

## Getting into a password protected BIOS

If you need to get into a PC's BIOS setup (also called CMOS setup) that has been password protected, but you have forgotten the password, or it is not your PC and the end-user cannot remember or locate it, then you will either need to crack the password, or you will need to reset the BIOS in order to get at it. **Resetting the BIOS cancels all BIOS passwords.**

### The Smart Route - Software !

By far the quickest route to success is to run a piece of software that will find the password for you. BIOS passwords are stored with very rudimentary encryption and are as a result very easily decryptable. As a starting point, go back to [www.ATWDOWNLOADS.com](http://www.ATWDOWNLOADS.com), and download :

#### CMOS Password v4.6

This brilliant little utility will successfully retrieve 90% of all BIOS passwords (read the **READREAD.txt** file before you use it).

### The BIOS-Reset / Clear-CMOS pins

If the above program does not work, then the next step is to try the clear CMOS pins.

**Most Motherboards come with a spare 2-pin jumper installed in the OFF position on some connector pins on the board. Most motherboards also have "Clear CMOS" pins.** If you can find a spare jumper, and your motherboard has "Clear CMOS" pins (you can verify this by either checking the motherboard manual, or by looking directly at the motherboard, next to the CMOS battery), you can reset the BIOS by taking the following steps :

- Shut down the PC and turn it off.
- Remove all power cables from the back of your PC's base, and take the case off.
- Place the jumper over the two "Clear CMOS" pins.
- Plug the power cables back into the PC (still leaving the case off), turn the PC on and wait for 30-60 seconds (most likely nothing will switch on – most motherboards do not switch ON when you have a jumper over the "Clear CMOS" pins).
- Shut down the PC (if it turned ON) and remove the power cables from the base again.
- Take the "Clear CMOS" jumper off the pins.
- Put the case back on the PC and plug the cables back in.
- **Turn the PC on and you should now be able to get into the BIOS.**

#### Removing the CMOS battery

Increasingly, in order to cut costs a number of motherboard manufacturers no longer provide BIOS Reset pins on the motherboard. If you have such a motherboard, then try this as the next step :

As mentioned above, most motherboards come with a removable on-board battery which enables the motherboard to retain its BIOS settings even when the PC has been disconnected from power. If this battery, the CMOS battery, goes dead, you lose some or all the BIOS settings and you have to install a new battery and reconfigure the BIOS. In a similar manner, often, if you remove that battery from the motherboard and leave it out for a while, this will reset the BIOS to its default state and thus enable you to get into it as a result of the BIOS password having been reset to nothing.

So, if your motherboard does not have CMOS reset pins, and you want to try removing the battery, do the following :

- Shut the PC down and turn it off.
- Remove all power cables from the back of your PC's base, and take the case off.
- Take the CMOS battery out of the battery chassis.
- **Wait for 2 minutes at least.**
- Put the CMOS battery back into the battery chassis.
- Put the case back on the PC and plug the power cables back in.
- **Turn the PC on and see if you can get into the BIOS.**

ooooooooOOOOOOOoooooooo