

# Recovering the Vista Bootloader with EasyBCD

Mahmoud Al-Qudsi

EasyBCD has a diagnostics section that was created as a one-click method to easily reset/recover/repair your Windows Vista bootloader without having to go through the recovery DVD, command line, and other difficult options that aren't even guaranteed to work.

**NOTE:** Can't boot into Windows? EasyBCD won't run? If you can't get into Windows or EasyBCD won't run for some reason or the other... don't panic! You can still save your data, bootloader, and Windows Vista by following our manual recovery instructions for booting from and using the Windows Vista DVD to reset your bootloader instead.

## Recovering the Bootloader

EasyBCD has multiple recovery options available to you, depending on just how bad your bootloader is screwed-up. We've listed the recovery options by increasing magnitude of "problem level," so start with Type 1 and see if that works before moving on to Type 2, and so on and so forth.

### Type 1: Reinstalling the Vista Bootloader to the MBR and Bootsector

#### Scenario

You've installed another OS after installing Windows Vista, so the Vista bootloader no longer appears/is-used when you reboot. Or you installed Windows Vista, and it failed to install its bootloader to the MBR.

#### Solution

Run EasyBCD and go to the "Bootloader Management" window:

- Select "Reinstall Vista Bootloader" from the first menu, then click "Write MBR"
- Reboot to test. If it doesn't do the trick, move on to Type 2.

### Type 2: Resetting the Vista Bootloader Configuration

#### Scenario

Your Windows Vista bootloader is incorrect or corrupted and so you can't boot into one or more Windows Vista entries. Depending on your situation, you may see errors about winload.exe, kernel32.dll, or other system files.

#### Solution

Boot into a working copy of Windows (be it XP or Vista), and run EasyBCD. Go to the "Diagnostics Center" page:

- Select "Reset BCD Storage" then "Rescue My System" to begin recovery.
- You'll see a dialog asking you for your boot drive - pick the letter of your Windows Vista drive, then hit OK to continue.
- EasyBCD will reset your BCD data and re-configure your bootloader correctly.
- At this point, you will only have one entry in the Vista bootloader - it'll be for the copy of Windows Vista installed to the drive you selected in the step above. Make sure you go to the Add/Remove entries page and [add whatever operating systems] you need to before you reboot.
- If you still can't get Vista to boot properly, head on to the next section.

# Recovering the Vista Bootloader with EasyBCD

Mahmoud Al-Qudsi

## Type 3: Re-Creating all Vista Bootloader Files and Settings from Scratch

### Scenario

Your "BOOT" folder has been deleted, was not created, or has been corrupted; and the Vista bootloader will not show.

### Solution

Boot into a working copy of Windows and install/run EasyBCD. Go to the "Diagnostics Center" page:

- Select "Recreate missing/deleted boot files" then "Rescue My System" to begin recovery.
- You'll first be asked to select your Boot Drive from a drop-down list. This is the drive that your system boots from, and will generally have files like NTLDR, NTDETECT, BOOTMGR and/or a BOOT folder.
- Pick the drive and press OK.
- You'll be asked for the letter of your Windows Vista drive next - just like in the step above. Choose the right drive and press OK to continue.
- EasyBCD will recreate (if possible) your boot files and re-configure your bootloader from scratch.
- If EasyBCD fails, that means a process has locked your BOOT folder. Manually delete this folder with a Live CD, recovery console, or other method, then try Type Three again.