

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN **PALADIN LTS** (VERSION 9 OR HIGHER)

USB with PERSISTENCE MODE



How to Make Your Own PALADIN LTS USB

IMPORTANT:

This guide shows you how to create a bootable PALADIN LTS (Version 9 or higher) USB drive. You can optionally enable **Persistence Mode**, which lets you save settings, updates, and files between reboots — turning your PALADIN USB into a powerful, portable forensic toolkit.

What You Will Need

- A USB drive (16GB or larger recommended)
 - A Windows PC
 - The PALADIN LTS ISO
 - [Download from sumuri.com/product/paladin-lts](https://sumuri.com/product/paladin-lts)
 - One of the following free tools to create the USB:
 - [Rufus](#) (Recommended — allows you to add a Persistence volume during setup)
 - [balenaEtcher](#) (Simple interface, but does *not* support Persistence volume creation)
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Why Use Persistence Mode?

Persistence Mode lets you **save your work and settings** on the PALADIN USB, even after restarting the computer.

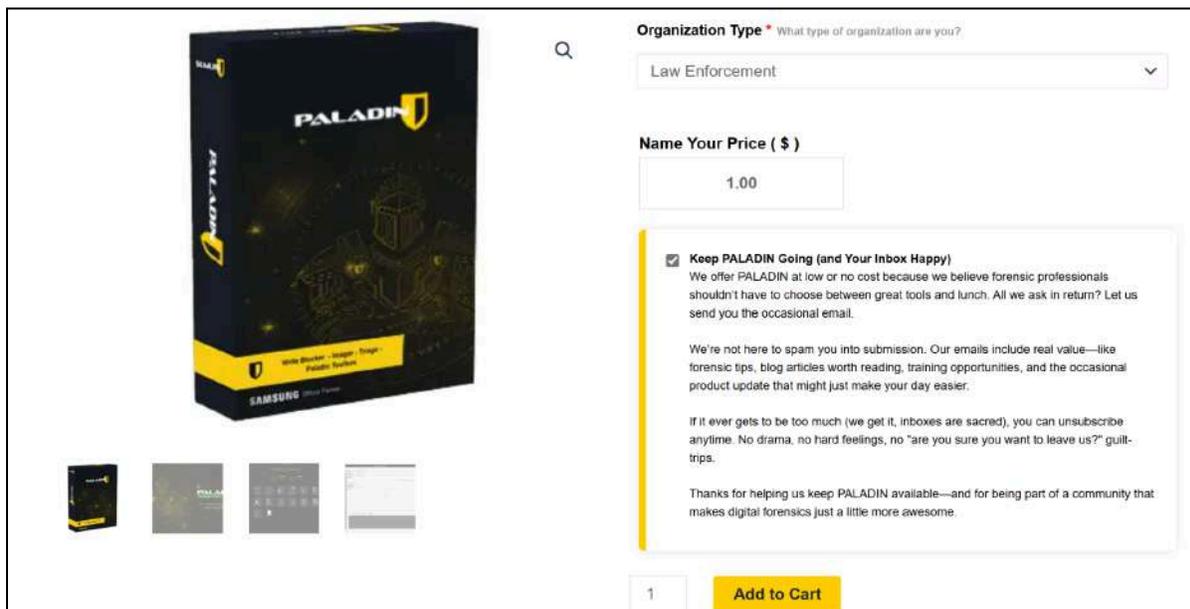
With Persistence Mode, you can:

- Keep custom settings (like Autopsy configs or network preferences)
- Retain downloaded tools and software updates
- Save logs, case notes, and reports
- Avoid reconfiguring PALADIN every time you boot

Without Persistence Mode, everything resets after each reboot — no files or settings are saved.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Download PALADIN LTS



- Go to sumuri.com/product/paladin-lts
- Add PALADIN LTS to your cart and complete the free donation checkout
- Download the **PALADIN LTS ISO file** from the link provided after checkout
- **Creating a PALADIN USB will erase everything on the drive.** Back up any important files before continuing.
- If you choose to enable Persistence Mode, the size you allocate will determine how much data and how many changes can be saved.
- Even with Persistence Mode, **always back up important case data** to a separate, secure location.

Rufus vs. balenaEtcher

- **Rufus** is recommended because it allows you to create a Persistence volume *during* setup.
- **balenaEtcher** is easier to use and verifies the image after flashing, but it does *not* support creating a Persistence volume at the same time.

You can use either tool to create a bootable PALADIN USB, but your experience may vary depending on which one you choose.

⚠ CAUTION: Rufus & Secure Boot Compatibility

If you are using **Rufus** to create a PALADIN bootable USB on a computer that currently runs **Windows 10 or 11**, you may encounter a boot failure. Recent Windows security updates have blacklisted older Linux bootloaders to prevent security bypasses.

Signs of this issue:

- A blue screen error stating: "**Security Policy Violation**".
- An error stating: "**SBAT self-check failed**".
- A warning from Rufus during the creation process that the ISO contains a **revoked UEFI bootloader**.

Verified Solutions (as of 2026):

- **Use BalenaEtcher:** This tool is currently the most recommended alternative as it performs a direct "clone" of the ISO, preserving the original signatures that are more likely to pass Secure Boot checks.
- **Rufus "DD Image Mode":** If using Rufus, you **must** select "**Write in DD Image mode**" when prompted after clicking "Start." The default "ISO Image mode" modifies the bootloader, which triggers the security violation.
- **Manual Override:** If the solutions above do not resolve the issue and the system remains inaccessible, you may need to **temporarily disable Secure Boot** within the BIOS/UEFI settings to successfully boot PALADIN and proceed with your investigation.

Method 1: Using Rufus (Recommended)

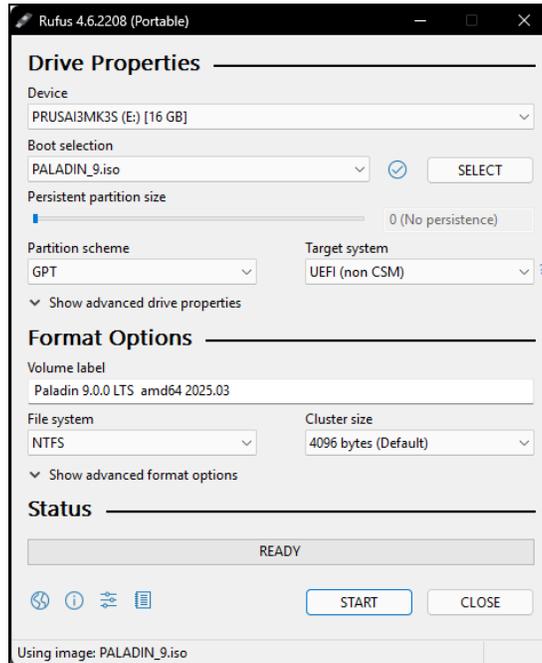
Download and Open Rufus



Download				
Latest releases:				
Link	Type	Platform	Size	Date
rufus-4.7.exe	Standard	Windows x64	1.6 MB	2025.04.09
rufus-4.7p.exe	Portable	Windows x64	1.6 MB	2025.04.09
rufus-4.7_x86.exe	Standard	Windows x86	1.6 MB	2025.04.09
rufus-4.7_arm64.exe	Standard	Windows ARM64	5.3 MB	2025.04.09

- Go to rufus.ie and download the latest version
- Plug your USB drive into your Windows PC
- Open the Rufus application

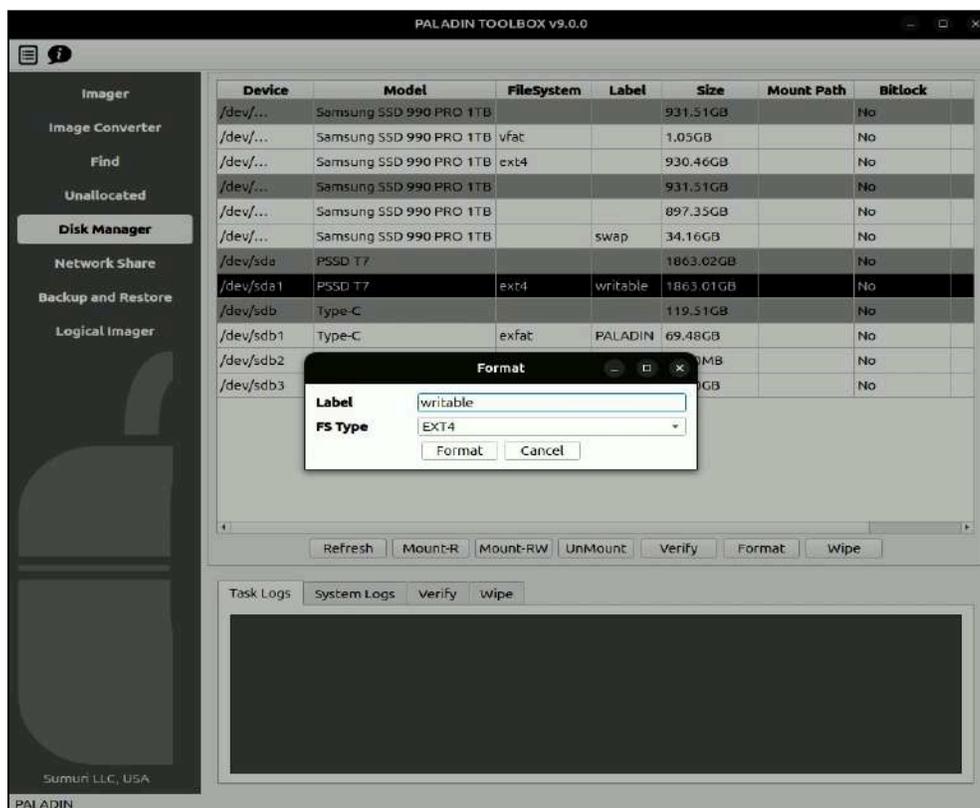
Set Up Your PALADIN USB with Persistence in Rufus



Inside Rufus:

1. **Device** – Select your USB drive
2. **Boot Selection** – Choose “Disk or ISO image”, then click **Select** and choose your downloaded PALADIN LTS ISO
3. **Persistent Partition Size** – Choose how much space to reserve for saving files and settings
 - Example: Use 8GB for persistence on a 16GB drive
4. **Partition Scheme** – Select **GPT**
5. **File System** – Choose **NTFS**
 - ◆ *Note: PALADIN includes files larger than 4GB, which **FAT32** cannot support*
6. Leave all other settings as they are
7. Click **Start**, then confirm any prompts that appear

Format the Persistence Volume as writable



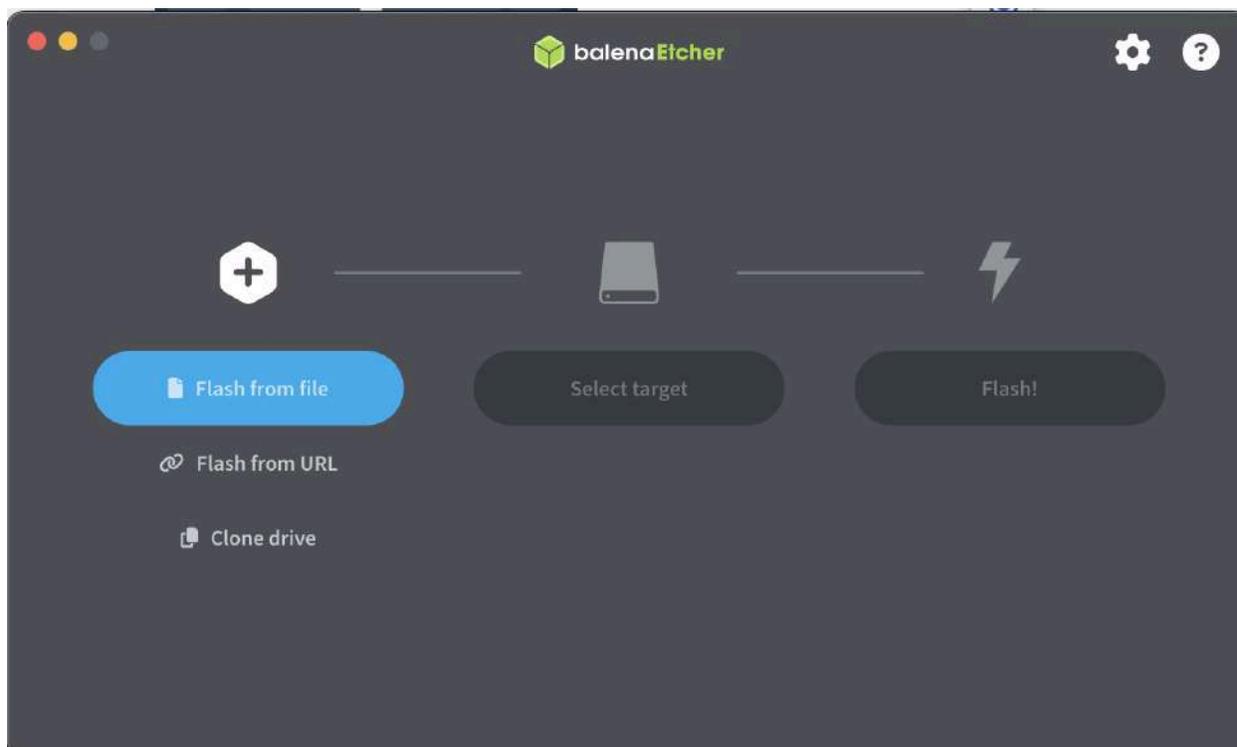
To make sure Persistence Mode works correctly, you can label the persistent partition as **writable**:

1. Boot into PALADIN using the USB drive you just created
2. Open the **PALADIN Toolbox** and select **Disk Manager**
3. Find the persistent partition (usually formatted as `ext4` and may not have a label)
4. If needed, reformat it as `ext4` and set the label to:
writable (all lowercase)
5. Apply and confirm the changes

✓ Why label it “writable”?

Labeling the partition `writable` ensures PALADIN recognizes it as the persistence volume — allowing it to save settings, logs, downloaded tools, case files, and other changes between boots.

Method 2: Using BalenaEtcher



*Note: **balenaEtcher** does not support adding a Persistence volume during **setup**. You can still use this method to create a bootable PALADIN USB, just without persistence.*

Steps:

1. **Download and install balenaEtcher**
→ <https://etcher.balena.io>
2. **Open balenaEtcher and insert your USB drive**
 - Plug the USB into your Windows or Mac computer
 - Launch the balenaEtcher app
3. **Select the PALADIN LTS ISO**
 - Click “Flash from file” or “Select image”
 - Find and open your downloaded PALADIN LTS ISO
4. **Select the target USB drive**
 - Click “Select target”
 - Choose your USB drive carefully — this will erase everything on it
5. **Start the flashing process**
 - Click “Flash!”
 - If prompted, grant administrative permissions
6. **Wait for flashing and validation to complete**
 - balenaEtcher will write the ISO and verify it afterward
 - When it says “Flash Complete,” you’re done
7. **Eject the USB safely**
 - You can now remove the drive and use it to boot into PALADIN

Important Tip:

Always double-check that you are formatting the correct partition to avoid losing any important data.

Booting into PALADIN Persistence Mode

- Insert your PALADIN USB into the computer you want to use
- Turn on the computer and enter the **Boot Menu**
 - This is usually done by pressing **F12**, **F2**, **ESC**, or **DEL** during startup
- Select your USB drive as the boot device
- When the PALADIN menu appears, choose **Persistence Mode**

You’re now running PALADIN with Persistence Mode enabled — any settings, updates, and case files will be saved between reboots!

Tips for Best Performance

- **Be patient on first boot** — It may take **3–5 minutes** to start the first time, especially if you created a large persistence volume
- **Always eject the USB drive safely** to avoid corruption of saved data
- **Back up important case data regularly** — even with persistence, a backup is always best practice

Contact Us

For more information about PALADIN feel free to reach out to us directly at any time.

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