

Safely remove hardware in Windows

Windows 11, Windows 10

To avoid losing data, it's important to remove external hardware like hard drives and USB drives safely.

Windows 11Windows 10

1. Look for the **Safely Remove Hardware** icon on the taskbar. If you don't see it, select **Show hidden icons**. Press and hold (or right-click) the icon and select the hardware you want to remove.
2. If you can't find the **Safely Remove Hardware** icon, press and hold (or right-click) the taskbar and select **Taskbar settings**.
3. Under **Notification Area**, choose **Select which icons appear on the taskbar**.
4. Scroll to **Windows Explorer: Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media** and turn it on.
5. If this doesn't work, make sure the device has stopped all activity like copying or syncing files. Select **Start** > **Settings** > **Devices**. Select the device, and select **Remove device**.
6. Finally, check with the hardware manufacturer for new drivers or other updates.

Check connected hardware



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