External hard drives (USB, eSATA, firewire) and external drive docking stations

Blancco Drive Eraser is capable of erasing externally connected hard drives (USB, eSATA and firewire) and hard drives connected to external hard drive docking stations.

However there are some limitations and known issues when dealing with this kind of hardware. The most common issue is that Blancco Drive Eraser does not detect the connected device. This can happen due to several different reasons:

1. If the connected device does not identify itself as a magnetic hard drive or an SSD, Blancco Drive Eraser cannot detect the device properly. Some devices, especially USB connectable ones, might identify themselves as flash devices, and therefore are not detected by the software.
2. If the connected device requires operating system specific drivers it is very likely that Blancco Drive Eraser is not able to detect the device properly. Some devices might require Windows based drivers to function properly.
3. External storage devices come in different varieties and from dozens of different manufacturers and they sometimes do not follow common ATA /hard drive standards as well as they should. This may cause issues with the detection.
4. Sometimes USB connectivity may prevent the software's ability to issue firmware based erasure commands, resulting in detection issues or a failed erasure process. This is usually more common with SSDs.
5. Docking stations may also prevent the software's ability to issue firmware based erasure commands, resulting in detection issues or a failed erasure process.

Should a disk detection issue occur:

- Connect the external device to a computer, start the computer and enter BIOS. Check if the external device is detected by BIOS; hard drive settings/USB device settings/boot device settings. If the device is not detected by the BIOS at all, it is very likely that Blancco will not be able to detect it either.
- Check from BIOS that USB ports are not in disabled state.
- Try connecting the USB devices to different USB ports. For example desktop computer's back side USB ports are usually more reliable than the front ones. Try connecting devices to different speed USB ports. For example if USB 3 device is not detected in USB 3 port, try connecting it to USB 2 port.

Workaround solutions for the disk detection issues:

- If Blancco Drive Eraser fails, Blancco File Eraser or Blancco LUN Eraser could be used as a workaround solution
- One File Eraser based approach would be for example to format the externally connected storage device and then run Blancco File Eraser's "Free space shredding". This overwrites the free space of the storage device using a selected overwriting standard. Note: Blancco File Eraser is not able to access special disk areas such as DCO/HPA/remapped sectors/bad sectors, and can only access the areas that the Windows operating system can.
- If a hard drive can be removed from its external casing and connected directly to a computer's SATA port, it may significantly increase the chance of detecting the hard drive. This is not recommended unless the operation does not damage the device or its casing.