

Re: external hard drive and a "error loading OS"

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You'll need to enter your BIOS settings. This is generally done by pressing the "DEL" key at startup. Your BIOS may be different, but as soon as the system powers on, it *should* give a message stating what key to use. Sometimes it's "F11", sometimes "DEL", sometimes a combination of keys. Worst case scenario, hit the website for you motherboard and get the manual (they usually have them in .pdf format). That will list what key[s] to use.

Once you're in the BIOS, what you are looking for is the boot order. Every BIOS is different, so I can't point you right to it. Just wander through all the menus / submenus until you locate it (the .pdf manual may or may not be of assistance here, depending on who your board's made by). Once you've found it, ensure that the hard drive is listed before any external devices. Your system may list "Hard Drive" or it may call it "HD0". It may even get a little more complicated and call it something like "STS80*****" (a name that comes from the HD itself.). I usually setup the boot order as such;

- 1 – Floppy A:
- 2 – CD-ROM D:
- 3 – Hard drive C:
- 4 – Network/External

This allows that the computer will check the floppy and CD-ROM for boot media and then, if it doesn't find anything, boot normally (from the hard drive). It essentially removes everything else from the boot order as it will always find a boot sector on the hard drive (unless you format or otherwise blow it.)

Once this is done, save the settings and reboot. If the error still occurs, you'll have to disable the USB boot support.

Go back into the BIOS and this time, attempt to locate a setting which does just that. However, you may not have that setting (not all systems do, even those that support booting from a USB device.) If that's the case, your only remaining option is to disable USB legacy support (this is what causes the BIOS to recognize a USB device). Be aware, without this support, ALL USB devices will no longer function until Windows boots up. That's an issue if you're using a USB mouse or keyboard (as many are).

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If, for some reason, you cannot disable USB legacy support, about the only remaining option you have is to simply unplug the USB drive before you boot. A little inconvenient, but that will, in the end, solve your problem.

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