

## Assign unique drive letters before disaster strikes!

Imperative with any backup program is your assigning unique volume names to your hard drive partitions. This is a "must do". If you haven't already performed this necessary chore, do it NOW.

When working from within Windows Normal Mode, drive letters are usually a non-issue. However, when working in a recovery mode such as from a Recovery CD; or Powerquest DriveImage 7 boot disk; or Acronis True Image Bootable Rescue media, then it is imperative for you to positively identify the correct drive.

Many backup programs get drive letter assignments confused and your only drive identification is the unique name previously assigned by you. Part of this confusion is because Windows XP allows the user to assign their own drive letter without following any specific format. When the user boots into a recovery situation, the drive letters cease to be "user assigned". Instead, the drive letters are assigned by the system based on its own pre-determined format. Thus, system assigned drive letters can become confusing. Examine my true life examples listed below.

This situation occurs most frequently when booting into a system recovery or other maintenance situation. **If you choose the wrong restore location, you can cause yourself lots of grief. Choose the restore location based on your unique names--not the drive letters assigned by the backup program.**

To create your own unique drive names

1. Double click My Computer icon.
2. Right Click the intended drive letter change.
3. Click Properties.
4. Add unique name to open window. (11 chars or less)
5. Click Apply
6. Click OK to exit.

Before renaming		
Name	Free ...	Total Size
3 1/2 Floppy (A:)		
Local Disk (C:)	23.2 GB	39.0 GB
Local Disk (D:)	35.3 GB	39.0 GB
Local Disk (E:)	26.2 GB	33.6 GB
Local Disk (F:)	59.6 GB	62.6 GB
Local Disk (G:)	42.5 GB	62.6 GB
Local Disk (H:)	28.0 GB	64.5 GB
Local Disk (I:)	23.8 GB	25.9 GB
Local Disk (J:)	21.2 GB	27.0 GB
Local Disk (K:)	27.5 GB	45.7 GB
Local Disk (L:)	9.18 GB	50.5 GB
Local Disk (M:)	37.1 GB	50.0 GB
Local Disk (N:)	42.2 GB	42.2 GB
Local Disk (O:)	4.33 GB	5.85 GB
DVD/CD-RW Drive (P:)		
CD-RW Drive (Q:)		
WDC USE2 (R:)	20.7 GB	74.5 GB

After Renaming		
Name	Free ...	Total Size
3 1/2 Floppy (A:)		
SATA P1_C (C:)	23.2 GB	39.0 GB
SATA P2_D (D:)	35.3 GB	39.0 GB
SATA P3_E (E:)	26.2 GB	33.6 GB
200-P1_F (F:)	59.6 GB	62.6 GB
200-P2_G (G:)	42.5 GB	62.6 GB
200-P3_H (H:)	28.0 GB	64.5 GB
160G-P1_I (I:)	23.8 GB	25.9 GB
160G-P2_J (J:)	21.2 GB	27.0 GB
160G-P3_K (K:)	27.5 GB	45.7 GB
SCSI1-P1_L (L:)	9.18 GB	50.5 GB
SCSI1-P2_M (M:)	37.1 GB	50.0 GB
SCSI1-P3_N (N:)	42.2 GB	42.2 GB
SCSI2-P4-page (O:)	4.33 GB	5.85 GB
DVD/CD-RW Drive (P:)		
CD-RW Drive (Q:)		
WDC USB2 (R:)	20.7 GB	74.5 GB

**Sample images included next for  
XP Windows Recovery Console  
True Image Home V8-9  
PowerQuest Drive Image 7**

All three samples display incorrect drive letters compared to how Windows assigns drive letters.

When performing a restore or other maintenance, it is imperative that the user be able to correctly identify which drive or partition needs modification.

User should choose based on unique names and totally disregard the drive letter displayed by the recovery program. Otherwise, the user could wrongfully modify a wrong drive and could have a disaster to correct.

For example: if you want to perform maintenance on XP drive letter D, you must be aware that this is the 2nd partition of the SATA drive, etc. and use the SATA-P\_D unique name as the selection criteria.

**Windows Recovery Console**

```
C:\Windows > MAP (Drive Map Display)
(Eternal USB drive)
E: R: 76,309 mb \Device\Hard Disk 0 \Partition 1
(Channel 0, Primary Slave IDE)
D: L: 26,561 mb \Device\Hard Disk 1 \Partition 1
H: M: 27,713 mb \Device\Hard Disk 1 \Partition 2
I: N: 46,869 mb \Device\Hard Disk 1 \Partition 3
K: hidden 51,481 mb \Device\Hard Disk 1 \Partition 4
(Channel 1, Secondary Master SATA)
C: C: 39,997 mb \Device\Hard Disk 2 \Partition 1
F: D: 39,997 mb \Device\Hard Disk 2 \Partition 2
G: E: 34,468 mb \Device\Hard Disk 2 \Partition 3
A: A: Device\Floppy
J: Q: (Scsi CDROM) Device\CDROM 0
Q: P: (Channel 0, Primary Master) Device\CDROM 1 (IDE DVD)
```

Black drive letters & description as displayed by Recovery Console.  
Red Drive letters actually in use assigned by XP.  
--Note-1: all red lettering not part of Recovery Console display.  
--Note-2: two drives attached to Raid controller not displayed, Partitions & drive letters F thru O Drivers not provided by user during bootup.

**Acronis Truelmage Recovery**

Disk 1			
160G-P1_I	(D:)	23.8 GB	25.9 GB
160G-P2_J	(I:)	21.2 GB	27.0 GB
160G-P3_K	(J:)	27.5 GB	45.7 GB
Acronis Secure Zone (hidden protected partition)			
Disk 2			
SATA-P1_C	(C:)	23.2 GB	39.0 GB
SATA-P2_D	(G:)	35.3 GB	39.0 GB
SATA-P3_E	(H:)	26.2 GB	33.6 GB
Disk 3			
200-P1_F	(K:)	59.6 GB	62.6 GB
200-P2_G	(L:)	42.5 GB	62.6 GB
200-P3_H	(M:)	28.0 GB	64.5 GB
Disk 4			
SCSI1-P1_L	(E:)	9.18 GB	50.5 GB
SCSI1-P2_M	(N:)	37.1 GB	50.0 GB
SCSI1-P3_N	(O:)	42.2 GB	42.2 GB
SCSI2-P4_O	(P:)	4.33 GB	5.85 GB
Disk 5			
WDC USB2 (R)	(F:)	20.7 GB	74.5 GB

As viewed when computer is booted using the Acronis Truelmage user boot CD; or when booted into the Acronis Secure Zone during bootup.

Note how the drive letters are erroneously displayed. (red). Your own unique volume names are your only accurate choice.

**My Computer in Drive Image 7 Recovery**

Name ^	Free ...	Total Size
3 1/2 Floppy (A:)	3 1/2-Inch Floppy Disk	
160G-P1_I (C:)	23.8 GB	25.9 GB
SATA-P1_C (D:)	23.2 GB	39.0 GB
WDC USB2 (E:)	20.7 GB	74.5 GB
160G-P2_J (F:)	21.2 GB	27.0 GB
160G-P3_K (G:)	27.5 GB	45.7 GB
SATA-P2_D (H:)	35.3 GB	39.0 GB
SATA-P3_E (I:)	26.2 GB	33.6 GB
CD-RW Drive Q (K:)	empty Scsi CDROM Drive	
DVD/CD-RW Drive P (J:)	Drive Image 7 Recovery CD	
RamDrive = Z	Drive Image 7 ramdisk	

As viewed when computer is booted using the PowerQuest Drive Image 7 Recovery CD. Note how the drive letters are erroneously displayed. (red). Your own unique volume names are your only accurate choice.

## System Drive Properties

Change your disk volume name from "\_\_\_\_\_"  
to a unique descriptive drive & partition identifier.

(C:) Properties

Norton Utilities QuickFinder Sharing

General Tools Hardware TreeSize

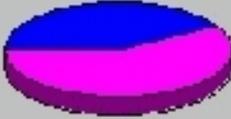
**before**

**after**

SATA-P1\_C *Enter unique drive id*

Type: Local Disk

File system: FAT32



Used space:	17,359,831,040 bytes	16.1 GB
Free space:	24,570,560,512 bytes	22.8 GB

Capacity: 41,930,391,552 bytes 39.0 GB

Drive C Disk Cleanup

Compiled-new by Grover Hatcher  
May 15, 2007  
Saved in Acrobat 5 format.