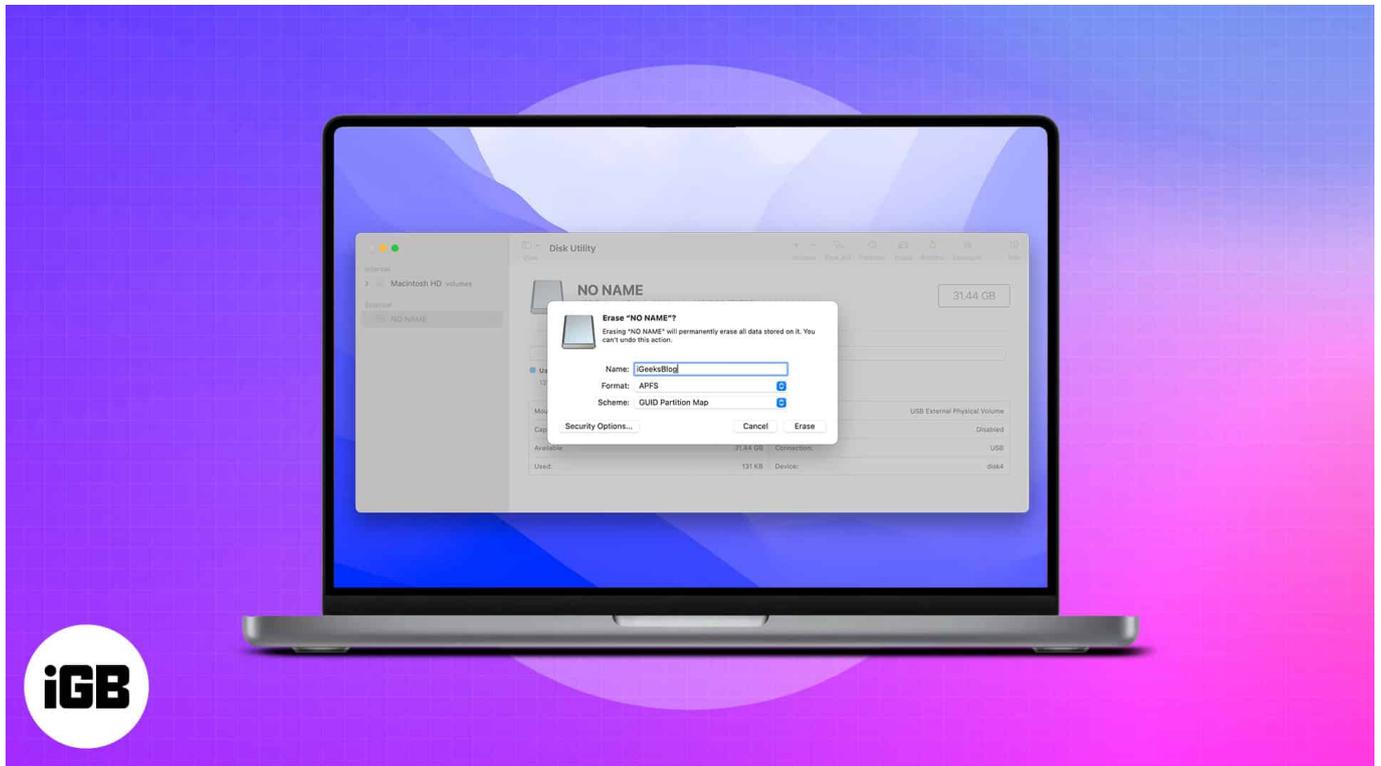


What to know:



- Make sure to back up files before formatting the USB drive.
- You can format a USB flash drive with a disk utility and Terminal command line.
- Formatting completely erases the drive.

There are a substantial number of Mac users worldwide. Despite this fact, not all accessories or peripherals are Mac-compatible. A USB flash drive is one of the goods that work flawlessly with macOS Ventura or earlier; however, it must be made compatible and have enough storage space. So, read on to learn how you can format a USB drive on a Mac.

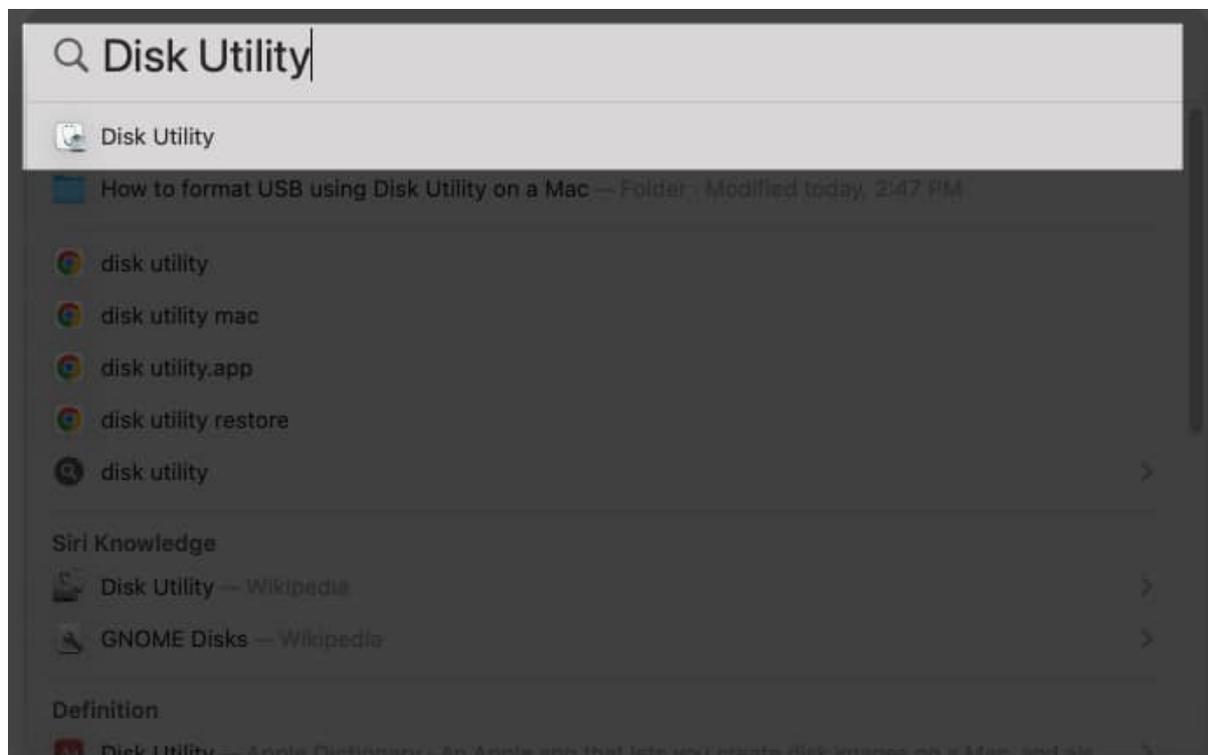
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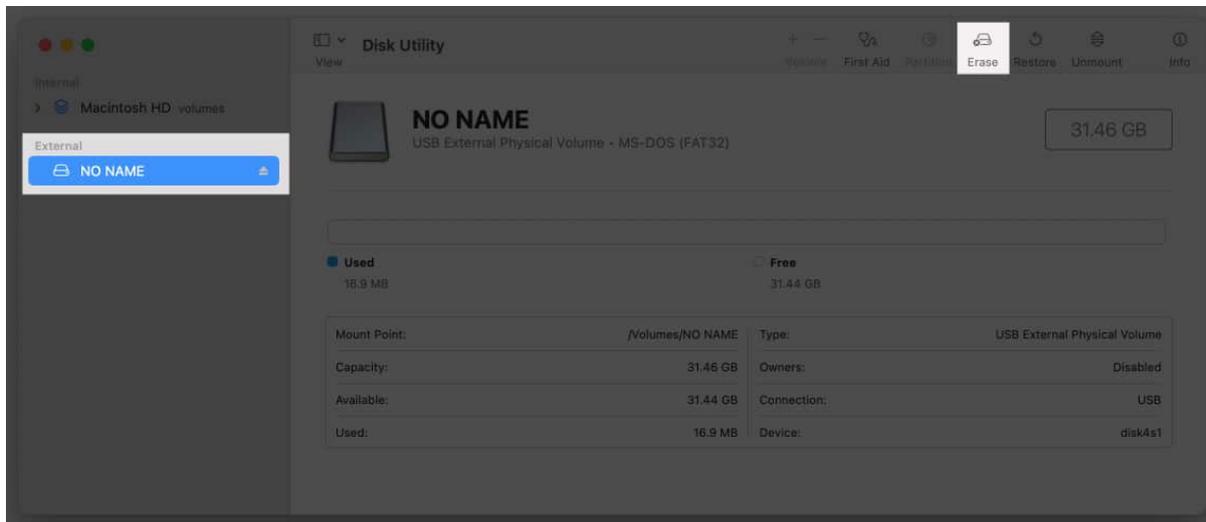
How to format a USB flash drive with disk utility

Note: Take a [backup of your data](#) before beginning the process of erasing the USB flash drive on your Mac.

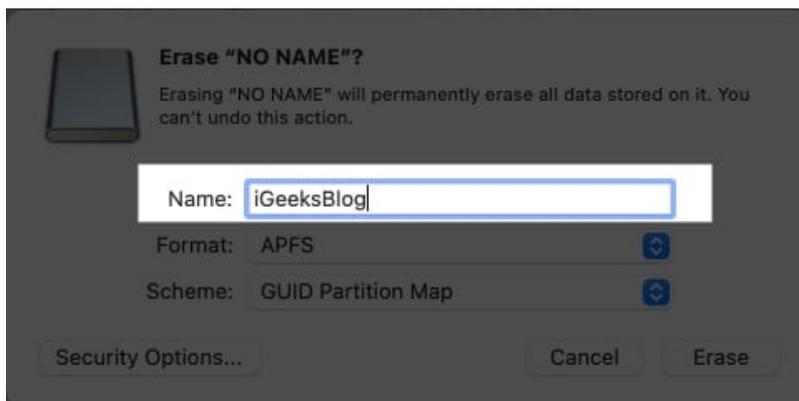
1. Connect **USB flash drive** to Mac.
2. Launch **Spotlight Search** (Command+Spacebar).
3. Type **disk** into the search box and open **Disk Utility**.



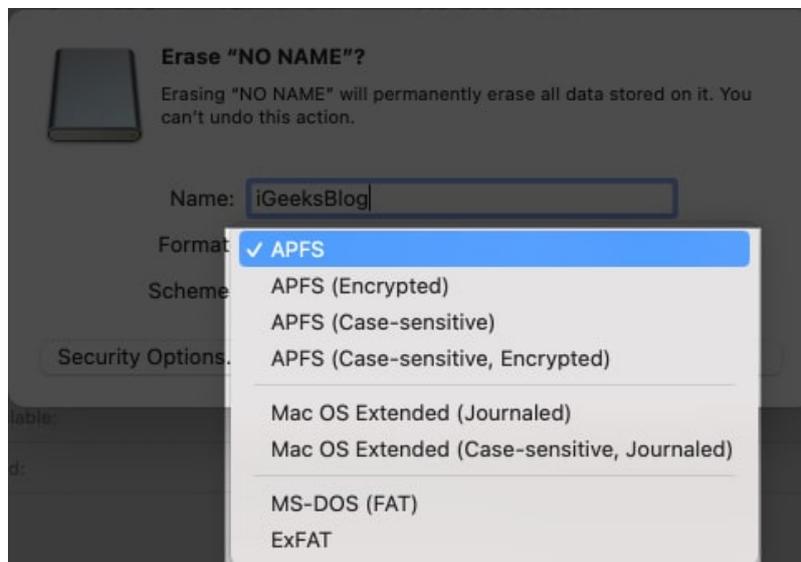
4. Select your **USB drive** → Click **Erase**.



5. Write your USB name next to the **Name** section.

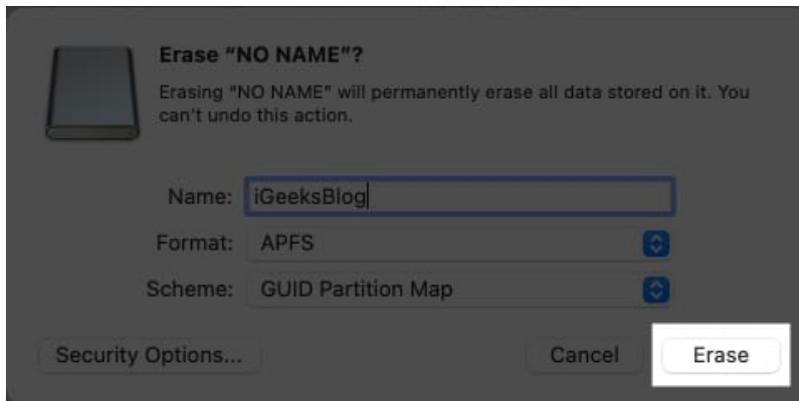


6. Then select the desired format from the dropdown menu next to **Format**. The options are as below:



- **APFS:** APFS is a standard Mac file system with features such as robust encryption and others. macOS 10.13 and later are supported.
- **APFS (Encrypted):** A protected format that is supported with macOS 10.13 and later.
- **APFS (Case-sensitive):** It is an APFS format that treats folder names like “iGeeksBlog” and “IGEEKSBLOG” as two independent entities.
- **APFS (Case-sensitive, Encrypted):** This format has both case-sensitive and secured format attributes.
- **Mac OS Extended (Journaled):** An encrypted or case-sensitive format that safeguards the hierarchical file system’s integrity. Advised for macOS 10.12 or earlier.
- **Mac OS Extended (Case-sensitive, Journaled):** A case-sensitive format that treats “igeeksmedia” and “IGEEKSMEDIA” as different entities. Recommended for macOS 10.12 or earlier.
- **MS-DOS(FAT32) and ExFAT:** Though FAT32 and ExFAT work for Mac, these formats are commonly used for Windows. FAT32 is suggested for disk sizes less than 32GB, and ExFAT is suggested for disk sizes more than 32GB.

7. Click **Erase**.



To understand more about the APFS format, check our post on [how to add, delete, or wipe APFS Volumes on Mac](#).

Format a USB drive on Mac with multiple partitions

1. Launch **Disk Utility** on Mac.
2. Choose a **Partition** from the sidebar menu.
3. Click **Partitions** from the top menu.
4. Select the **(-) sign** under the pie chart.
5. Click **Apply** → **Partition** on top → **Done**.
6. Pick the latest partition and click **Erase**.
7. Choose **Erase** → **Done**.

How to format USB on Mac using Terminal command line

1. Open **Spotlight** → **Terminal**.
2. **Copy** and **paste** the commands below one after the other, then hit the return key after each one.
 - `diskutil list`
 - `diskutil eraseDisk FILE_SYSTEM DISK_NAME DISK_IDENTIFIER`
3. As per your desired format, choose a command; copy-paste, and hit return.
 - **Mac OS Extended (Journaled):** `diskutil eraseDisk JHFS+ DiskName /dev/DiskNodeID`
 - **Mac OS Extended (Case-sensitive, Journaled):** `diskutil eraseDisk HFS+ DiskName /dev/DiskNodeID`
 - **MS-DOS(FAT32):** `diskutil eraseDisk FAT32 DiskNameGoesHere`

/dev/DiskNodeIDHere

- **ExFAT:** `diskutil eraseDisk ExFAT DiskName /dev/DiskNodeID`

Note: Change the file system's disk name in the terminal commands.

Is formatting USB safe?

Yes, formatting your USB is perfectly safe. You need this because when you purchase a new flash drive, it is either unformatted or formatted for out-of-box use on Windows machines. So, in order to prepare it for your Mac, you must format the stick to a Mac-specific file system. Furthermore, if you forget or fail to back up your data before beginning the procedure.

FAQs

What's the ideal USB format for Mac?

A USB should have the APFS format, which is the default format for Mac. If you can't locate the APFS format, you may alternatively try the Mac OS Extended version.

How to change read-only USB on Mac without formatting?

Change your read-only USB on Mac without formatting by right-clicking the USB in **Finder** → selecting **Get Info** → **Sharing & Permissions** → choosing **Read & Write**.

Read more:

- [How to determine file system of external drive on Mac](#)
- [Best USB-C to HDMI cables for Mac](#)
- [How to delete Mac partition on Mac](#)