

## How to Encrypt a Removable Drive with BitLocker

It's a good idea to encrypt your flash drives and external hard drives, especially if you travel with one on a regular basis. When you encrypt a drive, you are converting stored information (*e.g.*, files, documents, images) into unreadable code that cannot be easily deciphered (except by the person that has the key). The following instructions explain how to encrypt a removable drive with BitLocker, an encryption program available on Windows 7 and 8.

1. Click the "Start" menu icon and select "Control Panel" from the list (see Figure 1).

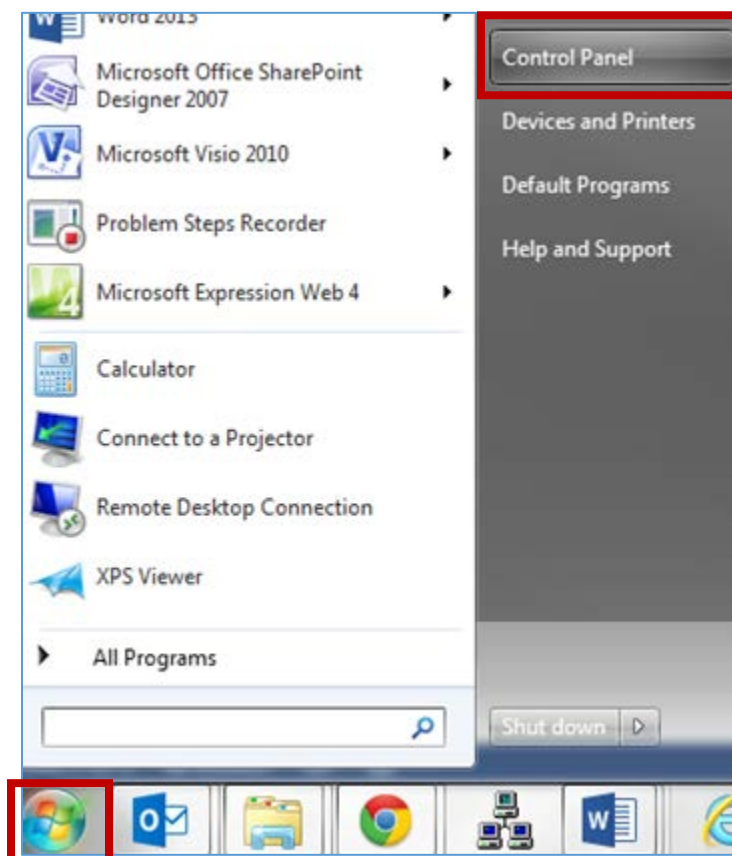


Figure 1

2. Select “System and Security” from the “Control Panel” window (see Figure 2).

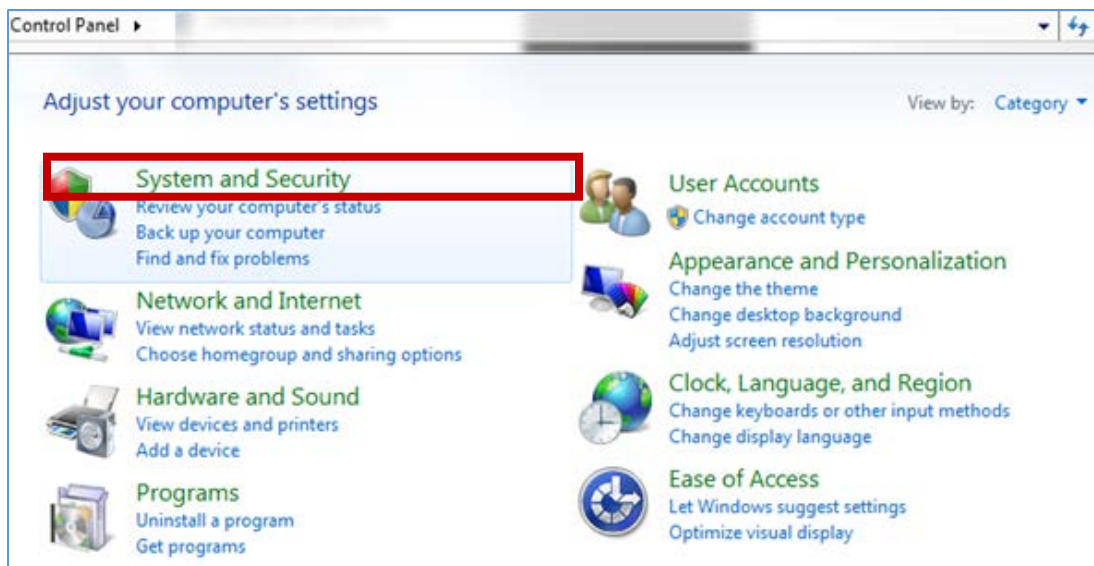


Figure 2

3. Select “BitLocker Drive Encryption” (see Figure 3).

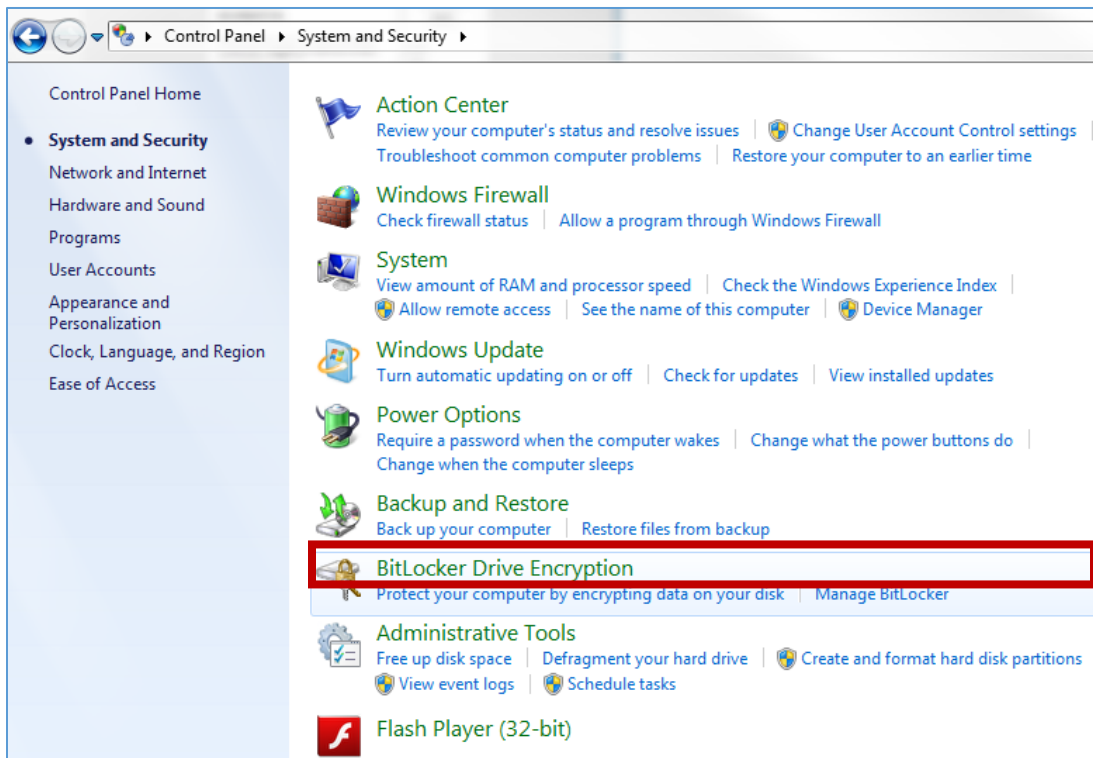


Figure 3

4. Insert the removable drive you want to encrypt. The drive's information will appear at the bottom of the window (see Figure 4).



Figure 4

5. Click “Turn On BitLocker” (see Figure 5).



Figure 5

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6. A new window will appear. Create a password for your removable drive and click “Next” when you are ready (see Figure 6). [Be sure to use a strong password.](#)

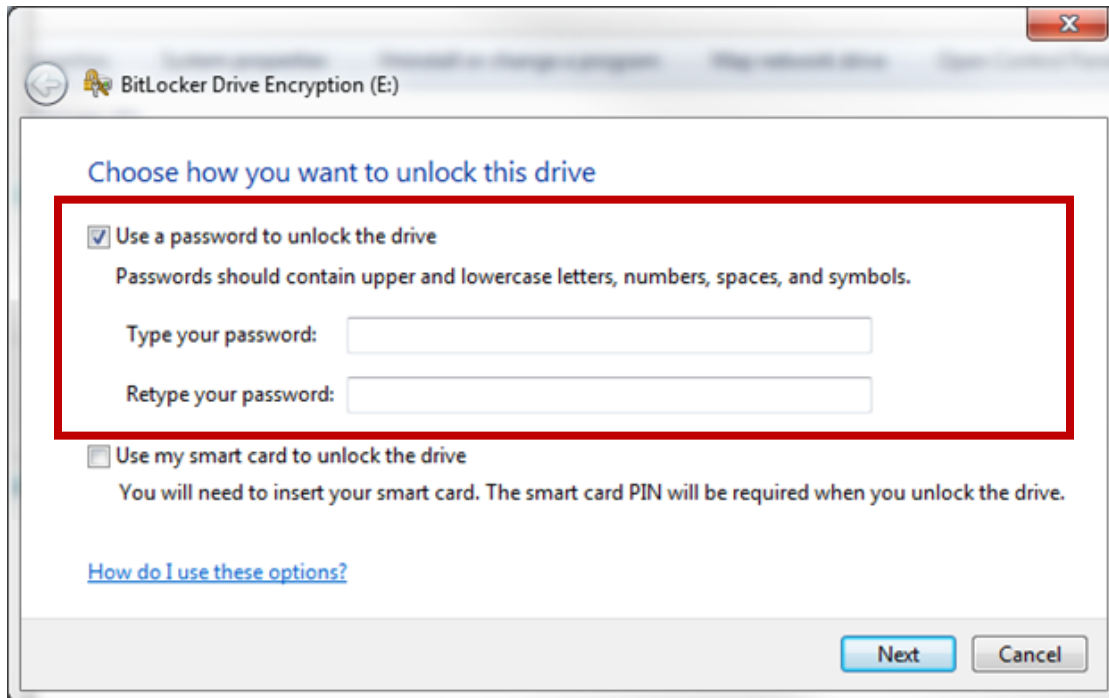


Figure 6

7. Select “Save the recovery key to a file” and click “Next” (see Figure 7). Choose the folder you want this file to be stored under and click “Save.”



Figure 7

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8. Click the “Start Encrypting” button to begin the encryption process (see Figure 8).



Figure 8



9. Wait for the encryption process to finish. Click “Close” when it is done (see Figure 9).



Figure 9

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10. After the encryption process has completed, you can optionally turn on the “automatic unlock” feature. This option unlocks your drive automatically when you insert it into the same computer used to encrypt the drive. Return to the “BitLocker Drive Encryption” window and click the “Manage BitLocker” link (see Figure 10).



Figure 10

11. Select “Automatically unlock this drive on this computer” from the new window that appears, and then click “Close” (see Figure 11).

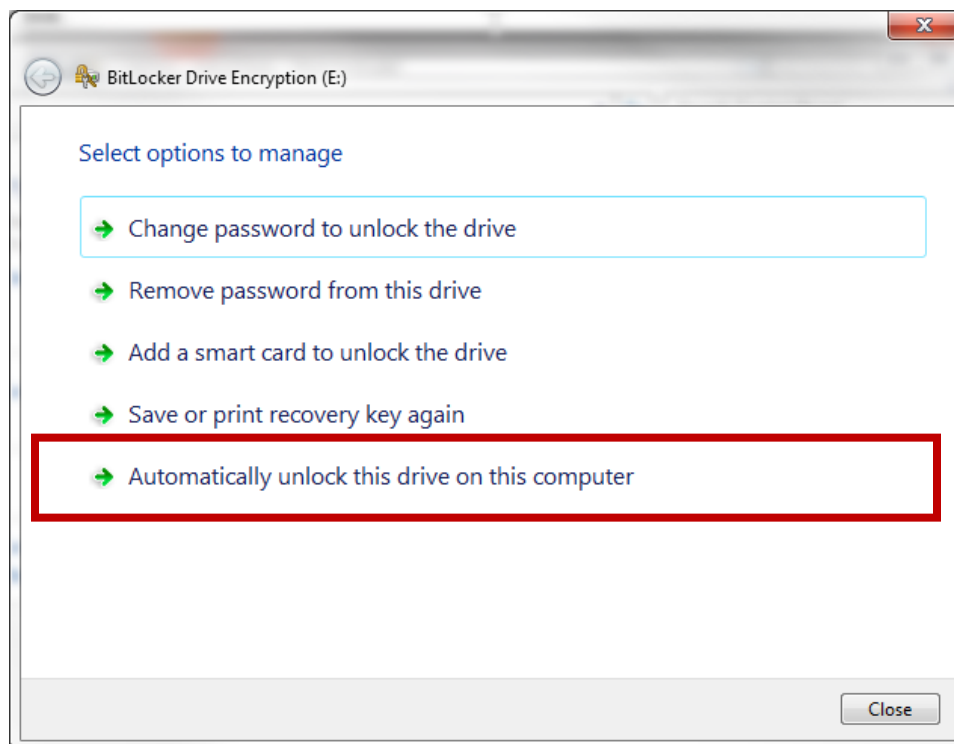


Figure 11