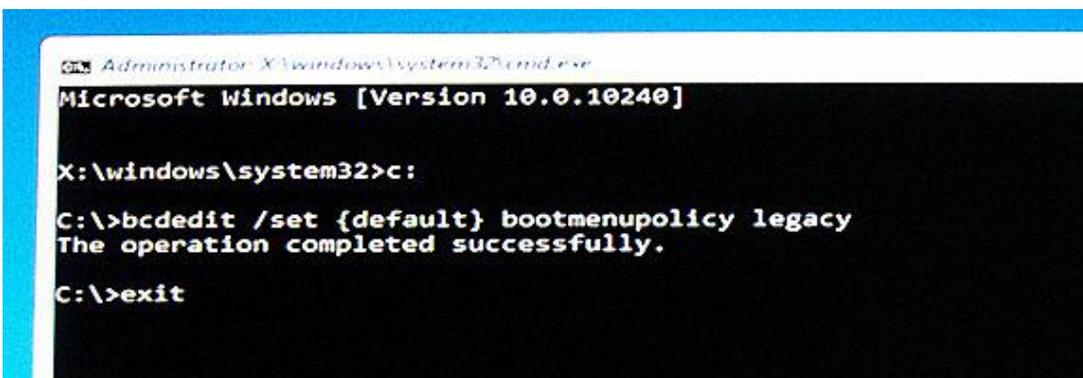
Select Turn off your PC. Boot the computer and repeatedly press and release F8 until the Advanced Boot Options menu pops up. Then you can select Safe Mode or Safe Mode with Networking.