



HELP DESK GEEK
COMPUTER TIPS FOR IT PROS

How to reset local security policy settings to default in Windows XP and Vista

27
Jan

Posted by Aseem on Tuesday, January 27th 2009



Have you ever gotten a computer second-hand? Maybe from a company that was shutting down or from someone who no longer needed theirs? Ideally, you would want to simply reformat the computer and start from scratch, right?

However, that's not always the case. Let's say you get a computer that has [Windows XP](#) or Windows Vista already installed, but you don't have the original CD that came with the computer. So you really can't reformat computer without risking Windows not activating properly.

So what's the problem with just leaving it the way it is? Well, sometimes when you get a computer, it may have been part of an Active Directory environment, which means it was subject to Group Policies.

Even if you remove the computer from the domain and put it into a workgroup, the local security policies that were changed will not be removed. This can be very annoying because local [security policies](#) include settings like preventing users from installing printers, restricting who can use the CD-ROM drive, requiring a [smart card](#), restricted logon hours, password requirements and more!

These are all great in a corporate environment, but will cause all kinds of grief to a normal computer user. So what you can do to solve this problem is to reset the local [security settings](#) to their default settings.

The way this can be done is by using the default security configuration templates that come with all versions of Windows XP and Vista. This may sound too technical, but all you have to do is run one command.

First, click on **Start, Run** and then type in **CMD**. Now copy and paste the following command into the window:

```
“ secedit /configure /cfg %windir%\repair\secsetup.inf /db secsetup.sdb /verbose
```

If you are running Windows Vista and need to reset the security settings to their default values, use this command instead:

```
“ secedit /configure /cfg %windir%\inf\defltbase.inf /db defltbase.sdb /verbose
```

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About the Author

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Aseem Kishore writes two blogs about technology and the Internet. He has also been working as an IT System Analyst for the last 8 years...[read more >](#)

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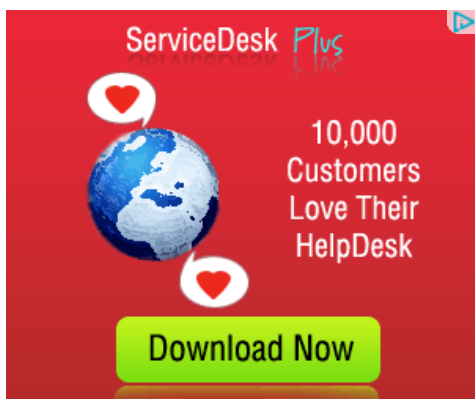
Viruses Make PC Slow, Remove Them Now By

```
C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe
Microsoft Windows XP [Version 5.1.2600]
(C) Copyright 1985-2001 Microsoft Corp.
C:\Documents and Settings\akishore>secedit /configure /cfg %windir%\repair\secse
tup.inf /db secsetup.sdb /verbose
```

That's it! Now just wait for Windows to go through all the [registry settings](#) and reset them. It takes a few minutes and you'll have to restart the computer to see the changes.

But now you should be able to use your computer without any of the remnants of local security settings from previous Group Policies. Enjoy!

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16 Comments Already

HallCrash Said,

March 10th, 2009 @3:03 pm

Good Job! This is a good way to reset the settings when Malware has messed them up. Even with the Malware removed, not all removal tools reset the security settings.

Jwhite2 Said,

March 17th, 2009 @6:18 am

Thank you so much. I am currently in IRAQ with the US Army. I knew there was a way to do this. The sad part is that it took me over a day to find it. Great help!!! Thank you

avivm Said,

May 31st, 2009 @1:40 am

I really appreciate your help. You saved us a lot of time.

nriacone Said,

October 24th, 2009 @9:39 am

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I have a machine as you described above that was part of a domain and given to an employee when they left the organization. I ran the command that you listed and still the machine is restricted from internet access. I have run RSoP and receive the red circle with a white x in it. A message will appear that the "Latest versions of the ... are not available" What other settings am I missing?

Thanks,

gcowboy Said,

December 2nd, 2009 @5:18 pm

Got an error...Here's a cut out of my scesrv.log....any info would be great:

---Configure Registry Keys...

Configure users\default.

Configure users\default\software\microsoft\netdde.

Configure machine\software.

Configure machine\software\classes.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on

machine\software\classes\PDFProCMWrap.CPDFProCMWrap\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on

machine\software\classes\PDFProCMWrap.CPDFProCMWrap.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.ClassNavCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.CPPWizCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.EventListCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.EventRegCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.HelpCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.InstNavCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.LoginCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.MOFCompCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.MOFWizCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.MultiViewCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.NSPickerCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.ObjViewerCtrl.1\CLSID.

Warning 5: Access is denied.

Error setting security on machine\software\classes\WBEM.SingleViewCtrl.1\CLSID.

Configure machine\software\classes\hlp.

Configure machine\software\classes\helpfile.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\ads\providers\ldap\extensions.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\ads\providers\nds.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\ads\providers\nwcompat.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\ads\providers\winnt.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\command processor.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\cryptography.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\cryptography\calais.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\driver signing.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\enterprisecertificates.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\netdde.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\non-driver signing.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\ole.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\rpc.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\secure.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\systemcertificates.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\upnp device host.

Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows\currentversion\explorer\user shell

```
folders.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows\currentversion\reliability.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows\currentversion\runonce.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows\currentversion\runonceex.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows\currentversion\telephony.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\accessibility.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\aeedebg.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\asr\commands.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\classes.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\drivers32.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\efs.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\font drivers.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\fontmapper.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\image file
execution options.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\inifilemapping.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\perflib.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\profilelist.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\seccedit.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows
nt\currentversion\setup\recoveryconsole.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\svchost.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\terminal
server\install\software\microsoft\windows\currentversion\runonce.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\time zones.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\windows.
Configure machine\software\microsoft\windows nt\currentversion\winlogon.
Configure machine\software\policies.
Configure machine\system.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\class.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\keyboard layout.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\keyboard layouts.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\network.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\securepipesservers\winreg.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\session manager\executive.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\timezoneinformation.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\control\wmi\security.
Warning 5: Access is denied.
Error setting security on machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\sptd\Cfg.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\apppmgmt\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\clipsrv\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\cryptsvc\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\dnscache.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\ersvc\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\eventlog\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\lrenum\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\netbt.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\netdde\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\netddedsdm\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\remoteaccess.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\rpcss\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\samss\security.
Warning 2: The system cannot find the file specified.
Error enumerating info for machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\scarddrv.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\scardsvr\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\stisvc\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\sysmonlog\log queries.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\tapisrv\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\tcpip.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\w32time\security.
Configure machine\system\currentcontrolset\services\wmi\security.
Configuration of Registry Keys was completed successfully.
—Configure File Security...
Configure c:\.
Warning 32: The process cannot access the file because it is being used by another
process.
Error building security descriptor for c:\pagefile.sys.
File Security configuration was completed with one or more errors.
```

sharfud Said,

January 30th, 2010 @4:08 am

After using this command, my PC is working perfectly. Thanks very much.

Ajay Said,

February 9th, 2010 @10:59 am

I am having a ton of security permissions problems and I need to reset everything. I tried to mess around with locking down my C drive, but I should not have done that. How can I get the original settings back?

rspaldi Said,

February 24th, 2010 @10:44 pm

Great article!

I had a new infection today that wiped secedit.exe from teh computer, as well as locking down everything.

The only way to get around it was to boot from the Ultimate Boot CD (www.ubcd4win.com), do a registry restore AFTER changing the security settings on the Config folder, then copying the file to the c drive, and then running the command.

These scumbags putting out the malware have got to be stopped!

Thanks again for your help. Between you, UBCD, and Superantispyware, I'm just barely staying ahead of the villians.

Data Master Said,

April 9th, 2010 @7:57 am

Didn't work at all!! Very disappointed!! Ive been working on a computer for almost a day now with no luck at all!! Does anyone have any other solutions for people this fix doesn't work for?

rocksmith Said,

April 14th, 2010 @5:47 pm

Cant get it to work on 7, can u give us a command line for windows seven 😞 my GPO is all MESSED UP

thx

Angel Said,

April 28th, 2010 @9:26 am

if it didnt work, try to do it from an administrator account.

what I can suggest is to log on as administrator, then go to the system32 folder, delete the 'hidden' folder named 'GroupPolicy' .. restart the machine (of course not hooked to your domain network).. and then run the command line and see if that makes any difference..

if the computer has local group policies, then deleting that folder helps to remove those policies.. but the registry still needs to be cleaned I think..

Cheers 😊

Kukulkan Said,

August 23rd, 2010 @9:31 am

These don't work in Windows 7 x64 at all, have tried it multiple times. Encountering security errors attempting to modify HKLM\Software\Classes. Have run using administrator account, ran CMD in admin mode, still no luck. If anyone has a clue how to do this, it'd be nice to hear it. It's really surprising there's no simple method for this that works.

skipper robb Said,

December 29th, 2010 @1:56 pm

Needle in a Haystack. You just burned down the Haystack. Very Good Job. It's one

of the 100 most important tools in my workstation chest now.

Chris Said,

January 11th, 2011 @9:46 pm

Wow – I literally searched for about 2 days trying to solve all my Windows XP problems after a HDD failure – I knew the problem was security, as I saw CHKDISK resetting them all and then afterward saw problems like

- no taskbar
- no copy and paste
- no start button
- many many other problems.

All Fixed with one line.

Thank you for enlightening the world with this. I've copied it into a batch file on our server for posterity.

I, seriously, can't thank you enough.

Chris

Graeme Jackson Said,

January 25th, 2011 @4:04 pm

Absolute life saver. I thought I was going to have to clean this all up policy by policy.

Thank you.

Jim Said,

March 27th, 2011 @2:44 pm

GREAT!!! Did exactly as advertised on an XP Pro machine. It got rid of all those annoying group policies.

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