OSL2000 Boot Manager

Version 9.32 - Complete expanded help guide

Installation, registration, command-line use, boot menu features, troubleshooting, multi-OS planning, compatibility notes, and glossary.

Historical documentation notice
This expanded guide uses the entire supplied archived support page, captured on 19 December 2019. It reorganizes and explains the page rather than updating its technical claims. Procedures target legacy BIOS/MBR-era systems and can be unsafe or inapplicable on current computers. Read warnings before acting.

Guide contents

Section	Topics
1. Start here and frequently asked questions	Download, install, uninstall, recovery disk, partition location, registration and license.
2. Installer and boot troubleshooting	Installer errors, missing boot menu, Windows, DOS, Linux, optical and removable devices.
3. Command line and feature reference	Switches, desktop shortcuts, F6, F8, AutoBoot, Stealth, Self-Timer, AutoHide and other menu features.
4. Multi-OS installation guide	Planning, old OS limitations, multiple Windows and Linux installs, partition management.
5. Knowledge base	BIOS boot order, compatibility issues and the archived gaming advice.
6. Glossary and normal boot sequence	Sector, MBR, partition table, BIOS, CHS/LBA, the boot process and 8 GB barrier.

Use this as a reference to the historical support page. It is not a substitute for a tested backup, recovery media, hardware documentation, or operating system documentation.

1. Start here and frequently asked questions

Before contacting support
The archived page asks users to read its documentation before contacting the helpdesk. It says questions already answered there may not receive a response. The archived page links to a contact form; that historical support route may no longer be active.

How can I download the latest version?

The archived page directs users to its Download page and says to follow the download instructions. The page snapshot is from 2019 and does not confirm that the download link still works or that 9.32 is the latest available version.

How do I install?

From Windows: Download and run **osl2000.exe**, then choose **Install**. The archived instructions say it may be installed before or after the operating systems.

From DOS: First run **osl2000.exe** from Windows. The source says it extracts files into **C:\OSL2000**. Boot DOS, open that folder, and run **dosinst.exe**.

Boot-floppy fallback: If ordinary installation has problems, create a boot floppy, copy the OSL2000 files from **C:\OSL2000** onto it, boot from the floppy, and run **dosinst.exe**. These steps describe legacy Windows and DOS systems.

Should I create an uninstall disk?

The archived page says it is not needed in most cases, but recommends creating one when system details are uncertain. It specifically warns about boot-time low-level utilities such as GoBack, disk managers such as OnTrack, EZ-Drive, and MaxBlast, and dynamic disk arrays, especially mirroring or striping. The source warns that such configurations may be incompatible with OSL2000 and that recovery media may be needed to restore the previous boot setup.

Where does OSL2000 install?

The archived documentation says OSL2000 does not need a dedicated partition and installs itself in the first track of the first hard disk, regardless of where the installer files are located. It presents the installation as automatic. Because this changes boot code, do not interpret the original claim as a guarantee of safety on every disk layout.

Will uninstall remove my data or partitions?

The original page answers no. It says OSL2000 uses the first few bytes of the master boot record and track zero on the primary hard disk, and claims uninstall will not remove operating systems, partitions, or their data. That is the original vendor statement, not a substitute for a backup or a verified recovery plan.

How do I uninstall?

From Windows: Run **osl2000.exe** and choose **Uninstall**. **From DOS:** Run **osl2000.exe** in Windows to extract the files, then run **dosinst.exe** from **C:\OSL2000** in DOS. If needed, the source describes booting from a floppy containing the OSL2000 files and running **dosinst.exe**.

The archived page says the uninstall disk is usually unnecessary, but may be required with the low-level boot utilities and disk managers described above. Keep **mbr.sav** and **image.sav** until rollback is no longer needed.

2. Registration and command-line use

How do I register?

The archived registration instructions say customers could order by credit card, phone, fax, purchase order, or post. The page says registration details were normally emailed within minutes. To enter them, download and run **osl2000.exe**, choose **Register**, and enter the supplied details. These purchasing and support options are historical and may no longer be available.

Registered versus unregistered

According to the archived page, the unregistered version displays a minor nag screen and has no other differences from the registered version.

Lost registration details

The archived page directs users to contact the helpdesk. Its feedback link may be inactive today.

Registration problems

The page gives these historical troubleshooting steps: remove the **C:\OSL2000** folder, download a fresh copy, run **osl2000.exe** and install first, then choose **Register**. The instruction to delete a folder should only be considered when following the original procedure on a compatible system and after preserving any files that may be needed.

Command-line options

The source says command-line options can automate installation and boot selection. In Windows, open a command prompt in the OSL2000 folder and run **setup /?**. In DOS, run **dosinst /?**. The options are not case-sensitive.

Option	Action from the archived guide
/?	Display the help screen.
/i	Install OSL2000 without creating an uninstall disk.
/u	Uninstall OSL2000 without using the uninstall disk.
/b:n	AutoBoot menu entry n, where n is 1 through 9. The utility restarts the computer and selects that entry.

The page gives **dosinst /i** as an unattended DOS install example and **dosinst /b:2** as an example that restarts into the second entry. It identifies entry 1 as the floppy drive when available. If the requested entry does not exist, the page says an error appears and the menu opens.

AutoBoot restarts the system
Close applications and save work before using AutoBoot. The source says AutoBoot works best with Stealth mode. When AutoBoot is active, the default OS and Self-Timer settings are ignored.

Create a desktop shortcut

The archived procedure is: right-click the Windows desktop, choose **New > Shortcut**, enter **C:\OSL2000\setup.exe /b:3**, click Next, give the shortcut a name, and finish. This example selects the third boot menu entry. Replace the number only after checking the current menu order. The source says shortcuts may need to be created separately in each Windows installation.

The page also describes running AutoBoot from a batch file or a shortcut. With Stealth mode active, the menu remains hidden during normal startup while AutoBoot can still select a requested entry.

3. Boot menu and feature reference

F6 - Special Boot Modes

Press F6 to enable SWAP mode for some operating systems booting from a second or later hard disk. The archived page says operating systems on the first hard disk do not need SWAP mode. It further says Windows and DOS are not fully compatible with SWAP mode, so they use AUTO mode for second-or-later hard disks by default, and this cannot be changed.

F8 - Manual Hiding

Press F8 to hide or unhide selected Windows and DOS partitions. The page says manual hiding is for rare cases where specific partition changes must be administered. Manual hiding is disabled while AutoHide is enabled; turn AutoHide off to use F8.

AutoBoot

AutoBoot starts a selected operating system from the currently running OS without requiring the user to choose it from the boot menu. The source describes using the AutoBoot button, a desktop shortcut, or a batch file. The archived page gives unattended jobs and remote maintenance as examples, including restoring partition or disk images. It always restarts the machine, so close applications and save work first. The **/b:n** option selects entry 1 through 9; if the requested entry does not exist, the source says an error is shown and the menu opens.

Stealth Mode

Stealth mode hides the boot menu during startup. The archived page says OSL2000 pauses for one second; pressing any key during that pause displays the menu. If no key is pressed, it boots the default OS, or the last booted OS if no default is configured. AutoBoot combined with Stealth mode bypasses the menu and directly starts the requested entry. The Self-Timer is ignored while Stealth mode is enabled.

Self-Timer and Set Default OS

The Self-Timer starts the default OS after a delay from 1 to 99 seconds. A value of zero disables the timer. If no default OS is set, the page says the last booted OS is selected. Set a default OS from the boot menu with **Ctrl+F2**; cancel it with **Alt+F2**. AutoBoot and Stealth mode make the timer unnecessary, so the page says it is ignored when either is enabled.

AutoHide and manual partition hiding

AutoHide is intended to keep Windows and DOS installations separate by hiding other Windows and DOS partitions. The archived guide describes different behavior depending on the booted partition: when Windows or DOS starts from a primary partition, AutoHide hides other partitions except logical partitions; when it starts from a logical partition, AutoHide hides the others, including logical partitions. Manual F8 hiding is disabled whenever AutoHide is on. Verify the exact behavior on the target system before relying on partition isolation.

Show All Partitions

This display option reveals partitions normally omitted from the menu, including partitions that are not bootable, such as Linux swap partitions. The page calls this a cosmetic option and says it is disabled by default to reduce confusion.

CD Alternate Boot

OSL2000 uses an alternate boot mode for CD-ROMs by default. If a system does not support it, the archived page says to disable alternate boot mode in Options to select Standard Boot.

3. Boot menu and feature reference - continued

MenuLock

MenuLock protects boot menu settings with a password after the menu has been customized. While it is enabled, the settings cannot be modified without the password. The archived key commands are **Ctrl+F3** to enable MenuLock and **Alt+F3** to disable it.

AutoScan

AutoScan automatically configures the boot menu and detects operating systems when they are added or removed. The page describes it as a built-in feature that avoids manual configuration.

AutoSense

AutoSense detects the operating system in the selected boot partition and configures the boot engine before loading it. The source describes this as automatic configuration performed by the built-in boot manager.

SafeBoot

The source says SafeBoot is designed to preserve startup when boot code is overwritten or the boot manager is disturbed, including during some operating system installations that write to the MBR. This is the vendor description, not a guarantee that every system can recover without separate recovery media.

Bypass the boot menu

If the menu causes trouble, the archived page says to hold Shift, Ctrl, or Alt during startup to bypass it.

Booting optical and other hardware devices

OSL2000 can boot devices that the system BIOS recognizes at startup, according to the archived documentation. For CDs or DVDs, the page says choosing **CD-ROM** attempts to boot the second boot device selected in BIOS. Set the desired optical device as the second boot device first; if another device occupies that position, OSL2000 may boot that instead.

For ATA, USB, FireWire, ZIP, and similar hardware, the archived procedure is to connect and initialize the device, install OSL2000, and restart. If the device is not available, check BIOS setup because boot support may be disabled by default. A device appearing in the menu under a generic hard disk name is described as a cosmetic label issue.

Diagnostic and rollback files

- **debug.log** records installer activity and is created each time setup.exe or dosinst.exe runs. The source says it can help locate a problem.
- **mbr.sav** and **image.sav** hold uninstall information used for rollback. Do not delete them while the uninstaller may still be needed.

Boot menu disappeared

The archived page recommends reinstalling OSL2000 if the menu has disappeared. It notes that some operating system installers may disable a boot manager during installation.

4. Installation and boot troubleshooting

Message or symptom	What the archived page says
Invalid free space in partition detected	The source associates this with a disk that does not conform to BIOS LBA mode, is not supported directly by BIOS at startup, or is very old. It says OSL2000 cannot be used if this error applies.
Device not found or responding	The primary device in the chain may not be a standard hard disk. The page suggests reconnecting hardware. It also describes trying the DOS boot-floppy installation procedure.
The system cannot find the file specified	The archived page gives the same possible primary-device issue and suggests reconnecting hardware or trying the boot-floppy procedure.
Bad Sector Flag Detected	The source associates this with low-level disk-sector errors or interference from antivirus or low-level disk utilities. It says recovering from disk-sector errors is outside the document scope. The original page suggests disabling antivirus or low-level utilities before retrying; first verify disk health and follow current security guidance rather than disabling protection casually.
Windows NT/2000/XP/2003/Vista/7 will not boot	The page says the OS boot loader may be in the wrong partition or hard disk, or may be corrupt. It lists ntldr, ntdetect.com, and boot.ini as files to check or copy to the corresponding partition. It cautions that boot.ini should only be modified if necessary.
Windows 9x/ME or DOS will not boot	The source says to transfer system files to the corresponding partition using the DOS command sys x: from a bootable floppy. This is a legacy procedure; verify the target drive letter and OS instructions before using it.
Linux will not boot	The page attributes this to GRUB or LILO not being installed correctly. It says to install the boot loader in the first sector of the boot partition and consult Linux documentation. For LILO-specific details see the multi-OS section.
CD or DVD will not boot	Set the intended optical drive as the second BIOS boot device, then choose CD-ROM from the OSL2000 menu. OSL2000 uses the BIOS device order described in the feature section.
USB, FireWire, ZIP, or another device will not boot	The device must be supported by the system BIOS at startup. Check BIOS setup for disabled boot options. A generic hard disk label in the OSL2000 menu may be normal according to the page.

Use caution with boot files
The archived help page contains low-level repair steps for legacy operating systems. Incorrectly copying or editing boot files, changing the active partition, or altering BIOS settings can prevent startup or cause data loss. Back up first and use instructions for the specific operating system.

Registration troubleshooting recap

The archived registration section suggests removing C:\OSL2000, downloading a fresh copy, installing it, and then entering registration details. It also points users who lost details or still need help to the old helpdesk. These are historical instructions; preserve needed files and backups before acting.

5. Multi-OS installation guide

Can a system have 100 copies of Windows?

The archived page answers yes. It describes a layout with one Windows copy in a primary partition and up to 99 copies in separate logical partitions, assuming the operating systems and hardware can boot from that layout. This is an example from the historical documentation, not a guarantee for every Windows version or computer.

Simple installation sequence

- Read the known multi-boot issues and compatibility notes before changing partitions.
- Decide which operating systems will be installed.
- Choose partition types, sizes, and file systems appropriate to each operating system.
- Create the required partitions with a suitable partition manager. Verify disk identity and back up before modifying partitions.
- Install each operating system.
- Install OSL2000 after the operating systems, then test each boot menu entry.

Primary partition boot flag
Before installing an operating system into a primary partition on the first hard disk, the archived page says to mark that partition active with a partition manager. It warns that otherwise the OS may place its boot loader in the wrong partition. Changing active flags can make a system unbootable; verify the target and recovery method.

Known multi-boot issues from the archived page

- Many DOS versions and some Windows versions released before 98SE may fail if their primary partition is not entirely below the 2 GB or 8 GB boundary.
- Installing Windows 2000 or XP onto a system with NT4 on NTFS may upgrade NTFS4 to NTFS5. The source warns NT4 may then fail without Service Pack 4; it says this issue does not occur for NT4 on FAT16.
- Some older Linux versions may require the root partition to be completely below the 8 GB boundary. The page says newer versions do not have this limitation.
- Some older Windows and DOS versions may require the final logical drive in an extended partition to be FAT. The page suggests that logical FAT partition can hold shared data.

Installing multiple copies of Windows

Method described as easier when using multiple hard disks: Connect the target disk as the primary master, create partitions, and install each OS manually. Reconnect the disks as before, then install OSL2000. The source stresses marking the target partition active before installing each OS.

Advanced imaging method: The page describes installing Windows on the primary hard disk, imaging that partition with a disk-imaging utility, and restoring the image into another partition or disk. It says the restored copy may need configuration changes such as boot.ini or registry edits before installing OSL2000. This is advanced, version-sensitive advice and should not be followed without a tested image and OS-specific guidance.

5. Multi-OS installation guide - continued

Installing multiple copies of Linux

The archived documentation says Linux distributions can be installed into logical partitions or a second hard disk. For each copy, install GRUB or LILO in the first sector of that Linux boot partition. The correct steps depend on the distribution and boot-loader version.

The page includes this legacy LILO example and says to replace the boot device and root device values for the target installation. It also says removing the prompt and timeout lines can speed boot. Treat the sample as historical; device names such as /dev/hda and kernel paths are specific to older Linux systems.

```
boot=/dev/hda
map=/boot/map
install=/boot/boot.b
image=/boot/vmlinuz-2.2.5-15
label=Linux
root=/dev/hdb3
read-only
```

After editing the old LILO configuration, the source says to run **lilo** and look for “*Added Linux”, restart, and then install OSL2000 if it is not already installed. For current Linux systems, use current distribution and boot-loader documentation instead.

Adding, deleting, and modifying partitions

The archived page says partition changes and creating multiple primary partitions require an advanced partition manager. It notes that Windows and Linux include basic partition tools, and references an advanced partition manager from the old OSLoader products page. The glossary mentions fdisk, Ranish, and DiskEdit as tools that can edit partition tables. Any partition-table edit can destroy data if performed incorrectly.

Multiple-OS planning checklist

- Document every disk, partition, filesystem, active flag, and intended OS before installation.
- Keep a tested backup and the OSL2000 uninstall/recovery disk available.
- Install the operating systems first and the boot manager last, following each OS vendor’s boot-loader guidance.
- Test each menu entry before enabling Stealth mode or automatic boot selection.
- Keep shared data on a partition accessible to the systems that need it; do not assume AutoHide behavior is the same for primary and logical partitions.

6. Knowledge base and compatibility

BIOS boot order and startup speed

The archived knowledge base recommends this boot order:

BIOS setting	Archived recommendation
First boot device	First hard disk
Second boot device	CD or DVD drive
Third boot device	Floppy drive

The source says this arrangement can let OSL2000 boot CDs directly, reduce accidental startup from an infected floppy, and skip other devices before starting from the hard disk. It also warns that BIOS changes are delicate and says not to modify settings you do not understand. BIOS options differ by computer; use the hardware maker's guidance.

Compatibility issues listed by OSLoader

- **Dynamic disk arrays:** The page says OSL2000 is not completely compatible with some arrays, especially mirrored or striped configurations. It calls multi-booting such a system delicate and recommends backing up critical data and testing on a test system.
- **Low-level disk utilities and disk managers:** The source says OSL2000 may not work with boot-time utilities such as GoBack or managers such as OnTrack, EZ-Drive, and MaxBlast. It recommends an uninstall disk where appropriate.
- **Windows 2000 AutoHide:** The page says AutoHide may fail to hide some partitions in particular configurations due to Windows 2000 Disk Management. Its historical workaround is to open Disk Management in Administrative Tools, right-click the affected drive letter, choose Change Drive Letter, then choose Remove. This should be checked against the exact Windows 2000 configuration before use.

The 8 GB barrier

The archived glossary says OSL2000 can boot beyond 8 GB when the BIOS supports LBA disk addressing. Older BIOS using CHS addressing may not boot operating systems in partitions beyond the 8 GB mark on larger disks. The old page suggests upgrading the BIOS or computer. Modern storage, firmware, and partition schemes differ; this section describes the historical BIOS/MBR context only.

Archived advice about running games at maximum speed

This is dated advice, not a current recommendation
The source itself disclaims accuracy and liability. Its gaming section was written for older PCs and Windows XP. It is reproduced here for completeness only. Do not disable virtual memory, set a fixed paging file, remove drivers, or format a partition based solely on this historical advice.

The archived page recommended Windows XP as a separate gaming system. Its stated reasons were broader hardware support, greater stability than earlier Windows versions, faster performance in newer games, and compatibility with games that would not run on earlier Windows versions. It listed this sequence: create and format a FAT32 partition; install Windows; install hardware drivers; disable virtual memory and restart; defragment the partition; re-enable virtual memory with custom settings; set both paging-file values to 1024 MB; restart; then install games. It further advised installing only drivers it considered necessary for games, avoiding extra device drivers and applications, and formatting the gaming partition again after performance declined. These claims and steps are not validated for current hardware or software.

7. Glossary and normal boot sequence

Term	Expanded explanation from the archived page
Sector	The smallest unit of data read or written by the disk in the source description. A sector is typically 512 bytes; a 10 GB disk was described as containing a little over 20 million sectors. The page contrasts older CHS addressing with LBA.
Master Boot Record (MBR)	The first sector of the first hard disk in the legacy model described. BIOS startup transfers control to it; it selects an active partition and transfers control to that partition's boot record. The archived page says the MBR no longer remains in memory after that handoff.
Partition table	Information describing disk partitions. The archived page says it is located in the first sector of each hard disk and warns that incorrect edits can destroy data.
Partition	A disk area that can contain a boot record, filesystem, operating system, and user data. The legacy partition-table limit described is four primary partitions, or three primary partitions plus one extended partition containing logical partitions.
Boot manager	Software that presents operating system choices at startup. OSL2000 is described as booting Windows or DOS from multiple partitions, logical partitions, or a second hard disk.
BIOS	Firmware that initializes hardware and selects a boot device in the legacy PC startup model. BIOS options and capabilities vary by computer.
CHS and LBA	Cylinder-Head-Sector is the older disk addressing method. Logical Block Addressing is the later method discussed in the archived guide; older BIOS without LBA support may encounter the 8 GB boundary.
Boot flag / active partition	A marker in the primary partition table that identifies the partition to start in the legacy boot process described by the page.

Normal legacy BIOS/MBR boot sequence

- The BIOS first tries the diskette drive A. If it is unavailable or a read fails, it attempts to read the hard disk MBR. If successful, it transfers control to that code.
- The MBR checks the partition table for a valid active boot flag. The source says missing or conflicting boot flags can produce INVALID PARTITION TABLE and stop startup.
- The MBR reads the boot record from the active partition. The archived page lists ERROR LOADING OPERATING SYSTEM if it cannot read it, and MISSING OPERATING SYSTEM if the boot record lacks a valid signature.
- The partition boot record loads the rest of the operating system and passes control to it.

Source accuracy note
The original page's numbered boot sequence skips item 4 and contains typographical errors. The sequence above preserves its described order while correcting the numbering and wording. It applies to the legacy boot model documented there, not modern UEFI startup.

Source and scope

Source: OSLoader.com, "OSL2000 Boot Manager - Documentation," archived at the user-provided URL. Snapshot timestamp: 19 December 2019. This guide expands the FAQs, List of Features, Multi OS Installation Guide, Knowledge Base, and Glossary from the supplied page. It does not add a claim of current vendor support or modern UEFI compatibility.

Open the archived support page

Contact, purchase, download, and product links on the archived page may be inactive. Verify any technical step independently before applying it to a real system.