

Fix "NTLDR is missing"

Applies to: Microsoft Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP

Symptoms

When you start your computer, you receive the error message "NTLDR is missing. Press any key to restart."

Cause

The error message "NTLDR is missing" means that the Windows boot loader (NT Loader, NTLDR) cannot be found. This often occurs when the computer tries to boot from a drive other than the one Windows is installed on, due to a change in the drive configuration or because you left a bootable disk in a removable drive. But it may also be because the NTLDR file has been corrupted or deleted.

Solution

Check the boot drives

First, check the boot drives to make sure that the computer is not trying to boot from a different drive to the one that contains Windows.

- Check that there are no CDs or DVDs in the CD/DVD drives.
- Check that no removable drives are plugged in to the USB ports.
- Check the boot order in the BIOS Setup to ensure that the computer boots from the drive containing Windows before any other bootable devices.

If this does not resolve the problem, you will have to repair the NT boot loader.

Fix NTLDR

The easiest way to fix the "NTLDR is missing" error is to use **Spotmau BootSuite** or **Spotmau PowerSuite Golden**. However, if your computer is using Windows XP and you have a Windows XP installation CD you may be able to boot from this and use the Recovery Console to fix NTLDR manually instead.

Use Spotmau BootSuite

- Insert the **Spotmau BootSuite CD** and start the computer. The main menu will appear.

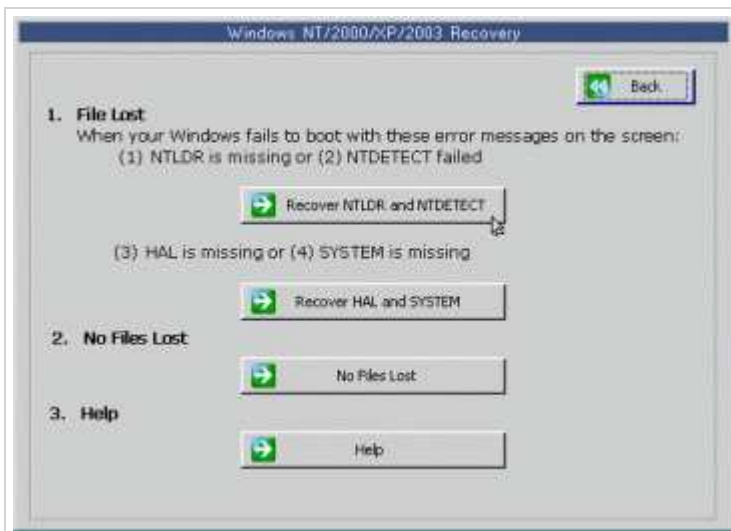




- Click **2. Windows Recovery.**



- When the Windows Recovery tool starts, click **Windows NT/2000/XP/2003.**
- On the Windows NT/2000/XP/2003 Recovery dialog, click **Recover NTLDR and NTDETECT.**
- On the Recover NTLDR and NTDETECT dialog, select your operating system (e.g. **Windows XP**) and then click **Recover.**



The tool will repair the file and report "NTLDR and NTDETECT have been recovered successfully."

- Remove the Spotmau PowerTools CD from the drive and click **Restart** to reboot the computer.

Using the Windows Recovery Console

The Windows 2000 and Windows XP CDs supplied by Microsoft has a tool called the Recovery Console which can be used to repair errors that prevent Windows XP from starting using the command line. OEM versions of Windows XP, including computers that were supplied with Windows XP preinstalled, may not have this utility.

- Insert the **Windows CD** and start the computer.
- When the **Welcome to Setup** screen appears, press **R**.
- Type a number corresponding to the Windows installation you wish to repair (usually **1**) and press **Enter**.
- When prompted, type the **administrator password** and press **Enter**.
- From the command prompt, copy NTLDR and NTDETECT.COM from the i386 folder of the CD to the root folder of the hard drive. In the example commands given below, C: is the hard drive and D: is the CD-ROM drive. You will need to change the drive letters if appropriate:

```
COPY D:\I386\NTLDR C:\
```

```
COPY D:\I386\NTDETECT.COM C:\
```

- Remove the Windows XP CD from the drive and **restart the computer**.

Prevention

It's difficult to prevent this sort of problem from ever occurring but making regular and frequent full backups of the system is a good precaution that can make recovery quicker and easier should the worst happen.

An excellent tool that will aid recovery from this kind of trouble is **MagiCure Professional**. It works by taking snapshots of the system at regular intervals and allowing you to restore them when trouble occurs. It runs before Windows loads allowing you to restore a good working system even if Windows will not start.

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