Chromebook support on Blancco Drive Eraser

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Chromebooks Manufactured from 2015 onward.

Any Chromebook manufactured from 2015 onward is supported, whether it is ARM-based or Intel-based.

The Chromebook processing will happen mainly in the Blancco Drive Eraser user interface, but the operator will have to prepare the Chromebook and connect it to Blancco Drive Eraser. The Chromebook has to be connected to the network via an Ethernet cable, Blancco Drive Eraser can be connected to the same network either via an Ethernet cable or via a wireless connection.

Detailed instructions for Chromebook handling can be found from Drive Eraser user manual.

Chromebooks Manufactured before 2015

Chromebooks are laptops or tablets running the Linux-based Chrome OS (designed by Google) as its operating system. The devices are primarily used to perform a variety of tasks using the Google Chrome browser, with most applications and data residing in the cloud rather than on the machine itself.

Most Chromebooks have a locked bootloader that will prevent them from booting any external operating system (Windows, Linux, BDE or any other). The process to unlock it differs from brand/model and it is impossible to provide a unique and generic method to do it. The Internet is full of useful information to accomplish this feat on the condition that you know the Chromebook manufacturer and model. The list below is non-exhaustive and only provides some recurrent tips that are required to unlock the bootloader and boot another operating system:

- Enabling Developer mode (requires pressing some keys while booting, then bypassing some screens/messages).
    - On occasions, this mode (off by default) can only be enabled by an administrator and/or need the Chromebook to be connected to a valid domain (e.g. school or else).
- Some alternative steps:
    - Modifying the Chromebooks BIOS (to enable the Legacy Boot, may require pressing some keys and typing some commands in a terminal),
    - Inserting a paperclip or other slim object into a tiny hole on the side of the unit while pressing the Power button,
    - Removing the back cover and turning a screw or short-cutting some pins (this deletes all the drive data and voids the warranty!),
- Enabling USB boot (may require pressing some keys and typing some commands in a terminal).
- Finally, rebooting the machine with a bootable USB stick containing a BDE image.

Provided that the Chromebook is unlocked and boots BDE successfully, BDE usually supports these machines well and the erasure works without issues.

Important:

Any user that needs to erase Chromebooks should make sure that the previous owner has put the device in Developer mode and/or the machine is not "Cloud-locked" and/or does not require any administrator password to be processed.

Notes:

There is a particular Chromebook model and drive (machine: GOOGLE Link, drive: SanDisk SATA SSD i100 32GB) that can be erased successfully with erasure standards such as "Blancco SSD Erasure" or "NIST 800-88 Purge", however the drive does not show up anymore upon rebooting the machine. Although the drive is visible internally, it is unusable. Our investigation has concluded that the executed firmware-based erasure commands that erase (purge) the drive brick it, this is probably due to a faulty drive firmware. The workaround consists in erasing these drives via a normal overwriting (clear) only (e.g. with "Aperiodic random overwrite", "HMG Lower Standard" or "DoD 3-passes"), disable the erasure of remapped sectors and the removal of hidden areas as well.