

**ALWAYS CLICK ON "CANCEL"  
WHEN AN "INITIALIZE DISK" BOX POPS UP  
(UNLESS YOU HAVE JUST ATTACHED AN  
UNFORMATTED HARD DRIVE OR USB FLASH  
DRIVE TO YOUR COMPUTER)**

**Summary:**

You are using your "Windows.." computer when an unexpected pop-up box asks you to "Initialize Disk". Please do NOT click on its "OK" button. Please click on its "Cancel" button. This goofy, totally-erroneous pop-up box has caused more "Windows.." users to inadvertently format their hard drives and lose their data files than any other of the "gotchas" in "Windows..!"

**AN UNEXPECTED POP-UP BOX ASKS YOU TO "INITIALIZE DISK"**

You did not install any new internal or external hard drives into your "Windows" computer.

All of a sudden, "Windows" cannot "see" one of your NTFS hard drives and claims that it needs to be "initialized":

## Initialize Disk

You must initialize a disk before Logical Disk Manager can access it.

Select disks:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disk 0
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Use the following partition style for the selected disks:

- MBR (Master Boot Record)
- GPT (GUID Partition Table)

Note: The GPT partition style is not recognized by all previous versions of Windows. It is recommended for disks larger than 2TB, or disks used on Itanium-based computers.

OK

You should click on the "Cancel" button of the "Initialize Disk" box.

If you allow Windows to "initialize" and then format this hard drive, you will lose all programs and/or data files that are stored on this hard drive. In other words, do not allow "Windows" to "initialize" the failed hard drive.

After you click on the "Cancel" button box, the "Initialize Disk" box will disappear.

If you are getting an "initialize Disk" box repeatedly, please go to [http://aztcs.org/meeting\\_notes/winhardsig/harddrives/repairing/010-HDMaintenanceStrategy.pdf](http://aztcs.org/meeting_notes/winhardsig/harddrives/repairing/010-HDMaintenanceStrategy.pdf) and follow our instructions for performing disk "Error-checking", "Defragmentation", and "Disk Management" in order to resolve the problem.