

Re: Can You Partition External Hard Drive

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.hardware/2008-12/msg00420.html>

- *From:* "Anna" <myname@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 21 Dec 2008 12:48:48 -0500
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Tim879 wrote:

Is it possible to partition an USB External HD to have both a FAT32 and NTFS partition? My TV only recognized FAT32 and I want to play MP3's / show pics on the TV but use the more stable NTFS file system to store my other files.

Will Windows XP recognize both drives? If its of any help I use the USB interface.

<snipped>

Anna wrote:

<snip>

There's still another way to get around the 32 GB FAT32 partition limitation, i.e., a method whereby you could create a FAT32 partition of virtually any size (without the need of an extra-cost third-party program), but it involves using a DOS floppy disk containing the FDISK & FORMAT commands (as in a Win9x/Me Startup floppy disk) together with the ability of removing the HDD from the USB external enclosure and installing it in your PC as a secondary HDD. (Programs for creating a DOS floppy disk are available all over the net). The process is relatively easy but I don't know if it is practical for you based upon the machines you're presently using.

"Shenan Stanley" <newshelper@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:uXe4iu4YJHA.1268@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Extra cost?

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Why do things always have to 'cost' or be made more difficult than needed?
heh

Limitations of the FAT32 File System in Windows XP
<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/314463>

If you are attempting to format with the native utilities in Windows XP – and the drive/partition is larger than 32GB – the FAT32 option will not be available. You are welcome to utilize a third-party utility – some are free.

Examples:

Format larger than 32GB FAT32 within Windows XP with this utility:
<http://www1.mager.org/mkdosfs/>

Or this one (with GUI):

<http://tokiwa.qee.jp/EN/Fat32Formatter/index.html>

Good luck!

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Shenan Stanley
MS-MVP

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How To Ask Questions The Smart Way
<http://www.catb.org/~esr/faqs/smart-questions.html>

Shenan:

I'm unsure as to whether your "extra cost" comment was directed to me since you quoted a only a portion of my post in response to the OP's query. I surely did **not** recommend any "extra cost" option to resolve the OP's objective. So I just wanted to make that clear.

Now as to the Jens-Ewe Mager program you referred to, i.e., your first link...

As you may or may not know, this is a program that we had (note the past tense) previously recommended to users re the OP's objective. The following is a copy of the post we've submitted a number of times to various XP newsgroups...

{Quote}The following does **not** concern itself as to **why** a user would want or need to create FAT32 formatted partition(s) from within the XP OS. We'll assume he or she has good & sufficient reasons for doing so.

As most of us know, the XP operating system cannot partition/format a hard drive in FAT32 greater than 32 GB. One **can**, however, use the FDISK/FORMAT commands on a DOS bootable floppy disk (such as a Win9x/Me Startup Disk) to partition/format an internal hard drive of virtually any size in FAT32.

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However, there is a way to FAT32 format a partition (or entire HDD) from *within* the XP OS when the partition is > 32 GB. The user can overcome this XP barrier through the use of a Linux-developed program called mkdosfs.exe developed by Jens-Uwe Mager. See <http://www1.mager.org/mkdosfs/> for complete details on the background of this program and its utilization.

You can download the mkdosfs.zip file from Mr. Mager's website and extract the mkdosfs.exe program file. The great advantage of this program is that it works from *within* the XP environment. **NOTE THIS PROGRAM IS *NOT* A CONVERSION PROGRAM IN THE SENSE THAT IT WILL CONVERT A NTFS PARTITION TO A FAT32 PARTITION WHILE RETAINING ALL THE DATA. RATHER IT IS DESIGNED TO FORMAT THE PARTITION, SO PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT ALL DATA WILL BE LOST FOLLOWING THE FORMATTING PROCESS.**

The program is very easy to use?

1. Install the mkdosfs.exe file (it's only 68 KB) in your C:\ root directory.
2. Ensure that the partition/drive to be formatted FAT32 is not presently being accessed at this point.
3. Using Start > Run > cmd, and get to a C:\ prompt.
4. Invoke the command ?mkdosfs ?F 32 x:? (no quotes) where x: is the drive to be formatted. Note the spacing within the command...
(mkdosfs(SPACE)?F(SPACE)32(SPACE)x: and capitalize the ?F?, as shown.

MAKE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN YOUR DRIVE LETTER REFLECTS THE DRIVE TO BE FORMATTED! YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE ANY CONFIRMATION PROMPT AFTER INVOKING THE COMMAND! ALL DATA ON THE FORMATTED PARTITION WILL BE LOST!

5. Press Enter after typing the command.
6. The formatting of your designated drive in FAT32 will take place. Two lines of text will be displayed:
?mkdosfs 2.8 (28 Feb 2001)
Win32 port by Jens-Uwe Mager <jum@xxxxxxxxxxxx>"
followed by the C:\ prompt after the drive has been formatted.

In addition to the program's usefulness in overcoming the FAT32 > 32 GB limitation imposed by the XP OS as it affects your internal hard drives, another significant advantage of this program is that you can now format a USB external HDD in FAT32 in any capacity. And do so within the XP OS environment. {End of quote }

The reason we no longer recommend that program is because of a number of negative reports we rec'd from various users, that while the program was apparently successful in formatting the previously created NTFS partitions

32 GB using, for example, XP's Disk Management utility, in a number of

cases non-recognition partition problems and/or data corruption problems were later encountered by the user. Although I can only recall one or two cases where we (personally) subsequently encountered a similar problem after

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using the program, we felt there was sufficient reason to no longer recommend this program (at least without reservations). Needless to say encountering this type of problem could be disastrous for many, if not all, users.

All the above is based on the 2.8 version of Mr. Mager's program. I do not know whether any subsequent versions have been released.

In any event, I wanted to bring this to the attention of the OP (and you) in deciding whether to use that program.

I'm not familiar with the Fat32Formatter program you mentioned. It does sound interesting and I'm glad to brought it to our attention. I'll certainly give it a try.

Anna