

Windows SSD Cloning Preflight and Verification Checklist

A product-neutral checklist for preparing, cloning, booting, and validating a Windows drive migration.

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Use: Personal and business reference

Use the status column to record Complete, Not complete, Not applicable, or Needs review. Do not erase or repurpose the original drive until the replacement has booted repeatedly and the important files have been verified.

1. Hardware and compatibility

Item	Status
1. Record the current drive model, interface, capacity, partition style, and used space.	_____
2. Confirm the replacement SSD interface and physical size fit the computer.	_____
3. Confirm the destination capacity is large enough for all source partitions and used data.	_____
4. Prepare the correct enclosure, adapter, cable, or second internal slot.	_____
5. Confirm the computer can boot in the same firmware mode used by the existing installation.	_____

2. Protect the source before cloning

Item	Status
1. Create a separate backup of irreplaceable files that does not depend on the clone succeeding.	_____
2. Save the BitLocker recovery key and record whether each relevant volume is encrypted.	_____
3. Check drive health and investigate warnings, unusual noises, read errors, or repeated freezes.	_____
4. Finish pending Windows updates and restart before cloning.	_____
5. Close programs, pause sync tools, and avoid editing files during the clone.	_____

3. Identify source and destination

Item	Status
1. Record the source disk model, serial number when available, and capacity.	_____
2. Record the destination disk model, serial number when available, and capacity.	_____
3. Confirm the destination contains no needed data or has been backed up.	_____
4. Review the clone summary before starting and confirm the direction is source to destination.	_____
5. Do not rely on drive letters alone because they can change outside normal Windows startup.	_____

4. Clone settings

Item	Status
1. Choose disk clone or system clone based on the goal and software capabilities.	_____
2. Include every required system, recovery, EFI, and Windows partition.	_____
3. Use SSD alignment or equivalent optimization when the software provides it.	_____
4. Decide whether partitions should retain size or expand to use additional capacity.	_____
5. Record the software version and settings used so the job can be reproduced.	_____

5. First boot from the replacement

Item	Status
1. Shut down fully after the clone completes.	_____
2. For the first test, disconnect the original drive when practical to prove the new SSD can boot independently.	_____
3. Confirm firmware boot order or choose the replacement drive explicitly.	_____
4. Record any recovery screen, BitLocker prompt, boot error, or automatic repair message exactly.	_____
5. Do not initialize, format, or erase the original drive during troubleshooting.	_____

6. Verify the new installation

Item	Status
1. Confirm Windows starts without depending on the original drive.	_____
2. Confirm the expected Windows edition, user profile, applications, and important settings are present.	_____
3. Open representative files from each important data location.	_____
4. Verify the replacement drive model and expected partition sizes in Disk Management or an equivalent tool.	_____
5. Restart at least twice and test shutdown, sleep, network access, and normal application launches.	_____
6. Run a new backup from the replacement drive.	_____

7. Retain the original until confidence is established

Item	Status
1. Keep the original drive unchanged for a defined observation period.	_____
2. Record the date the new SSD entered normal use.	_____
3. Confirm no files, licenses, recovery partitions, or application data are missing.	_____
4. Only after verification, decide whether the original will be retained as a fallback, securely erased, or repurposed.	_____
5. Document the final disposition of the original drive.	_____