ThinkPad T420 Hard Drive Replacement

Does your T420 need a new hard drive? This guide will show you how to install a new hard drive.

Written By: Nick

INTRODUCTION

If the hard drive in your ThinkPad T420 has failed or you wish to install a larger or faster drive, this guide will show you how to replace the hard drive.

Guide notes

- **This guide does not cover operating system installation. I may be able to help locate an image if I know what your system ran before, but there are no gaurantees.**
- If you are installing an SSD or an Advanced Format drive, a drive spacer may be required and are usually available on sites like eBay if your drive does not include one. **If you are installing a hard drive, cut the spacer based on the location of the breather hole.**
- **If the system has a unknown HDP, this MUST be removed. This password will be loaded onto your replacement drive since it is stored in the ATMEL chip.**
- Make a backup of your original drive, if possible. This is not a requirement, but can be used to recover if something goes horribly wrong. **Do not do this with a used system.**
- Once you are done with the old drive and are sure you have your data you need off of the old drive, securely wipe the drive. **SED's (and FDE) can be erased by deleting the encryption key from the drive rather then using full disk erasure.**
- **Reinstalling/cloning your operating system will take several hours. I cannot estimate how long this will take.**

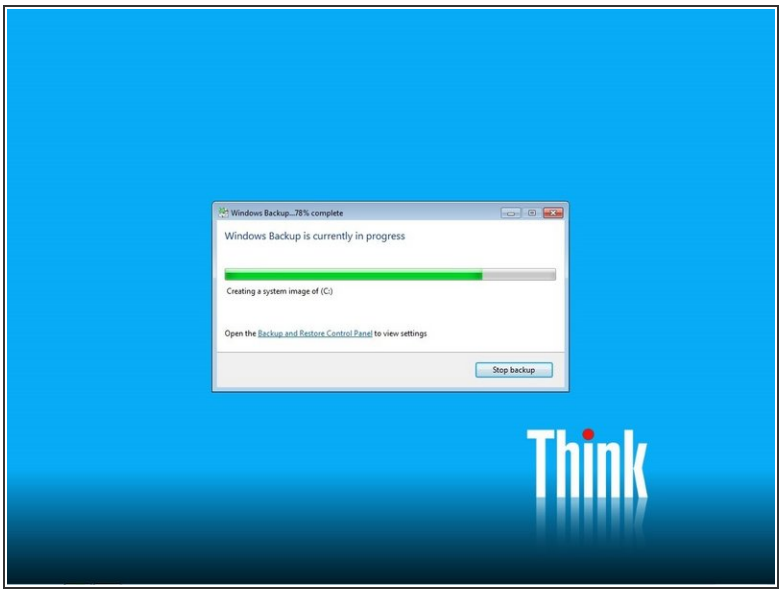
TOOLS:

- 64 Bit Driver Kit (1)

PARTS:

- 500 GB SSD / Upgrade Bundle (1)
- 1 TB SSD / Upgrade Bundle (1)
- 250 GB SSD / Upgrade Bundle (1)
- 2 TB SSD / Upgrade Bundle (1)

Step 1 — Backup your personal data



⚠ **In most cases, the old OS image will likely need extensive cleaning to be usable. This can be done, but should only be used as a final snapshot of the old drive.**

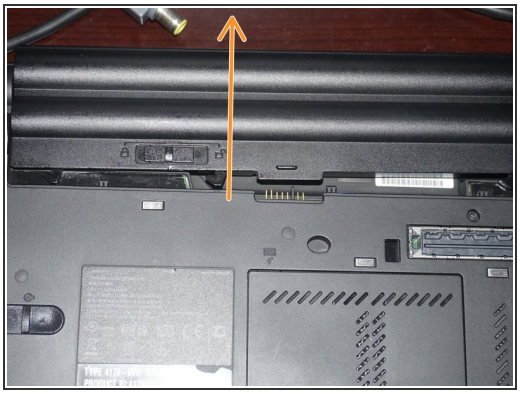
ⓘ While a new OS installation is recommended, the existing image can be used for quick system recovery. **If you plan on doing this, cleanup the system first.**

ⓘ This step only applies if you do not have a recent backup and the drive works. This can be skipped if you want to start from scratch. **I do not have any backup software recommendations.**

- Before working on the system, make a backup. This can be done with software or manually. **For additional security, the old drive and image can be used as a backup.**

Step 2 — Unplug the system and remove the battery





- If the system is plugged in, disconnect it from power.
- After the computer is unplugged, remove the battery. Slide the locking tab to the **unlocked** position.
  - While holding the tab in place, remove the battery.

Step 3 — Remove the hard drive door



- Remove the hard drive door from the system. Use a **Phillips #1** bit.
- Once the screw is loose, remove the drive cover as shown.

Step 4 — Pull the drive caddy out



- Remove the black plastic tab from the system. Pull the tab to remove the drive and caddy.
- Set the computer aside while replacing the drive.

Step 5 — Remove the drive bumpers



- Remove the hard drive bumpers to expose the screws. Do this for both sides.
- Remove the drive screws using a **Phillips #1** screwdriver.

Step 6 — Remove the hard drive

- Once the 4 screws are removed, remove the old drive. Set it aside for storage if you want to keep it.

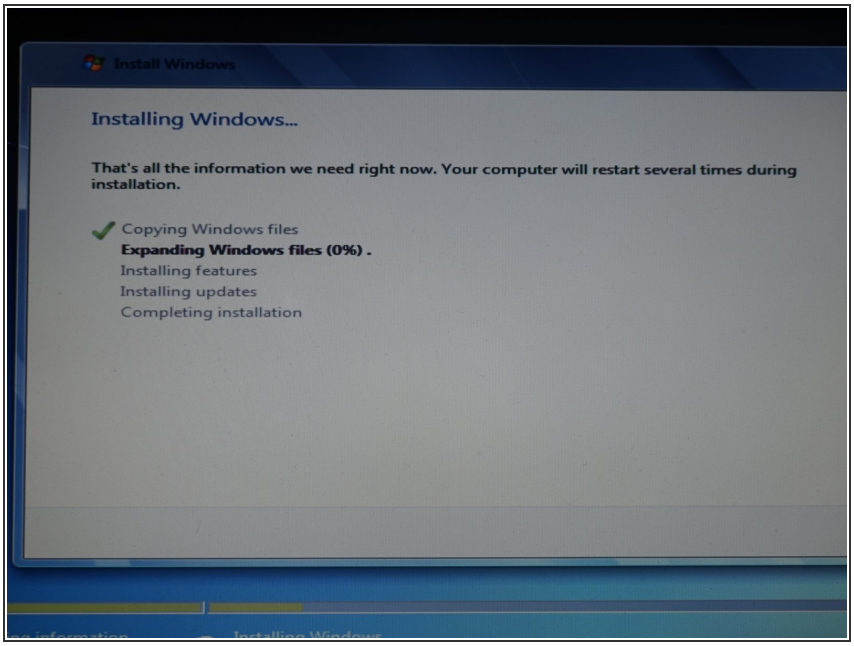
Step 7 — Install the new hard drive

⚠ If you are installing an SSD, a 7mm->9.5mm spacer may need to be installed.

- Install your new drive using steps 6 through 3. Reinstall the operating system or reimage your system.

This document was generated on 2020-03-15 12:08:20 PM (MST).

Step 8 — Install an operating system



If you are installing Windows, purchase OEM installation media without a product key unless the ISO is official. Do not use 3rd party images.

In order to save time setting up your system in the future, image the system for quick recovery. This image can be used to quickly restore the system.

- After reassembling the system and confirming the new drive is recognized, install your preferred operating system.

Once you install the new hard drive, reassemble your computer in reverse order. Once you do this, install an OS and restore your data.