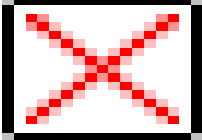


How to setup a Windows Software RAID Mirror and Convert Basic Disks to Dynamic

Submitted by ingram on Tue, 09/27/2011 - 5:02pm



This is a beginner level guide for Windows Administrators who are looking for clear and easy to follow steps on how to configure a Windows software RAID and convert basic disks to dynamic disks. Windows Software RAID is a simple and quick way to setup a RAID when you have limited resources. No special hardware is required, as so with a normal RAID (also known as a hardware RAID). In my example, I have two 1 terabyte hard drives. One of the hard drives has the OS installed on it, while the other hasn't been partitioned. This example is being performed on Windows Server 2003 Standard, however, most other Windows OS's have very similar steps.

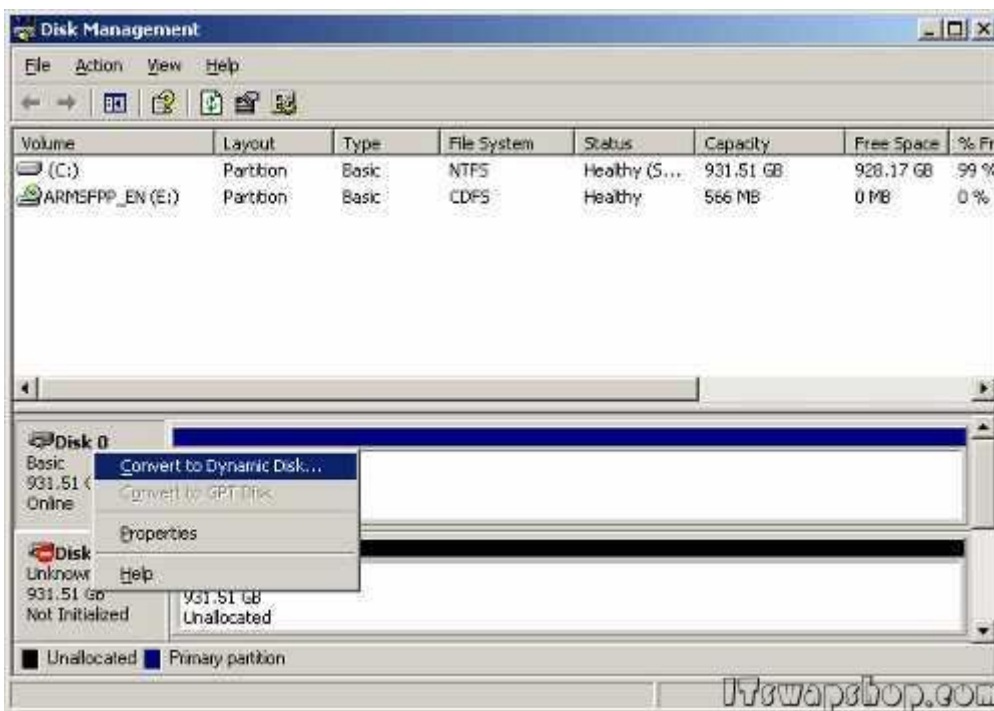
To begin, open up Disk Management: Start > Run > diskmgmt.msc



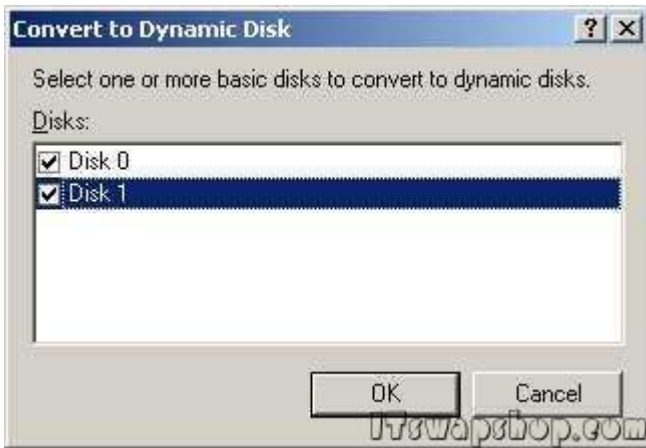
You see the both disks. The online disk is listed first, and the second disk is labeled "Not Initialized". Right click on Disk 1 and choose "Initialize Disk":



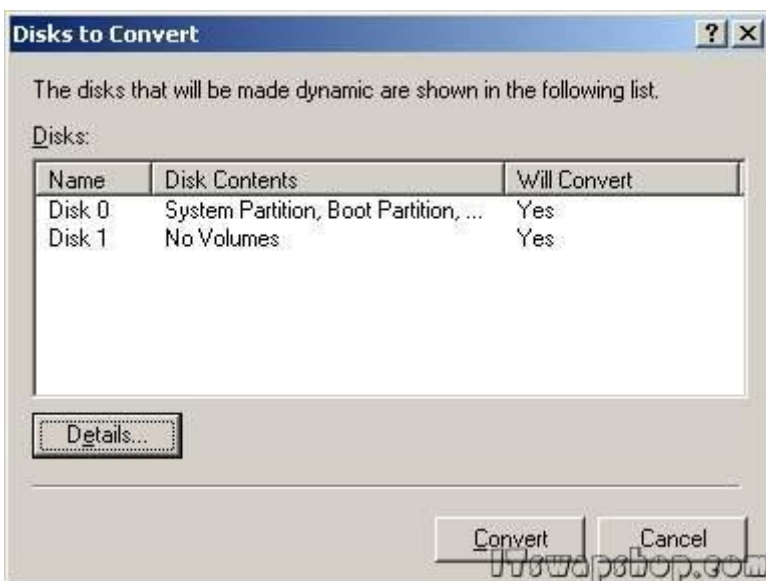
Now right click on Disk 0 and choose "Convert to Dynamic Disk..."



A dialog box will pop up asking which disks you would like to convert to dynamic disks. Choose Disk 0 and Disk 1:

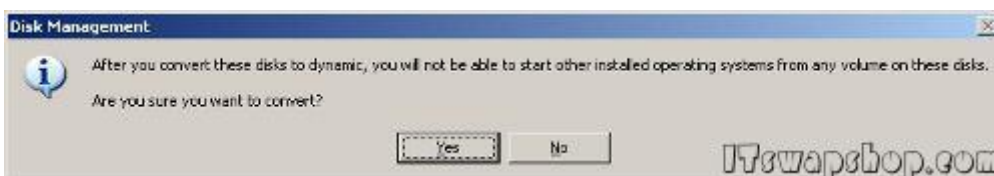


Click "Convert" to begin the process:



"After you convert these disks to dynamic, you will not be able to start other installed operating systems from any volume on these disks. Are you sure you want to convert?"

Choose Yes to accept the message:



"File systems on any of the disks to be converted will be dismounted. Do you want to continue this operation?"

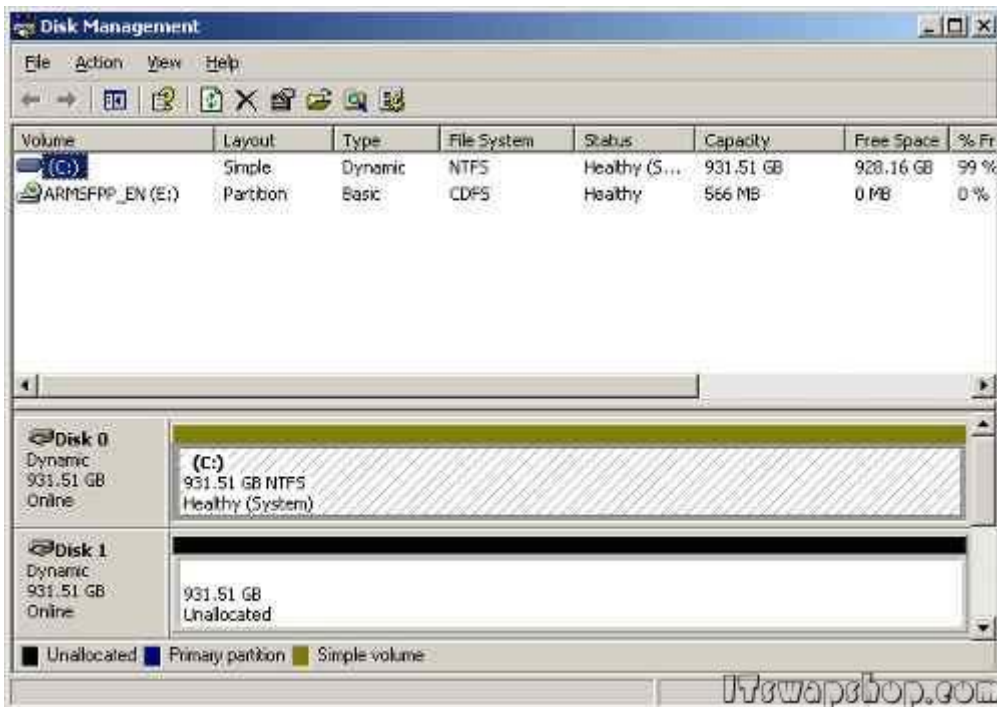
Choose Yes to continue:



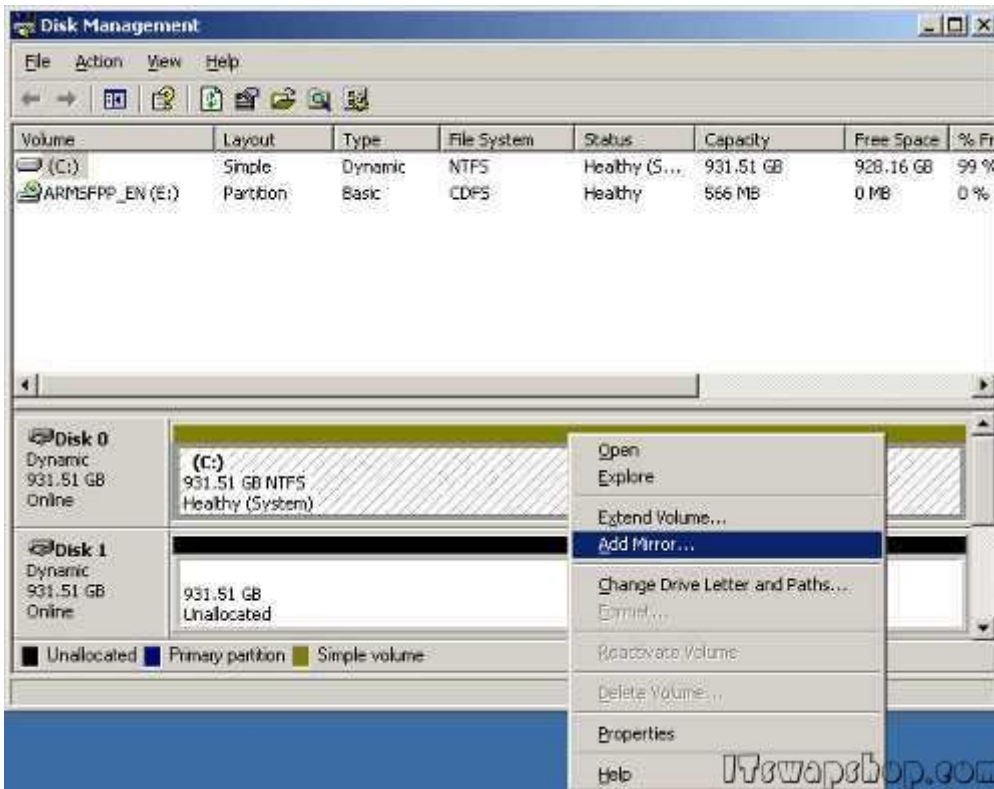
Click OK to restart:



After rebooting, open Disk Management. You will notice that the two disks are dynamic now:

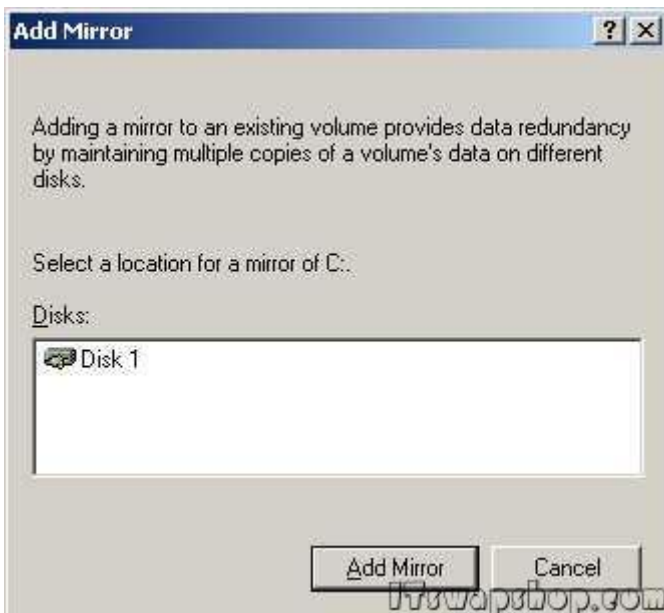


Right click on Disk 0 and choose "Add Mirror...":

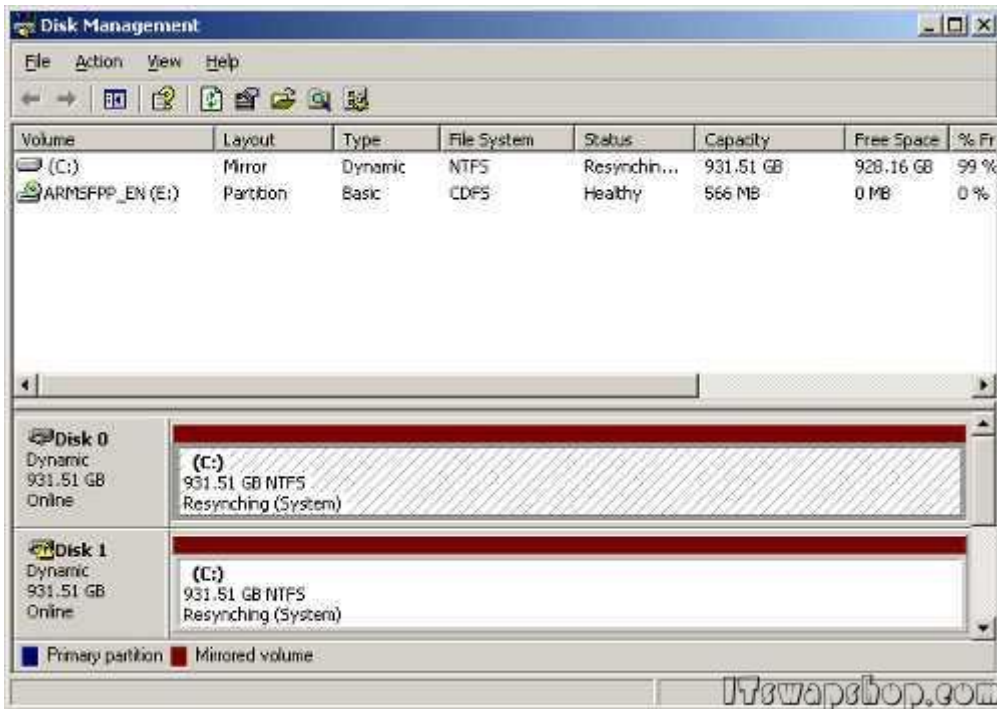


"Adding a mirror to an existing volume provides data redundancy by maintaining multiple copies of a volume's data on different disks. Select a location for a mirror of C:"

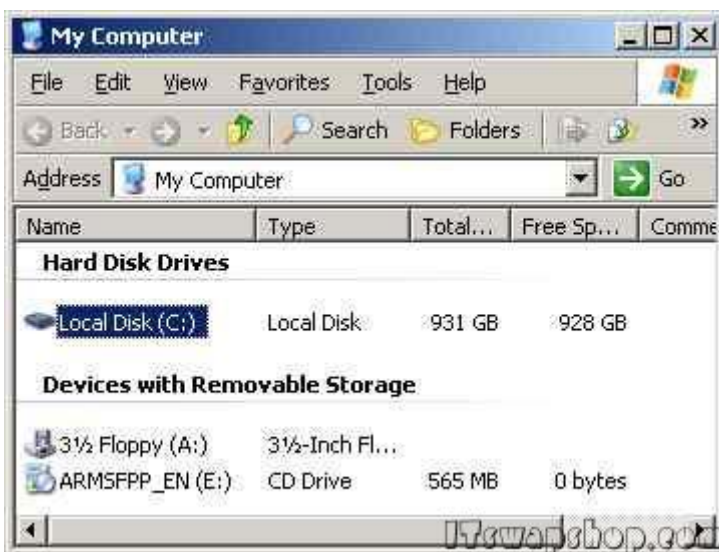
Choose Disk 1 to make a mirror of Disk 0 on it:



Now go back to Disk Management. You will notice that the two disks are syncing with each other. After they complete you will have a full mirror:



If you open up my computer, you will notice there is only one drive listed, however, it actually represents the two drives mirrored together:



That's all there is to it. It really is that simple. If you have any trouble with these steps, feel free to leave a comment!

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