

Using DuckDuckGc

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Starting Tails on Mac

This page describes the technique to start Tails from a USB stick on Mac.

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Starting on Mac

1. Make sure that you have installed Tails using either:

- [balenaEtcher from macOS](#)
- [balenaEtcher from Windows](#)
- [GNOME Disks from Linux](#)
- [the Linux command line](#)

2. Shut down the computer.

3. Plug in your Tails USB stick.

4. Switch on the computer.

Immediately press-and-hold the **Option** key (**Alt** key) when the startup chime is played.

Hold the key pressed until a list of possible startup disks appears.



5. Choose the USB stick and press **Enter**. The USB stick appears as an external hard disk and might be labeled **EFI Boot** or **Windows** like in the following screenshot:



If the USB stick does not appear in the list of startup disks:

1. Make sure that you have installed Tails using either:
 - [balenaEtcher from Windows](#)
 - [balenaEtcher from macOS](#)
 - [GNOME Disks from Linux](#)
 - [the Linux command line](#)
2. Make sure that you have [verified your download of Tails](#).
3. Try installing again on the same USB stick.
4. Try installing on a different USB stick.
5. Try using the same USB stick to start on a different computer.

If your computer still does not display the Boot Loader, it might currently be impossible to start Tails on your computer.

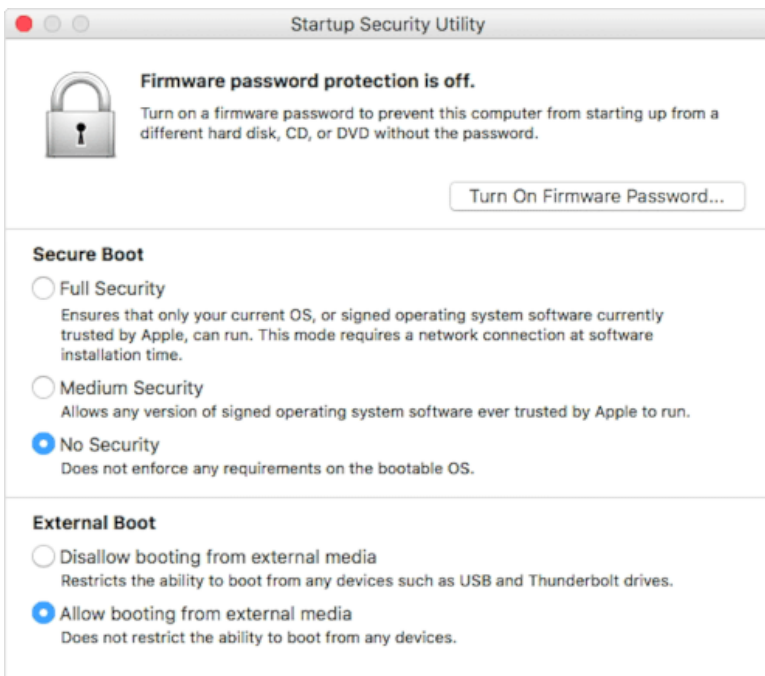
6. If your Mac displays the following error:

```
Security settings do not allow this Mac to use an external startup disk.
```

Then you have to change the settings of the *Startup Security Utility* of your Mac to authorize starting from Tails.

To open *Startup Security Utility*:

1. Turn on your Mac, then press and hold **Command(⌘)+R** immediately after you see the Apple logo. Your Mac starts up from [macOS Recovery](#) .
2. When you see the macOS *Utilities* window, choose **Utilities ▶ Startup Security Utility** from the menu bar.
3. When you are asked to authenticate, click **Enter macOS Password**, then choose an administrator account and enter its password.



In the *Startup Security Utility*:

- Choose **No Security** in the **Secure Boot** section.
- Choose **Allow booting from external media** in the **External Boot**.

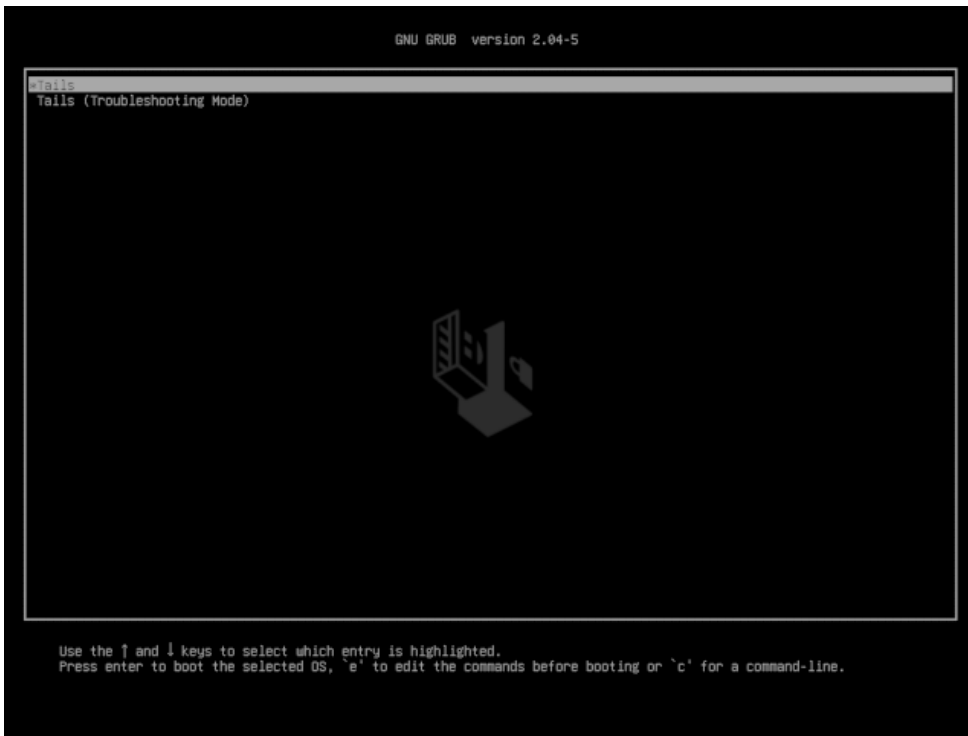
To still protect your Mac from starting on untrusted external media, you can set a firmware password, available on macOS Mountain Lion or later. A firmware password prevents users who do not have the password from starting up from any media other than the designated startup disk.

If you forget your firmware password you will require an in-person service appointment with an Apple Store or Apple Authorized Service Provider.

Read more on Apple Support about:

- [Startup Security Utility](#)
- [How to set a firmware password on your Mac](#)

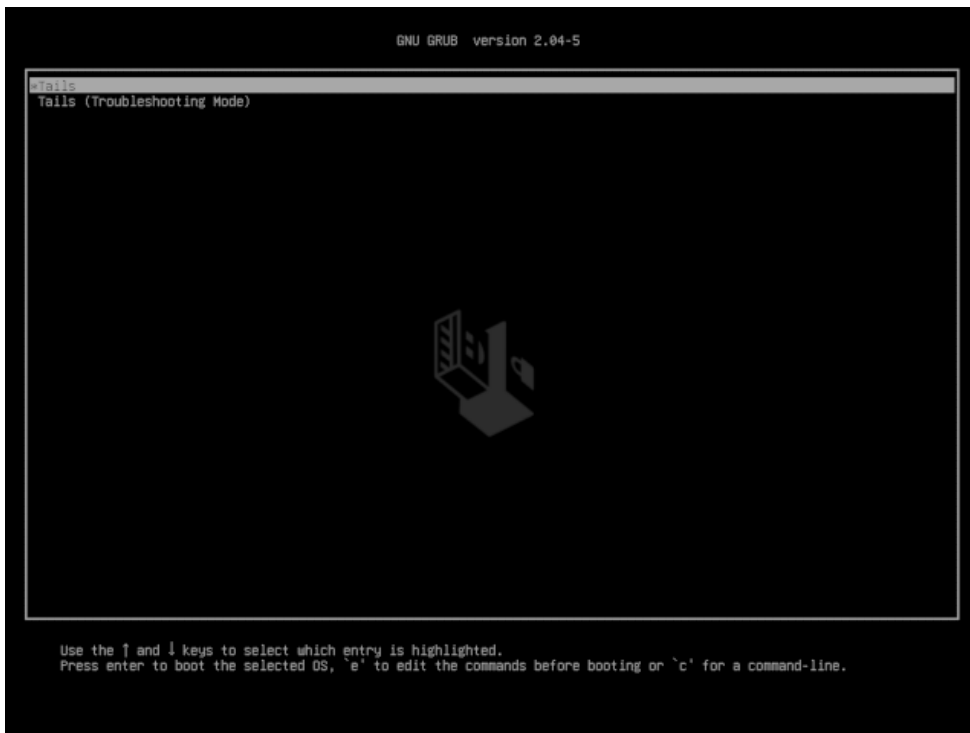
7. If the computer starts on Tails, the Boot Loader appears and Tails starts automatically after 4 seconds.



If the Boot Loader appears, you can continue reading our [instructions on the Welcome Screen and configuring the Persistent Storage](#).

Troubleshooting Tails not starting at all

Use this section if the computer does not start from the USB stick and the Boot Loader does not display:



Verify your Tails USB stick

1. Make sure that you have installed Tails using either:
 - [balenaEtcher from Windows](#)

- [balenaEtcher from macOS](#)
 - [GNOME Disks from Linux](#)
 - [the Linux command line](#)
2. Make sure that you have [verified your download of Tails](#).
 3. Try installing again on the same USB stick.
 4. Try installing on a different USB stick.
 5. Try using the same USB stick to start on a different computer.

If you get the following error message in macOS:

```
There may be a problem with this disk image. Are you sure
you want to open it?
```

Then, you have to [install Tails using balenaEtcher](#).

Check our list of known issues

Similar problems might have been reported already for your Mac model in our [list of known issues about Tails not starting at all](#).

Troubleshooting Tails not starting after the Boot Loader

Use this section if the Boot Loader appears but not the Welcome Screen when you start Tails.

Verify your Tails USB stick

1. Make sure that you have installed Tails using either:
 - [balenaEtcher from Windows](#)
 - [balenaEtcher from macOS](#)
 - [GNOME Disks from Linux](#)
 - [the Linux command line](#)
2. Make sure that you have [verified your download of Tails](#).
3. Try installing again on the same USB stick.
4. Try installing on a different USB stick.
5. Try using the same USB stick to start on a different computer.

Try the Troubleshooting Mode entry

In the Boot Loader, choose the **Troubleshooting Mode** entry, which works better on some computers.

Try the External Hard Disk entry

In the Boot Loader, choose the **External Hard Disk** entry, if it is available. Some USB sticks need this entry in order to start Tails.

Check our list of known issues

- If the computer displays the error message **Error starting GDM with your graphics card**, refer to our [list of known issues with graphics cards](#).

- Otherwise, refer to our [list of known issues about Tails not starting entirely](#). It might contain workarounds for your computer model.

Tails

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