



Alan German & Chris Taylor

Ottawa PC Users' Group

August 7, 2024

Follow Up CrowdStrike Falcon meltdown



- *Security Now* podcast from Steve Gibson 2024-07-30
 - <https://twit.tv/shows/security-now/episodes/985?autostart=false>
- Good analysis of how CrowdStrike Falcon works, what went wrong and why
- How CrowdStrike was able in many cases to remediate systems through a cloud service
- Processes put in place to ensure it doesn't happen again
- CrowdStrike Falcon customers say
 - absolute best-of-breed: so much better than anything else
 - *nothing short of amazing*
 - Microsoft in **distant** second place with *Microsoft Defender for Endpoint*
 - even with the huge problem caused by this, ample evidence CrowdStrike Falcon has saved their company many times over
 - support was exemplary
 - not a *single* listener who is a CrowdStrike customer would prefer to operate without CrowdStrike protection in the future

Share

New Bell scams?

Bell

- Yesterday I got a call from someone with a very strong east-Indian accent informing me that because I am such a good Bell customer, they want to be sure I would not go to the competition (as apparently many have done) by lowering my fees by 50% for the next 6 months
- No strings attached
- Because I am such a nice loyal customer
- Now we just need to verify a few details, so tell me, what is your... Here I hang up.

A very valued member

- Today I again get a call from Bell; another a strong east-Indian accent; poor connection with bad echo on the line
- This time they tell me they are installing Bell fiber* in my neighborhood and, unfortunately, they will be disconnecting the current wired phones
- No problem though, because I am such a great customer, they will be providing me with a special super fast new router free of charge!
- Says she will now hand me over to a tech guy who has to verify my computer's compatibility by logging into my current system... Here I hang up again

** BTW, I have fiber already for nearly two years, but I guess they wouldn't know that right?*

What will tomorrow bring?



<https://opcug.ca/fraud-watch/>

Share

NSA's



National Security Agency/Central Security Service

Mobile Device Best Practices

- Handy 2-page PDF file
- Many features on phones
 - provide great functionality
 - add to the risks of using the phone
- Document lists
 - common features along with recommendations for their use
 - common threats along with what you can do to prevent or mitigate them



https://media.defense.gov/2021/Sep/16/2002855921/-1/-1/0/MOBILE_DEVICE_BEST_PRACTICES_FINAL_V3%20-%20COPY.PDF



How can I safely dispose of an old laptop?

- I have a laptop that I haven't used for several years
- I erased all the files on the hard disk
- Someone told me that information can still be read
- A friend said that they used a program called DBAN
[https://www.pcworld.com/article/461014/
how-to-securely-erase-your-hard-drive.html](https://www.pcworld.com/article/461014/how-to-securely-erase-your-hard-drive.html)
- But, if you have a solid-state drive (SSD), a different approach is required
- This is too complicated for me
- What do you suggest?



Newsletter articles and presentations on this topic

- Really, really deleting files (Chris Taylor)
<https://opcug.ca/Articles/2309NEWS.pdf>
- Wipe Out Old Data (Alan German)
<https://opcug.ca/Reviews/FileShredder&HDShredder.htm>
- Nuke that old hard drive!
<https://opcug.ca/presentations/NukeDrive.pdf>

Finally, if all else fails...



Solid State Drives

There are two ways to safely dispose of unwanted SSD's:

(1) Use the manufacturer's SSD utility (e.g. Samsung Magician)

(2) Give your old SSD to Alan who will erase it for you and install it in the super-fast RAID that he wants to build!





It doesn't have to be complicated

What you need:

- (1) Know how to boot your laptop from a USB drive
(Google will know for your make and model)
- (2) A USB flash drive
(≥4 GB is OK– empty or with files that can be
- **will be!** - destroyed)
- (3) Software to create a bootable USB drive
(*Balena Etcher* - <https://etcher.balena.io>)
- (4) Software to securely erase the laptop's hard disk
(*HDShredder* - <https://www.miray-software.com/products/applications/hdshredder.html>)



Boot Dell laptop from usb drive



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Tools

Getting it to boot from the USB stick: Restart the computer and press F12 when the Dell logo appears to display the One Time Boot Menu. Using arrow keys, select USB Storage Device and press Enter. Jan 8, 2024



Spiceworks Community

<https://community.spiceworks.com> › ... › dell-hardware

Boot sequence does not detect any USB device on DELL ...



About featured snippets



Feedback

ETCHER

Flash. Flawless.

Flash OS images to SD cards & USB drives, safely and easily.



Select image



Select drive



Flash!

Download Etcher

<https://etcher.balena.io>

DOWNLOAD

Download Etcher

ASSET	OS	ARCH	
ETCHER FOR WINDOWS (X86 X64) (INSTALLER)	WINDOWS	X86 X64	Download
ETCHER FOR MACOS	MACOS	X64	Download
ETCHER FOR MACOS (ARM64)	MACOS	ARM64	Download
ETCHER FOR LINUX X64 (64-BIT) (ZIP)	LINUX	X64	Download
ETCHER FOR LINUX (LEGACY 32 BIT) (APPIMAGE)	LINUX	X86	Download

Looking for [Debian \(.deb\) packages](#) or [Red Hat \(.rpm\) packages](#)?



Miray

SOLUTIONS

PRODUCTS

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APPLICATION SOFTWARE

HDClone
HDClone CLI

HDShredder

Basic
Standard
Professional
Professional Portable
Enterprise

HDShredder CLI
Miray RAM Drive
Miray Bootcast
DiskSpy
DiskCheck
PCISniffer
NetSniffer
CopyStation
Evidence

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

HDShredder 7



HDShredder deletes the contents of hard disks and other mass storage media reliably at the physical level. HDShredder can also be applied to individual partitions and the user can select to perform the deletion according to international security standards. HDShredder works independent of partition layout, file system and operating system. It also works with proprietary formats which otherwise would be inaccessible.



UPDATES & UPGRADES

Find price-reduced updates and upgrades by using the CONFIGURATOR ➤

QUICKLINKS

➤ MANUAL (PDF)
➤ LICENSING (PDF)

HDShredder 7 is Available!

<https://www.miray-software.com/products/applications/hdshredder.html>

[SOLUTIONS](#)[PRODUCTS](#)[SHOP](#)[DOWNLOAD](#)[COMPANY](#)[Online shop](#) | [Contact](#) | [Login](#) |  [HDClone](#)[HDShredder](#)[Miray RAM Drive](#)[DiskCheck](#)[Service Upd](#)[MORE >](#)[FREE SOFTWARE](#)[PURCHASED SOFTWARE](#)[UPDATES](#)[OPEN SOURCE](#)

Free Software



HDClone

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HDShredder

[DOWNLOAD >](#)

Miray RAM Drive

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NEWSLETTER

Stay up-to-date about our software tools and operating systems.

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PURCHASE

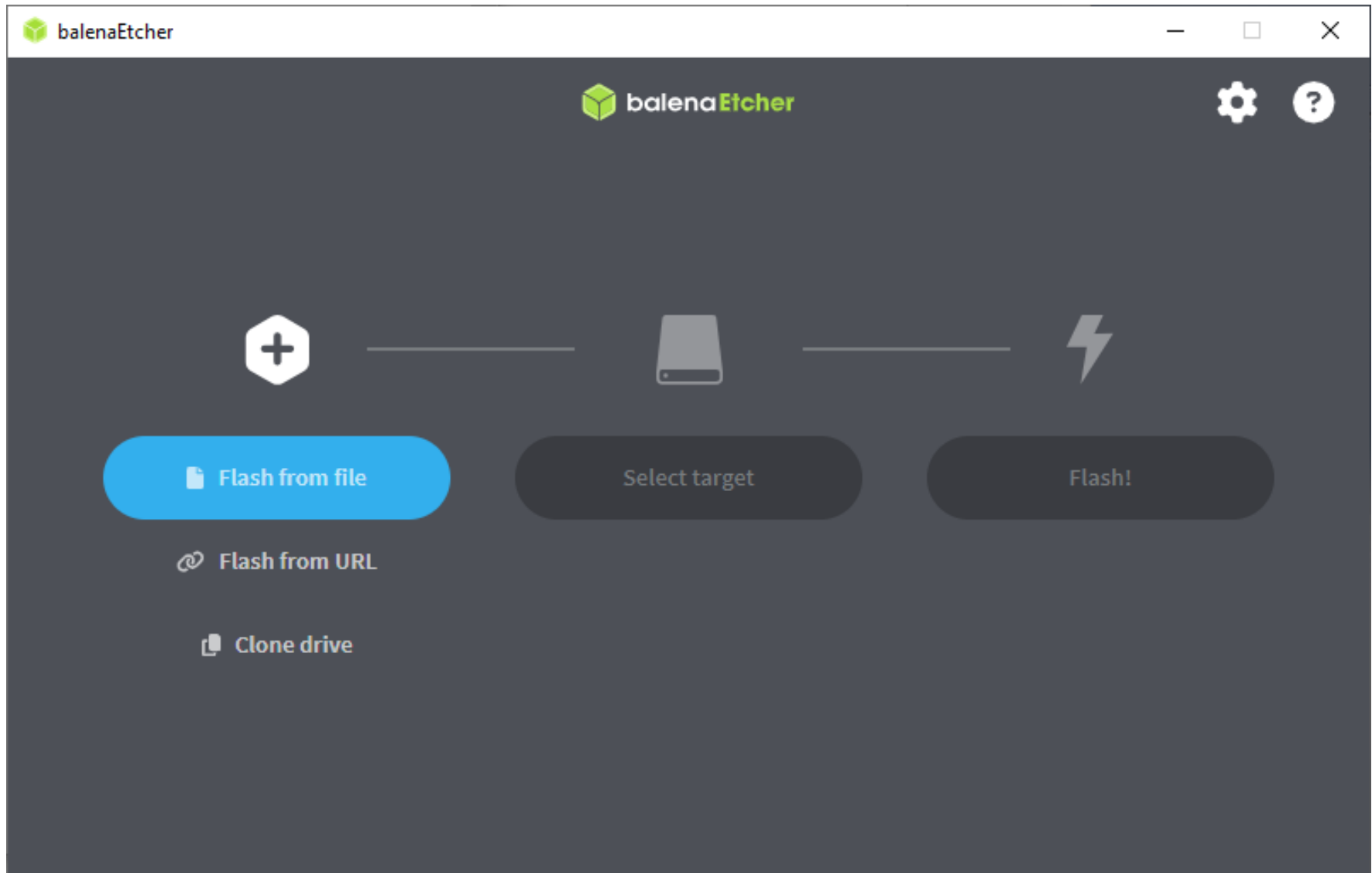
Some of our programs are also available as higher editions for purchase. These editions offer more features and are intended for frequent and professional use cases.

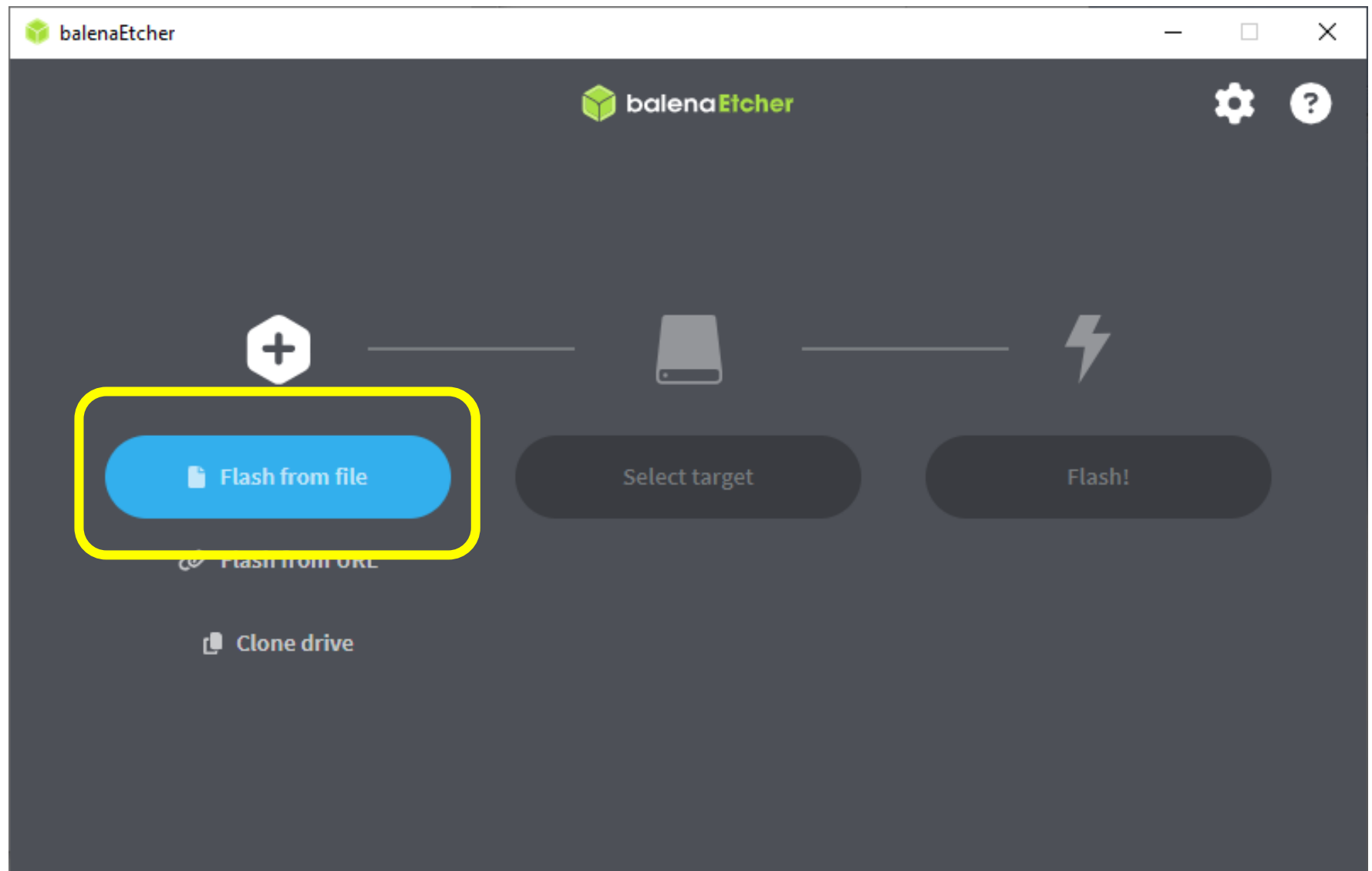
[PRODUCT LIST >](#)

FORUM

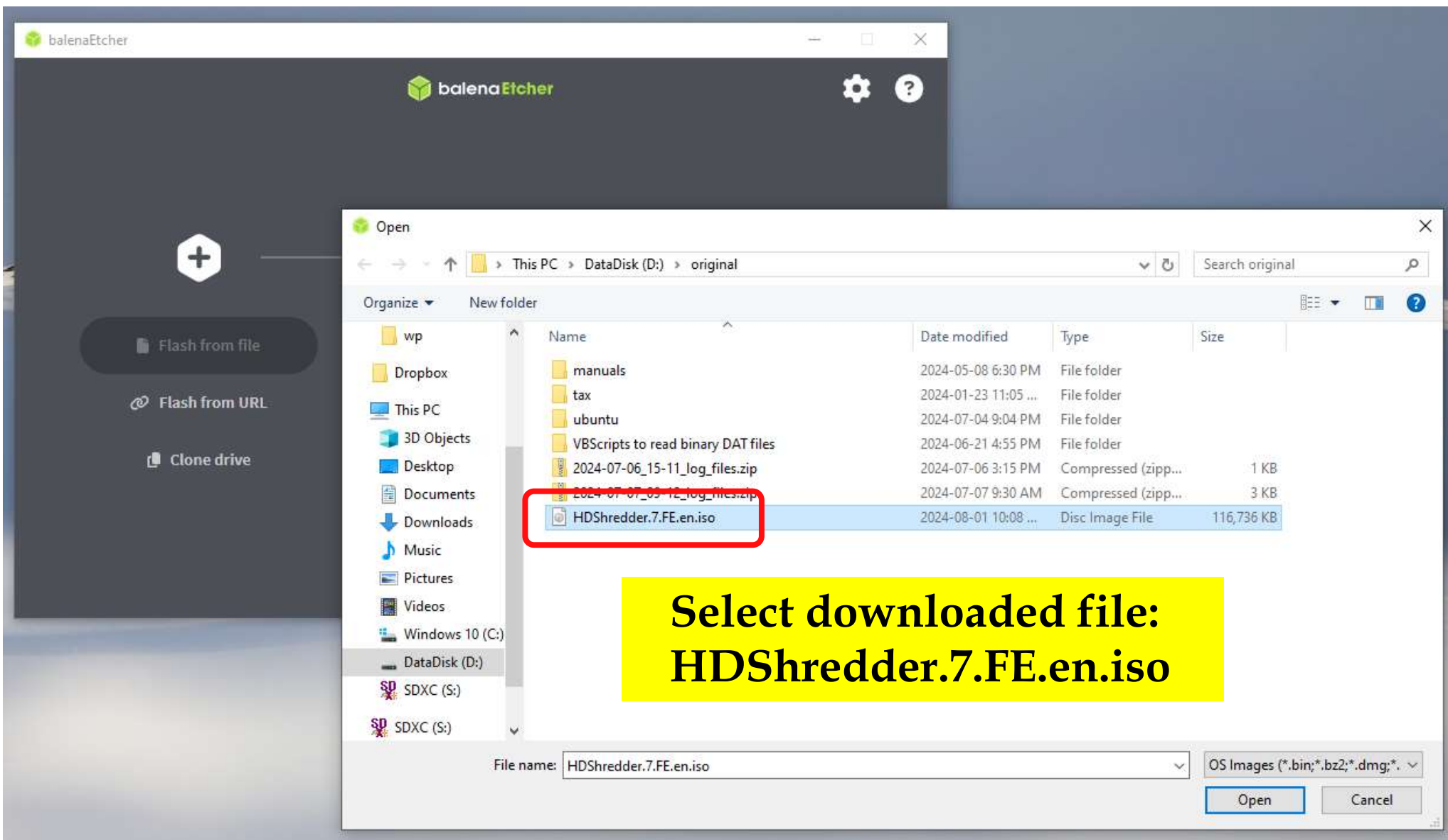
Select HDShredder

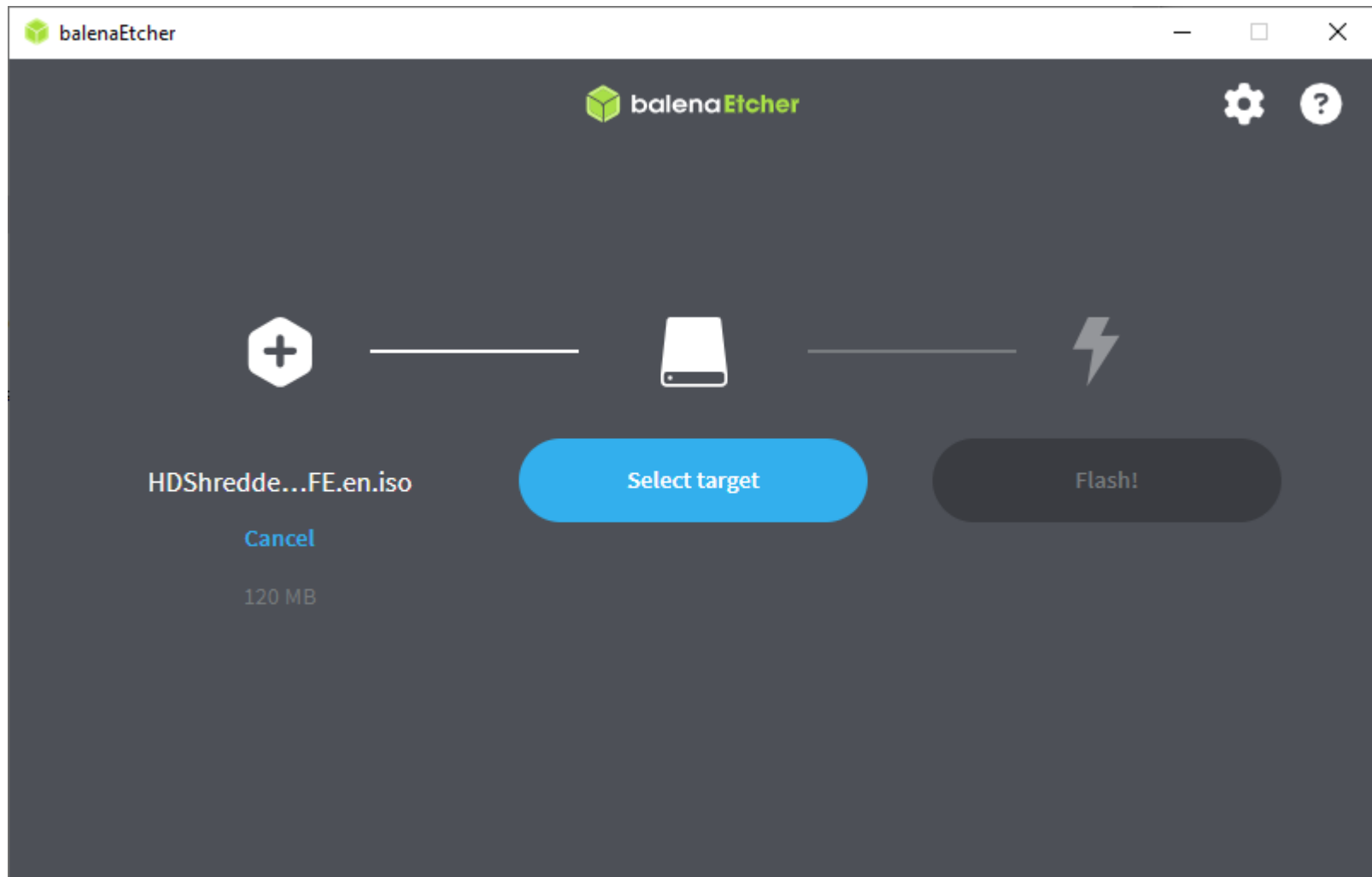
Double-click on the downloaded file:
balenaEtcher-1.19.21.Setup.exe





Click on *Flash from file*





HDShredder.7.FE.en.iso selected as source
Plug in target USB drive
Click on *Select target*



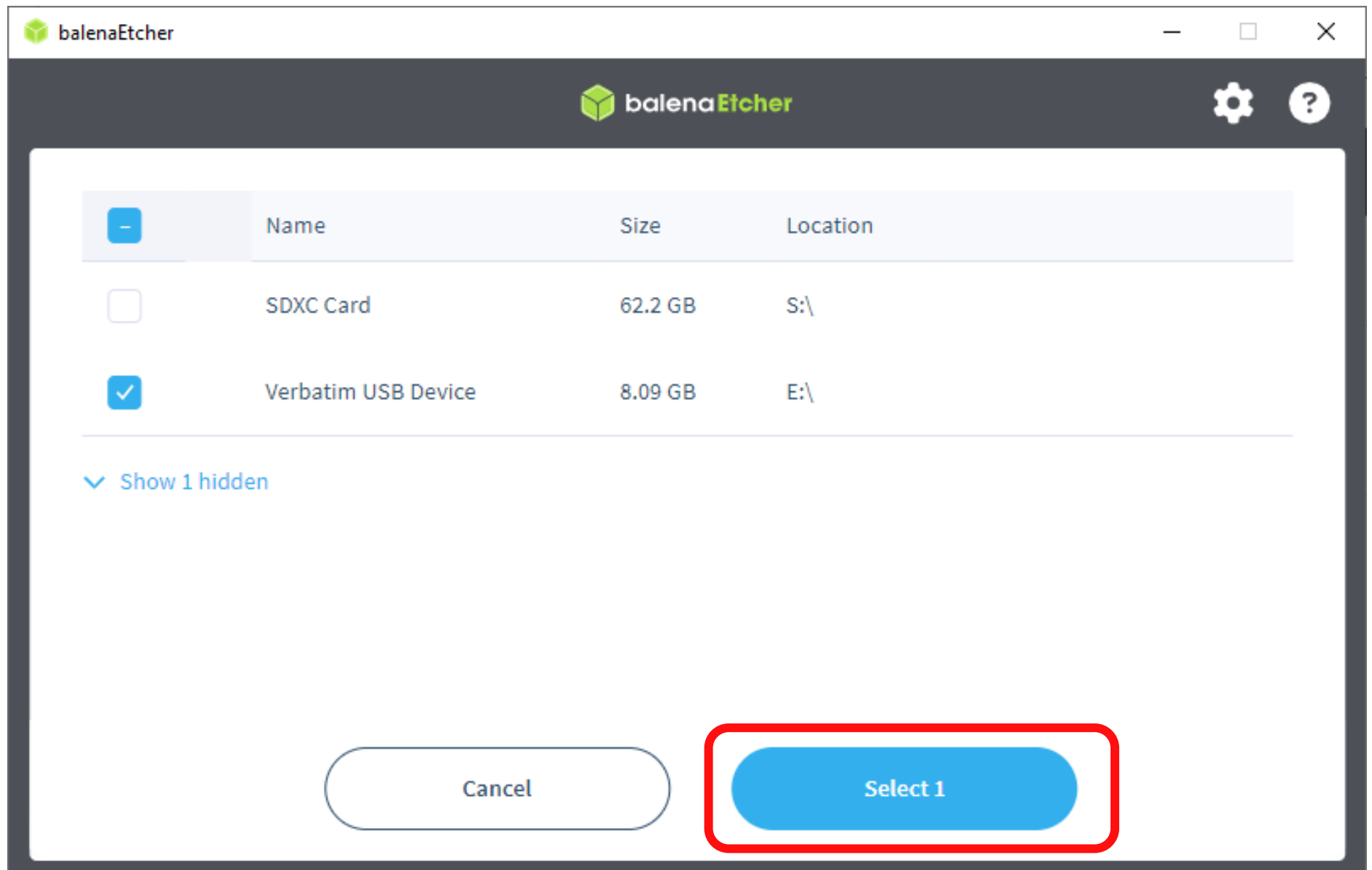
	Name	Size	Location
☐	SDXC Card	62.2 GB	S:\
☒	Verbatim USB Device	8.09 GB	E:\

▼ Show 1 hidden

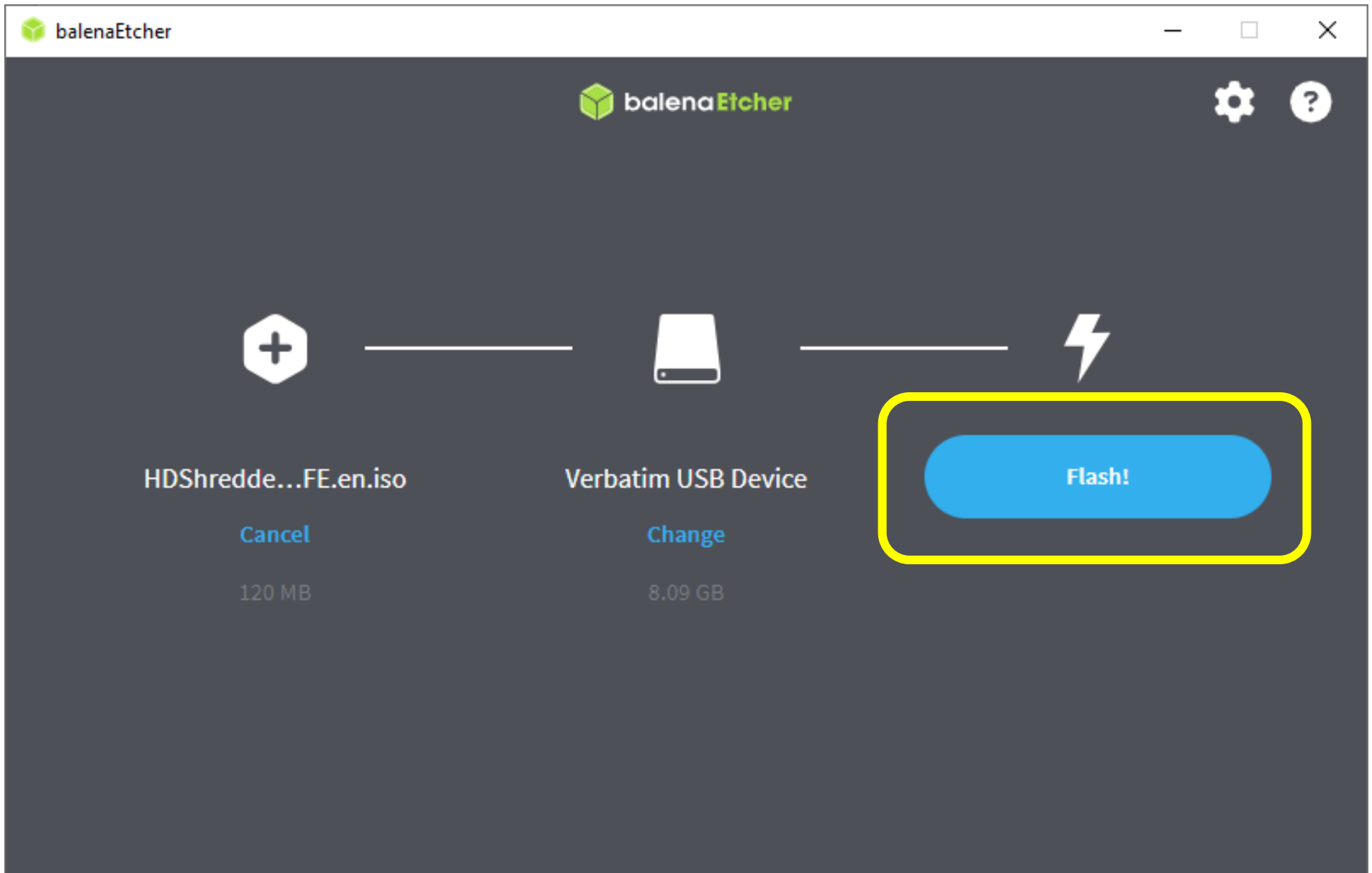
Select USB drive as target

Cancel

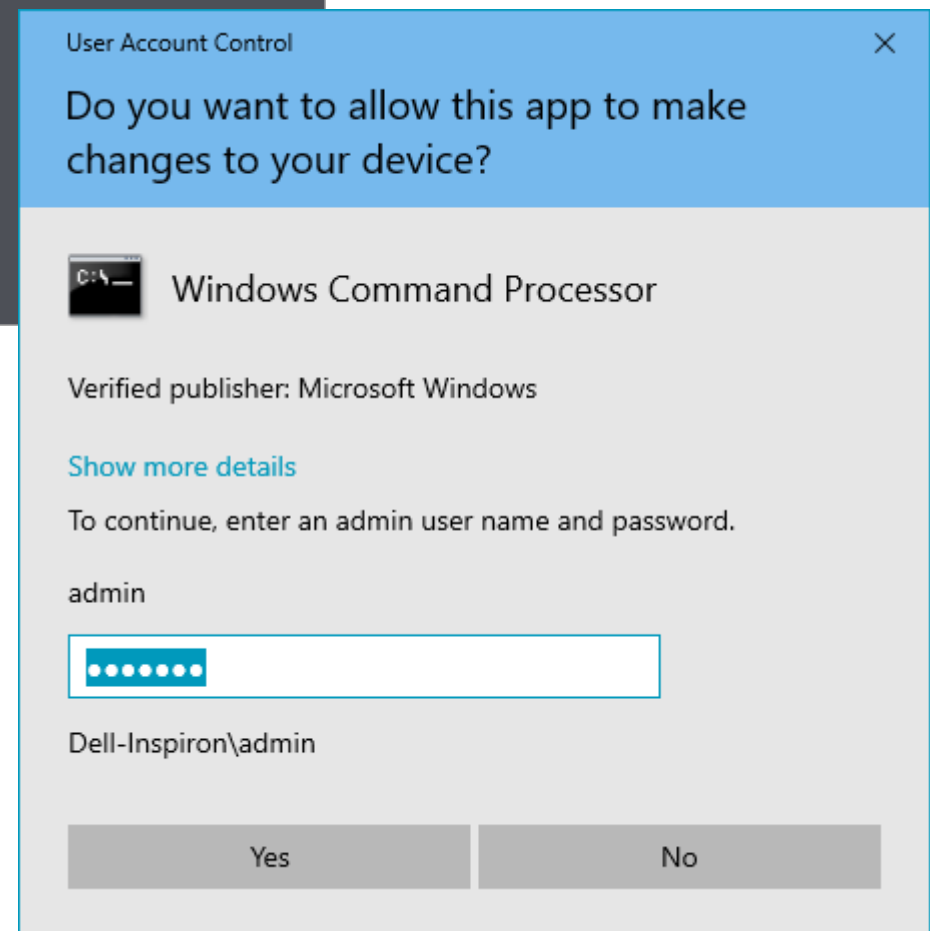
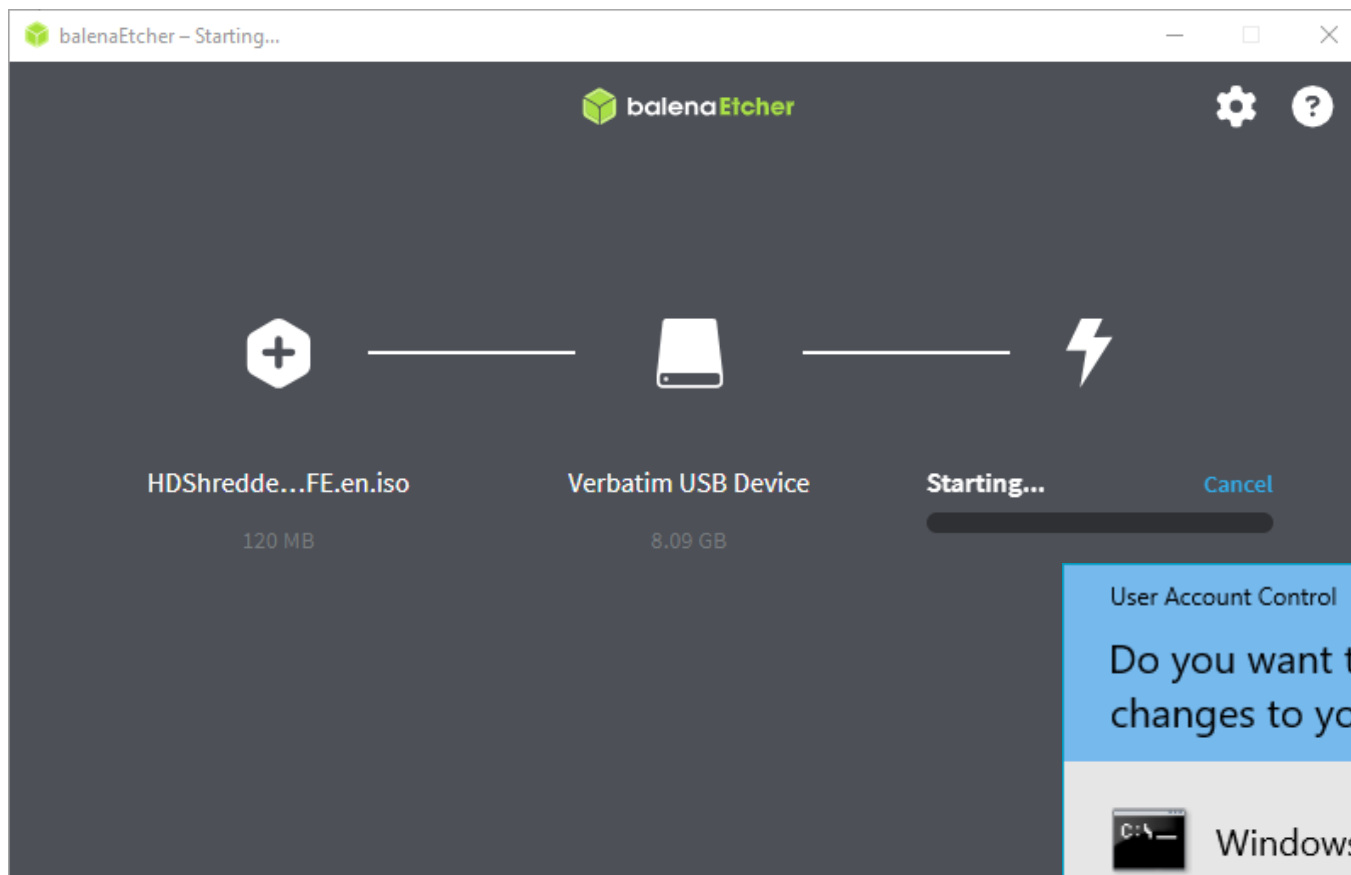
Select 1



Click on *Select 1*



Click on *Flash*





HDSHredde...FE.en.iso

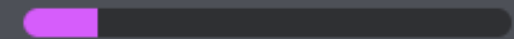
120 MB

Verbatim USB Device

8.09 GB

Flashing... 15%

Cancel



7.30 MB/s

ETA: 0m13s



HDSHredde...FE.en.iso

120 MB

Verbatim USB Device

8.09 GB

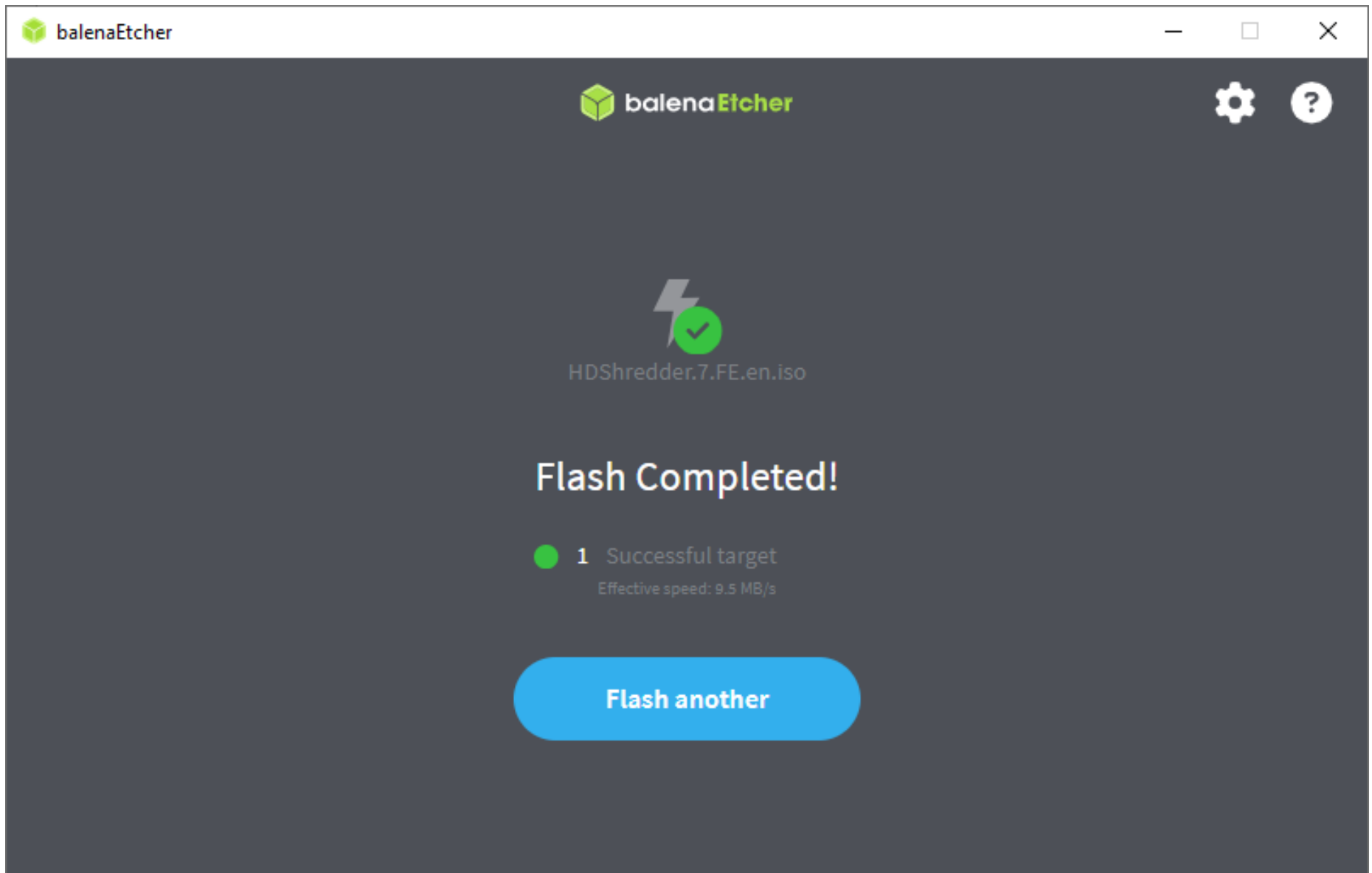
Validating... 57%

[Skip](#)



16.90 MB/s

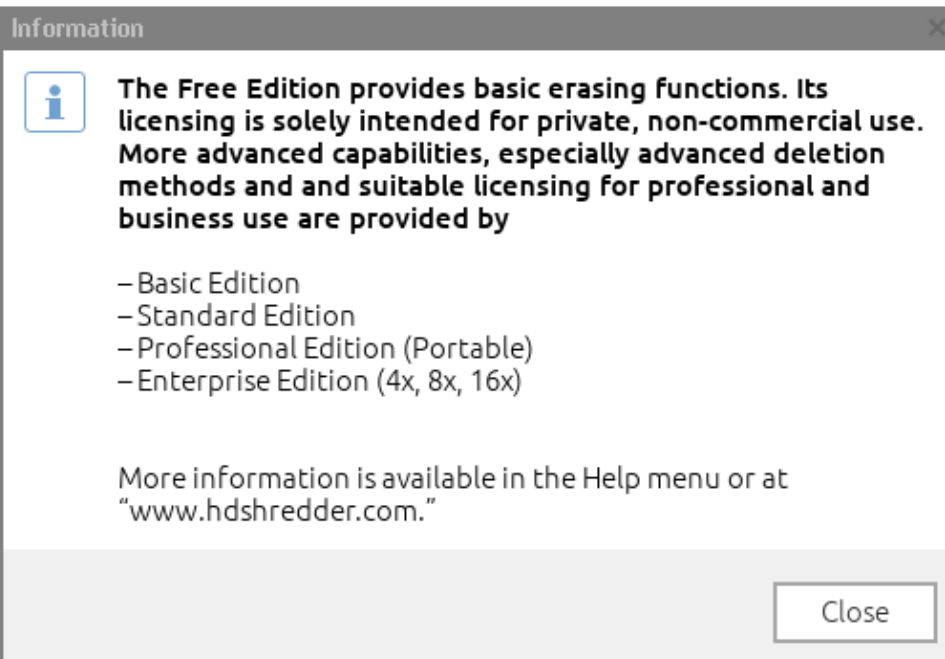
ETA: 0m3s



We now have a bootable USB drive !



Quick Select



Boot the computer from the USB drive



HDShredder 7

Free Edition



Quick Select

Secure Deletion



Complete Disk

Tools



SpeedTest



DiskView



Freeware License





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Fast

☐ Trim: do not apply

Disk

Please select a disk ...

☒ Partitions: No partitions found

Options

☐ Format upon completion: FAT

☐ Shut down computer automatically: No

Case number:

Notes:

[Advanced Options ...](#)

Select disk to be shredded

No target selected

Start





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Fast

☐ Trim: do not apply

Disk

Please select a disk ...

Name		Size	Type	Serial number
Automatically select the next disk				
Samsung SSD 840 EVO 250GB	C:,D:	250 GB	AHCI (SATA)	S1DBNSAFB96518F
Verbatim	E:	8.09 GB	USB	11030003003831
Generic-SD/MMC/MS PRO	S:	62.2 GB	USB	20121112761000000

Options

☐ Shut down computer automatically.

Case number:

Notes:

[Advanced Options ...](#)**Select laptop's hard drive**

No target selected

Start





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Fast

☐ Trim: do not apply

Disk

Verbatim E: 8.09 GB USB 11050603003851

☒ Partitions: 1 (120 MB)

Options

☐ Format upon completion: FAT

☐ Shut down computer automatically: No

Case number:

Notes:

[Advanced Options ...](#)

[Note that I actually selected a USB drive rather than my computer's hard drive]

Start





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Fast

☐ Trim: do not apply

This is why!

Disk

Ver

☒ Partit



Content of disk will be erased

The content of the disk will be completely erased and will not be recoverable.

Continue

Cancel

1 (120 MB)

Options

☐ Form

☐ Shut down computer automatically:

No

Case number:

Notes:

[Advanced Options ...](#)

Start





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Fast

☐ Trim: do not apply

Disk

Ver

Parti 1 (120 MB)

Options

☐ Form

☐ Shut down computer automatically:

Case number:

Notes:

[Advanced Options ...](#)

Start





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Fast

☐ Trim: do not apply

Disk

Verbatim E: 8.09 GB USB



Partitions:

Options

☐ Format upon completion: F/☐ Shut down computer automa

Case number:

Notes:

[Advanced Options ...](#)

Go and do something else!
*Secure erase is not a fast process
(despite the “Fast” erase mode);
the estimate is 15 minutes to
shred 8 GB*

Erasing disk ...

10.2 MB/s | ETA: 4:43 PM

Cancel

10%



Freeware License





Complete Disk

Quick Select – Secure Deletion



Erase mode

Disk

Options

Status ×

Basic information:

Target: Verbatim
Size: 8.09 GB

Result

✓ Success
✓ The disk has been successfully erased
⊗ No verification was conducted
⊗ No automatic report was generated

Status Events Messages

Run time: 13:19 minutes Sectors verified: 0
Remaining: <completed> Write errors: 0
Total sectors: 15,794,176 Read error verification target: 0
Sectors written: 15,794,176 Different sectors: 0

Report:

Finished

Successfully completed

10.1 MB/s

Cancel

100%



Freeware License



New life for old

If you are trashing a laptop:

- Install a light version of Linux to use the laptop for backup or as a web browser.
- Take apart the battery pack and you might find some still useful batteries inside. Many flashlights and, powerbanks use 18650's. Usually safe to dismantle, but wear glasses.
- If the HDD/SSD is good, you can acquire a USB3 housing to use the disk as an external drive.
- If the disk is too ancient or broken, drill holes through it or take it apart for curiosity.
- The RAM may be useful in a NAS or a firewall.
- You can often sell old laptops or parts on eBay.

Avoid the Trash Heap: 17 Creative Uses for an Old Computer

Don't junk that ancient laptop or desktop! With just a bit of extra effort, you can transform an old gaming PC into a NAS, experiment with a new OS, build your own security cam, and more.



By [Eric Griffith](#)

Updated April 22, 2024



<https://www.pcmag.com/articles/avoid-the-trash-heap-creative-uses-for-an-old-computer>



WhatsApp Status

- How do you set up *WhatsApp Status*?
- Is it safe to do so?
- A friend in Germany wants me to set it up so I can see their vacation photos but
 - (a) I am not sure how to do it and
 - (b) not sure if it is safe or if it is asking for trouble





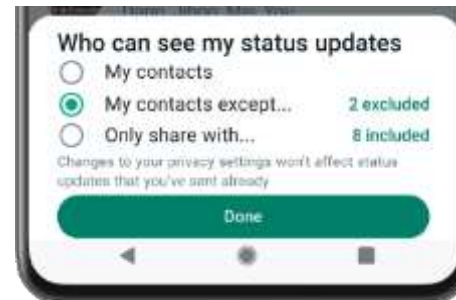
What is WhatsApp Status

- WhatsApp users can share multimedia updates with their WhatsApp contacts
- Updates disappear automatically after 24 hours



What is *WhatsApp Status*

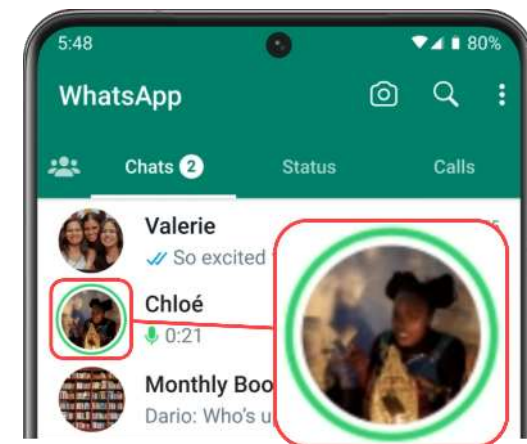
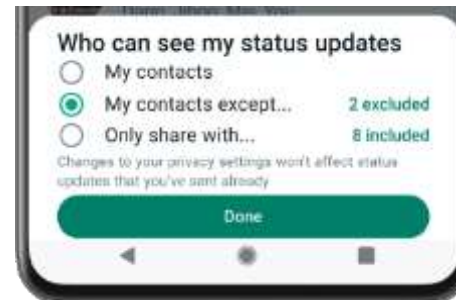
- WhatsApp users can share multimedia updates with their WhatsApp contacts
- Updates disappear automatically after 24 hours
- Can share updates with
 - all contacts
 - all contacts except...
 - only selected contacts





What is WhatsApp Status

- WhatsApp users can share multimedia updates with their WhatsApp contacts
- Updates disappear automatically after 24 hours
- Can share updates with
 - all contacts
 - all contacts except...
 - only selected contacts
- When a contact posts a status update, a ring shows around the contact's profile picture
 - visible in chat lists, group participant lists, & contact info





Using *WhatsApp Status* on Desktop

- Both parties must have each other saved as *Contacts*
- On the desktop app, click 
 - you can see others' *Status*, but can't create one
 - click contact under *Recent* to view status
 - you will see green ring around profile picture
 - if you haven't yet seen a *Status*
 - view statuses in the *Viewed* section on *Status* tab
 - when you view someone's *Status* they can tell you've seen it
 - unless you or they disable read receipts



Using *WhatsApp Status* on Android

- Both parties must have each other saved as *Contacts*
- Viewing Status basically same as on desktop



Using *WhatsApp Status* on Android

- Both parties must have each other saved as *Contacts*
- Viewing Status basically same as on desktop
- Create a *Status* with photos
 - tap *Updates*, tap your profile photo, tap *Gallery* & choose one or more photos
 - tap *Status (Contacts)* to customize audience
 - tap 
- iOS experience is similar



WhatsApp Status pros and cons

- Following comes from a non-user!
 - money-back guarantee if I am way off the mark
- Pros
 - very simple to share photos with your contacts in WhatsApp
 - maintenance-free
 - Statuses disappear after 24 hours
 - can customize which of your contacts can see a Status
- Cons
 - can only share with your WhatsApp contacts
 - Statuses disappear after 24 hours
 - currently no way to be notified of a new WhatsApp Status
 - combined with them disappearing after 24 hours, maybe a *Con*
 - lack of notifications may be changing
 - <https://www.gizchina.com/2024/04/06/whatsapp-status-update-notifications/>

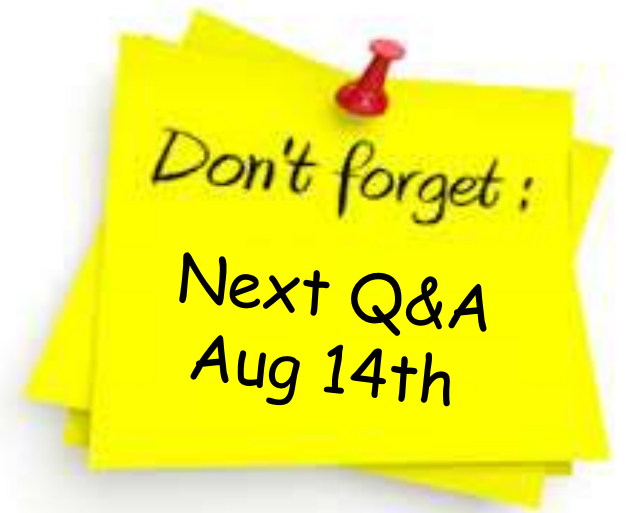


Alternatives to WhatsApp Status for sharing photos

- Any cloud file sharing service
 - Google Photos/Drive, OneDrive, Dropbox, etc.
- Pros
 - free cloud storage available
 - typically 2 GB – 15 GB
 - images won't disappear after 24 hours
 - can share with anyone
- Cons
 - more tedious
 - others not notified of new postings
 - may run out of free cloud space
 - if sharing with specific people
 - others must have an account on the cloud service being used
 - but this allows notification!



**Any other:
Questions
Comments
Shares?**



**Send your questions,
answers, and topics *
you wish to share to:**

SuggestionBox@opcug.ca

** Questions, comments, and shares can be anonymous if requested*