Make a Windows 11 Local Account Passwordless

What
Instructions on how to setup a Windows 11 local account such that no password is required and the Windows login is by passed directly booting into Windows.

Why
For a desktop PC used by a single user in a secure location, entering the password every time you startup or restart the PC becomes more of a hassle than a helpful security feature. Each user should decide for themselves. Not having to enter the password for every startup and restart saves a lot of time.

How
Notice: These instructions are specific to setting up a local account to startup/restart with no password without having to create or use a Microsoft account.

<u>Background</u>
The procedure to setup an account to start Windows without a password is basically the same for Windows 10 and 11, but Windows 11 requires a Microsoft account to access that setting. That setting is in the Control panel applet accessed by using **netplwiz** in a Run box.
In Windows 10 for a <u>local account</u>, entering netplwiz in a Run box open the Users accounts window as shown in the image below.

Notice the setting *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer*. Unchecking this setting followed by entering the password 2 times and restarting will result in the PC booting to Windows without a password.
In Windows 11 for a local account, entering netplwiz in a Run box open the Users accounts window as shown in the image below.
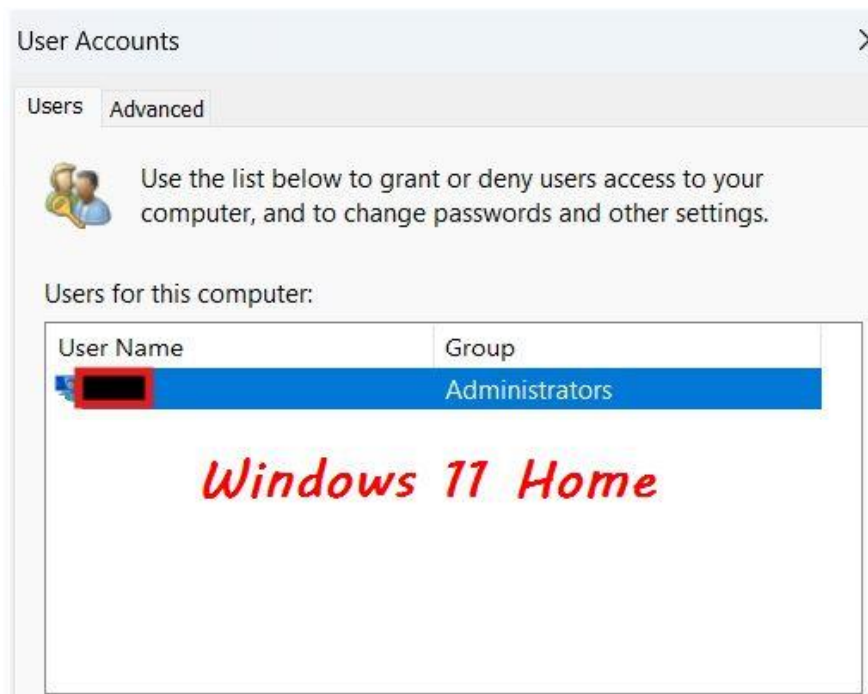
Notice that the setting *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer* is not there, so it can't be unchecked and this account can't be setup passwordless. In Windows 11 the availability of that setting in the Control applet User Account window is controlled by another setting in Windows. In order to access that other setting so you can change it to allow that setting be available in the Control applet User Account window, you must create and login using a Microsoft account for the PC.

You could create and use the Microsoft account to change the settings and then when all passwordless, delete the Microsoft account.

A much easier way is to change that setting and make that *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer* option available in netplwiz User Account window <u>without</u> having to create and use a Microsoft account. That setting is kept as a Registry value. Changing that registry value will change the setting.

The following instructions explain how to change a Registry value which will make the option to not use a password on startup/restart available for a local account.

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o   The registry value to be changed is in the following key branch.

    HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\PasswordLess\Device

    In the value named

    DevicePasswordLessBuildVersion

o   The default data for this value is 2. Changing that data to **0** will change the setting and make the *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer* available in the Control applet.
o   You can change that setting using any of the methods below:

Option 1:
- Open Registry Editor.
- Go to the key listed above.
- Double click *DevicePasswordLessBuildVersion* in the right pane to open Modify box.
- Change the 2 to **0** and click OK to close the box.
- Close the Registry Editor.
- Restart for change to take effect.

Option 2:

- Download the *PasswordlessAccess.reg* file.
- Open the file to Merge with your Registry.
- Authorize the Merge and OK the warnings.
- Restart for change to take effect.

Option 3:

- Open an Administrator Command Console.
- Copy the following command

   Reg Add "HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion\PasswordLess\Device" /v
   DevicePasswordLessBuildVersion /t REG_DWORD /d 0 /f

- At the prompt, paste the command and press enter to run it.
- The Console will respond that the key was added successfully.
- Close the Command Console.
- Restart for change to take effect.

- After changing the Registry value and restarting, enter **netplwiz** in a Run box to open the Control panel applet for User Account.
- The *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer* will be there and will be checked.
- If you have more than one User account listed in the box, be sure to select your User account.
- Uncheck the box next to *Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer* and Press Apply.
- A box will open requiring you to enter the password for your User account 2 times.
- Press OK.
- Restart and upon Start up you will see it boots into Windows without needing a password.
- All done without creating and using a Microsoft account on the PC.