

Resolving BitLocker Recovery Prompt (No Key Available)

Scenario Windows boots to blue BitLocker recovery screen asking for 48-digit key. No skip/continue button initially visible, or key not found in Microsoft account.

Quick Fix via Recovery Environment (Works in most cases 2025-2026 builds)

1. On recovery screen: Press **Esc** (or Esc twice) → look for "**More recovery options**" or directly "**Skip this drive**" / "**Skip this device**" button at bottom. Click **Skip this drive**.
2. Select **Troubleshoot** > **Advanced options** > **Command Prompt**.
3. In Command Prompt (admin-level):

```
manage-bde -status
```

(Confirms drive letter, usually C:, and encryption status.)

4. Suspend protection:

```
manage-bde -protectors -disable C:
```

(Replace C: if different. Press Enter. Success = protection suspended.)

5. Type exit → close Command Prompt. Back out → select **Continue** / **Exit and continue to Windows** (or force restart via power button).
6. PC should now boot normally into Windows (no prompt).

After Booting Successfully

1. **Back up recovery key immediately** (prevents future lockouts): Settings (Win + I) → Privacy & security → Device encryption → **Back up your recovery key** Options: Save to Microsoft account (view at aka.ms/myrecoverykey), USB drive, or print.
2. Check status (admin Terminal/Command Prompt):

```
manage-bde -status C:
```

Expect: Protection Off / Suspended.

3. **Resume protection** (recommended for security):

```
manage-bde -protectors -enable C:
```

Or in Settings → Device encryption → **Resume protection** (if shown). Reboot to test normal boot.

Alternative: Permanently Remove Encryption (if you don't want it)

- Settings → Privacy & security → Device encryption → toggle **Off**.
- Drive decrypts (30 min-hours; keep plugged in).
- After completion: No more prompts/keys ever. Data unprotected if device stolen.

Notes

- Suspension keeps data encrypted (still secure offline), but pauses boot checks temporarily.
- Resume manually after changes (BIOS updates, hardware swaps).
- If command fails or loops return: Use Troubleshoot → Reset this PC (wipes data).
- Prevention: Always back up key to Microsoft account during setup.

Done. Test thoroughly after changes.

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