Windows CD key

CAUTION: Using Regedit is not recommended for new computer users.

Before using the registry to find the Windows CD Key, download Belarc Advisor and print out it's report. The CD Key may be listed in that report.
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If you've lost the Windows cardboard envelope that had the CD Key on the back of it and need to reinstall Windows, you can track down your CD Key by peering into the registry. To begin, select the Run command on the Start menu and launch the Registry Editor by typing Regedit in the Open text box. Once you have the Registry Editor up and running, locate and double-click on the HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE key. When this subtree is visible, open each of the following subkeys in succession:

Software
Microsoft
Windows
CurrentVersion

Now, locate the Product "ID" value in the CurrentVersion subkey.

Here, you'll find a copy of the entire certificate number in four groups of five, three, seven, and five numbers. The CD key number you need to install Windows is made up of the second and third group. Simply write down this number and close the Registry Editor.

CAUTION: Using Regedit is not recommended for new computer users. EVEN EXPERIENCED USERS SHOULD CREATE A NEW SYSTEM RESTORE POINT BEFORE MAKING ANY CHANGES IN THE REGISTRY. IF YOU FIND YOU'VE MADE AN ERROR, YOU CAN USE THAT RESTORE POINT TO RETURN THE REGISTRY TO THE WAY IT WAS PRIOR TO MAKING THAT CHANGE.

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