



(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

For many years, we've been able to make Linux Live disks that boot and run completely off of a USB Flash drive (or optical disc). These portable OS installs can be useful when you just want to try an operating system without messing with whatever platform you have on your internal hard drive or SSD. And they can be good for when you want to take your OS and programs with you as you move back and forth between computers.

Thanks to Rufus, a popular free app that creates bootable USB drives, you can make a portable install of Windows 11 that runs off of a Flash drive you carry in your pocket. Testing Rufus' "Windows to Go" feature, we were able to use the same Windows 11 disk on two different computers, with minimal hassle.

The latest version of Rufus not only allows you to create a Windows to Go version of So, if you have a computer that doesn't have TPM 2.0 or a compatible CPU (Intel 8th to Go disk with no problem. If you want to install Microsoft's OS onto the main SSD 11's TPM requirements or [how to do a clean install of Windows 11](#).

Below, we'll show you both how to create a portable Windows 11 installation that r between computers.

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TPM and CPU requirements of the new OS. higher), you can boot off of this Windows see our story on how to [bypass Windows](#)

se it when you switch back and forth

tom's**HARDWARE**

How to Create a Portable Windows 11 Installation

Having a portable Windows 11 installation installed to a USB drive is useful if we do move to a different machine, we'll be asked to reset your PIN. But all we need is a few

1. [Download the latest version of Rufus](#) and install it on your machine. At the time of writing, Rufus includes the Extended Windows 11

2. Insert a blank 64GB or larger USB stick then open Rufus. The faster the USB drive

3. Select the USB device that you want to install Windows 11 to.

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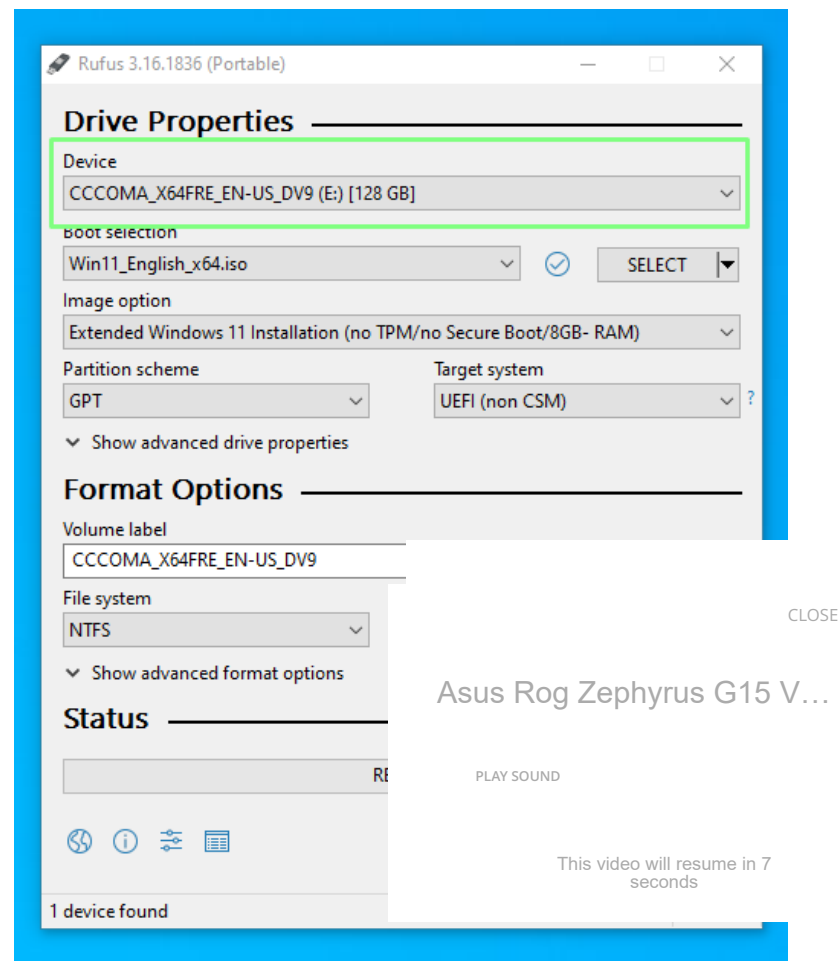
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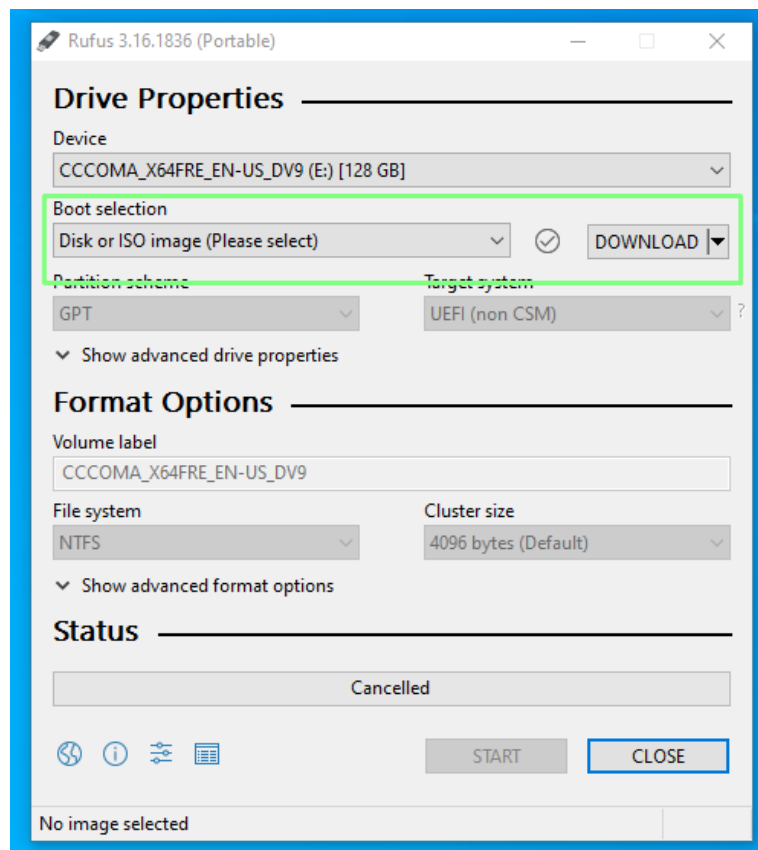
a portability is a little limited as when we install Windows 11 without touching our legacy installs.

includes the Extended Windows 11

drive.

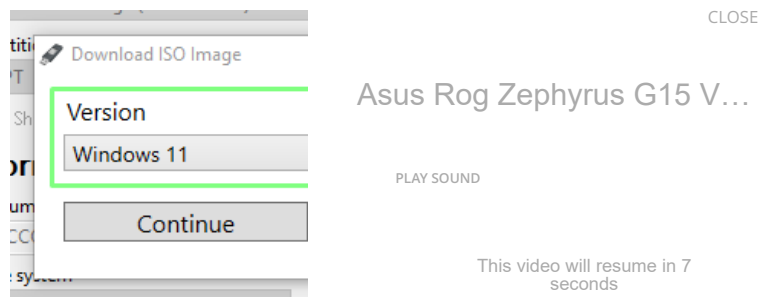


4. Ensure that Boot Selection shows “Disk or ISO image” and click on DOWNLOAD.



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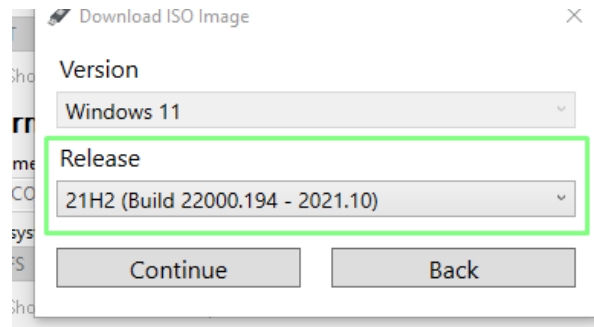
5. Select Windows 11 and click Continue.



(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

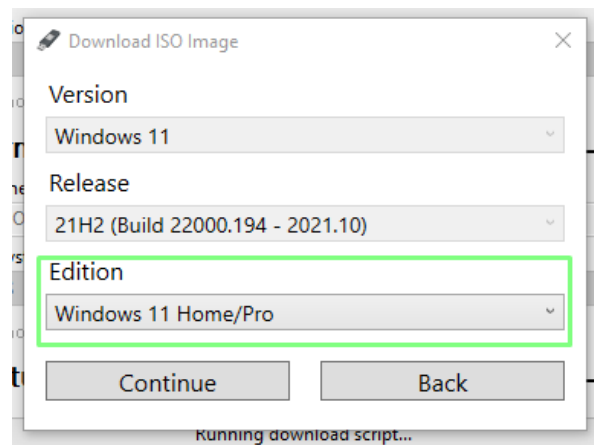
6. Select the latest release and click Continue.





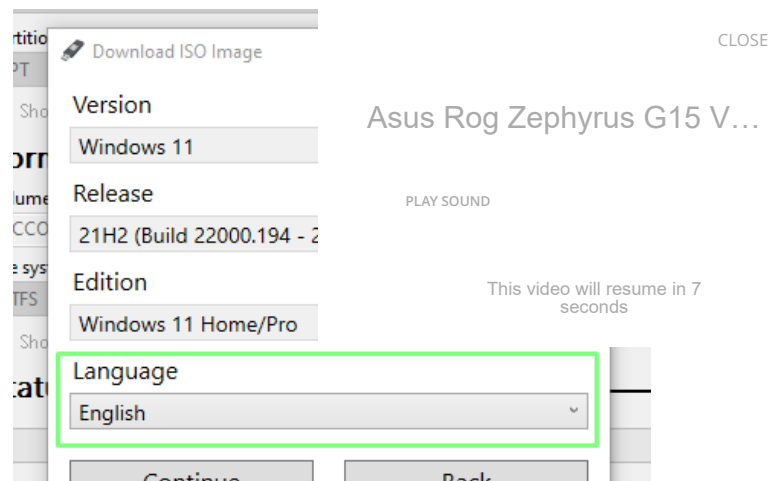
(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

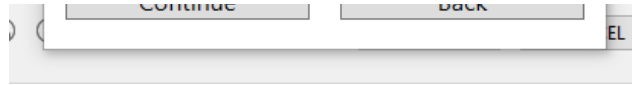
7. Select the edition and click Continue.



(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

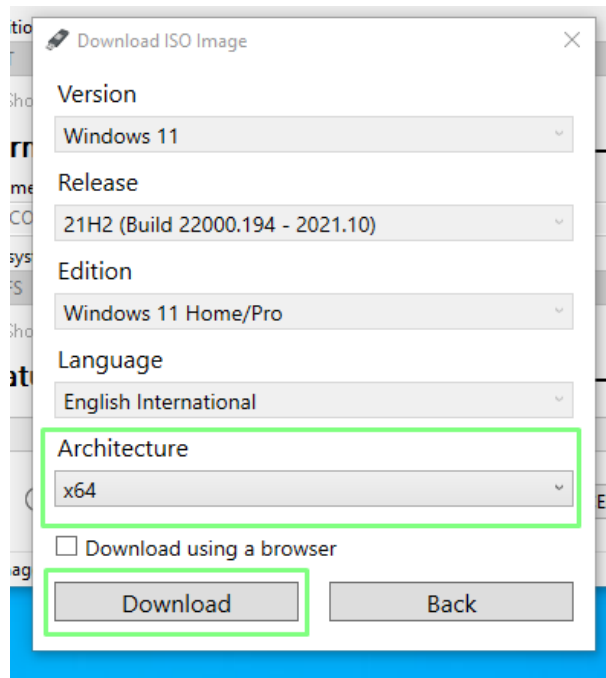
8. Select your preferred language and click Continue.





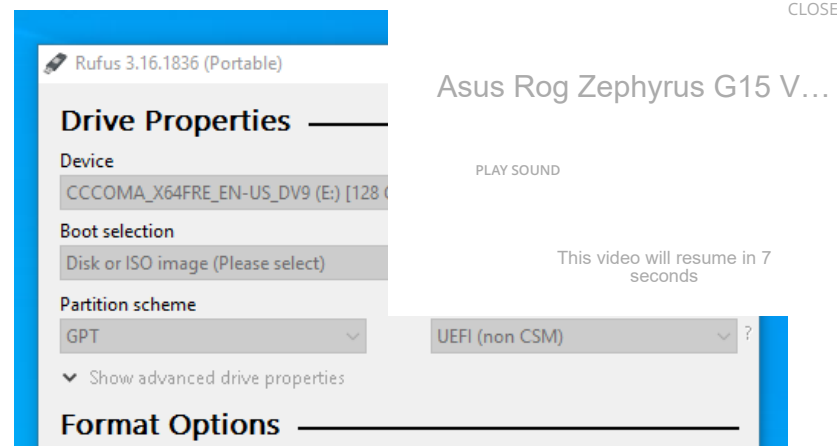
(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

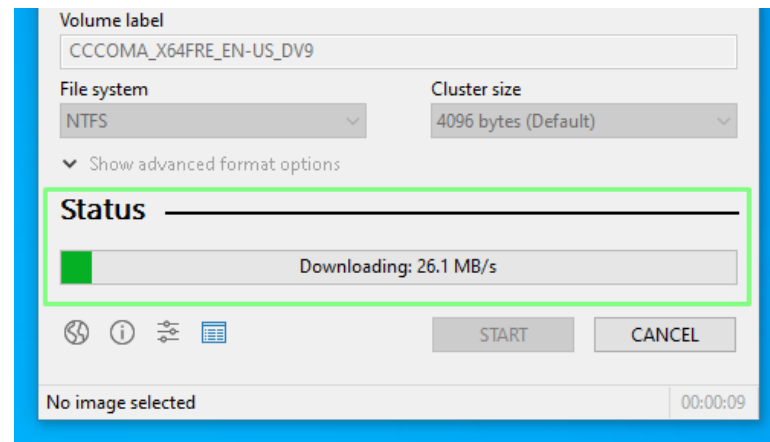
9. **Select the architecture and click Download.** A new window will open asking where to save the ISO image. **Save it to your Downloads folder.** You can also download the image using a browser if you wish.



(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

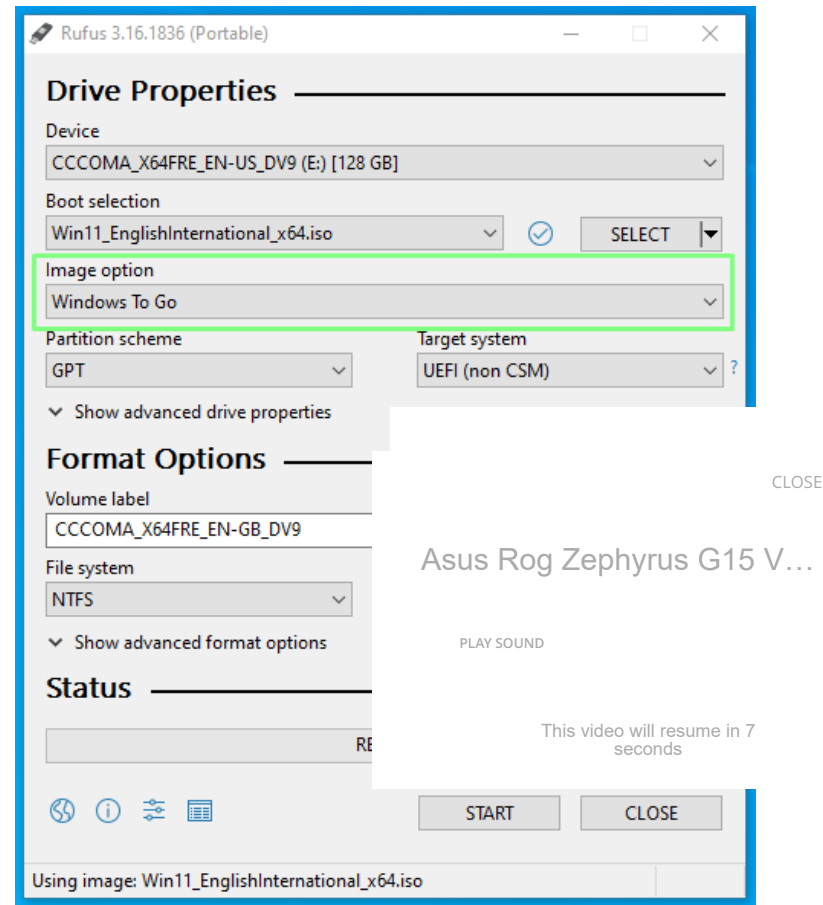
10. **Wait for the download to complete.**





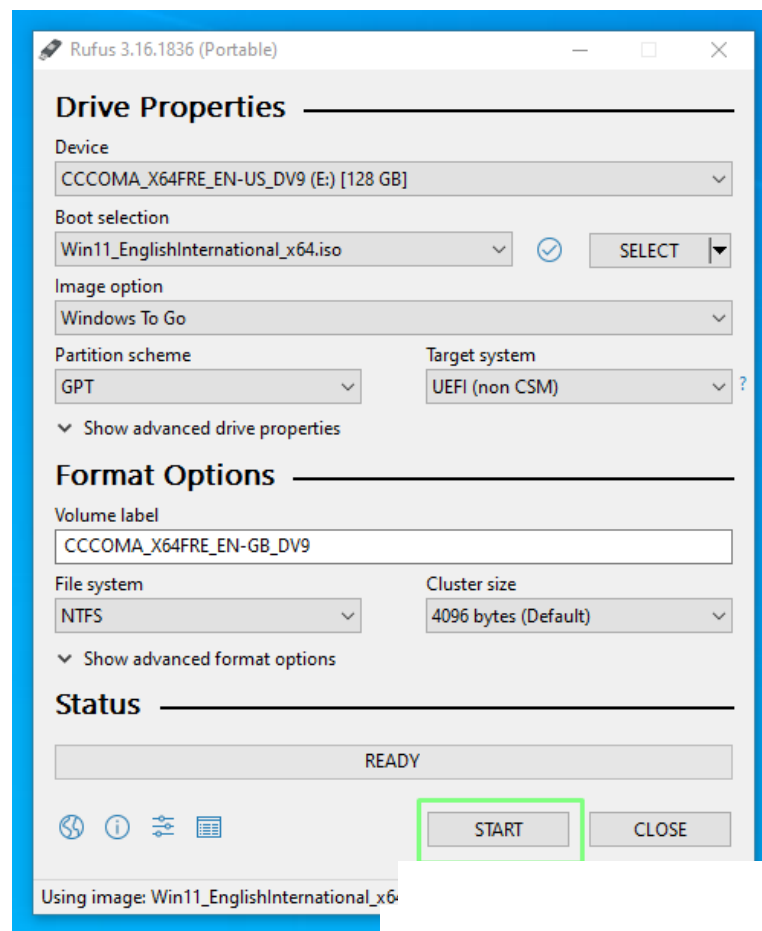
(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

11. Click on the Image option drop down and select Windows To Go. This will install Windows 11 directly to the USB drive.



(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

12. Double check that the correct drive has been selected and click on Start to begin the installation.



CLOSE

(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

13. The write process can take some time, depending on the USB drive being used, from.

14. Power up the machine that you wish to use for Windows 11, press whichever k

15. Select your Windows 11 boot drive and boot.

16. Follow the standard Windows 11 post install script to set up your computer.

Your USB drive now contains a full Windows 11 installation, ready for use.

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into the machine that you wish to boot

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Using the Portable Windows 11 Drive Across Machines

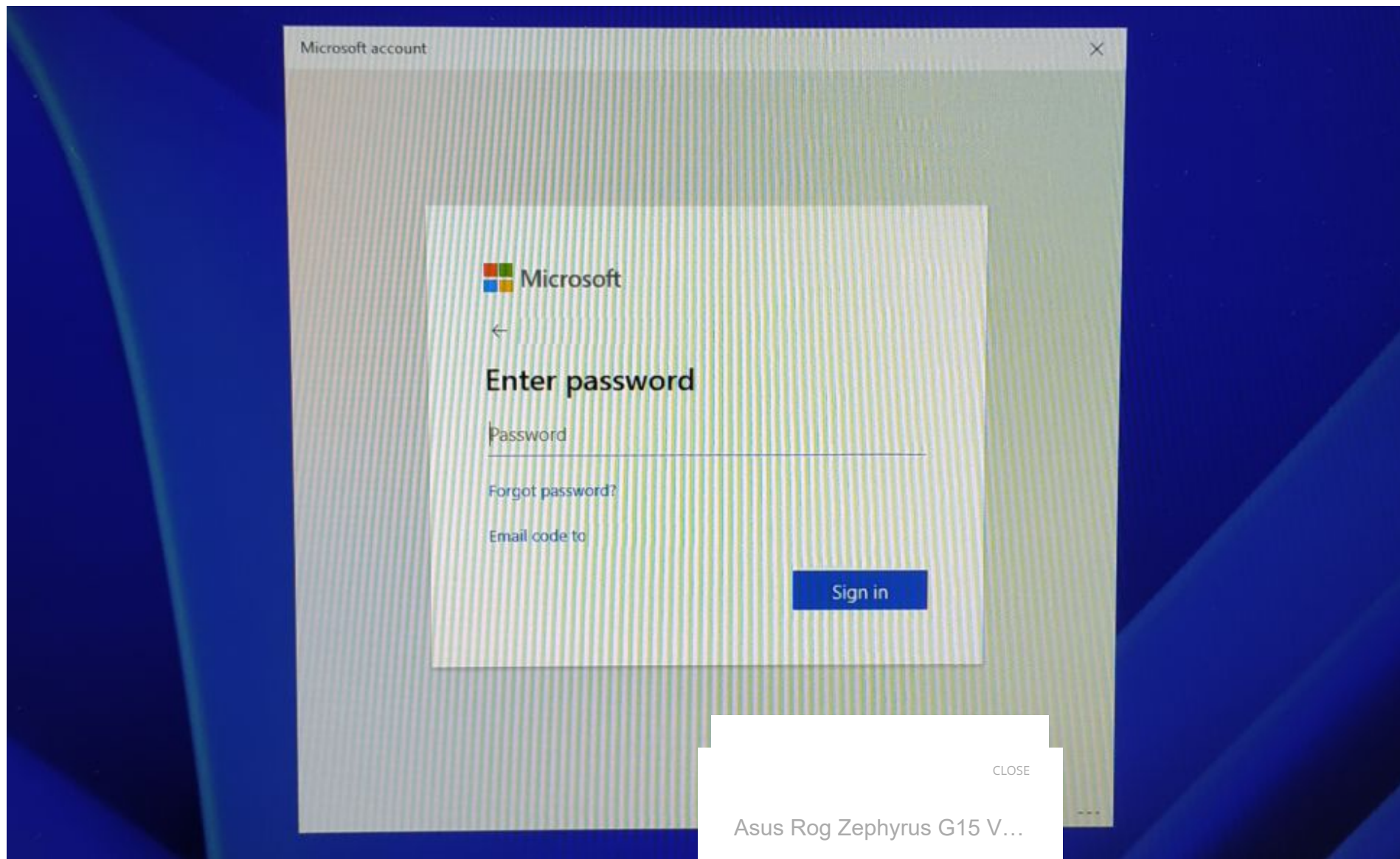
Each time the portable Windows 11 drive is inserted into a device, you will be challenged to verify who you are.

1. Insert the Windows 11 USB into a new device and boot.
2. Click on Setup my PIN on the login screen to start the verification process.



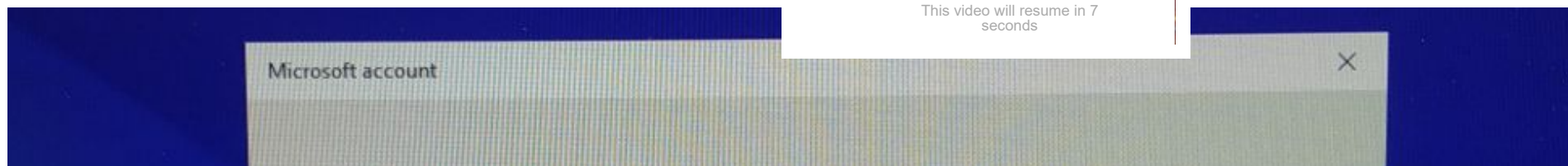
(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

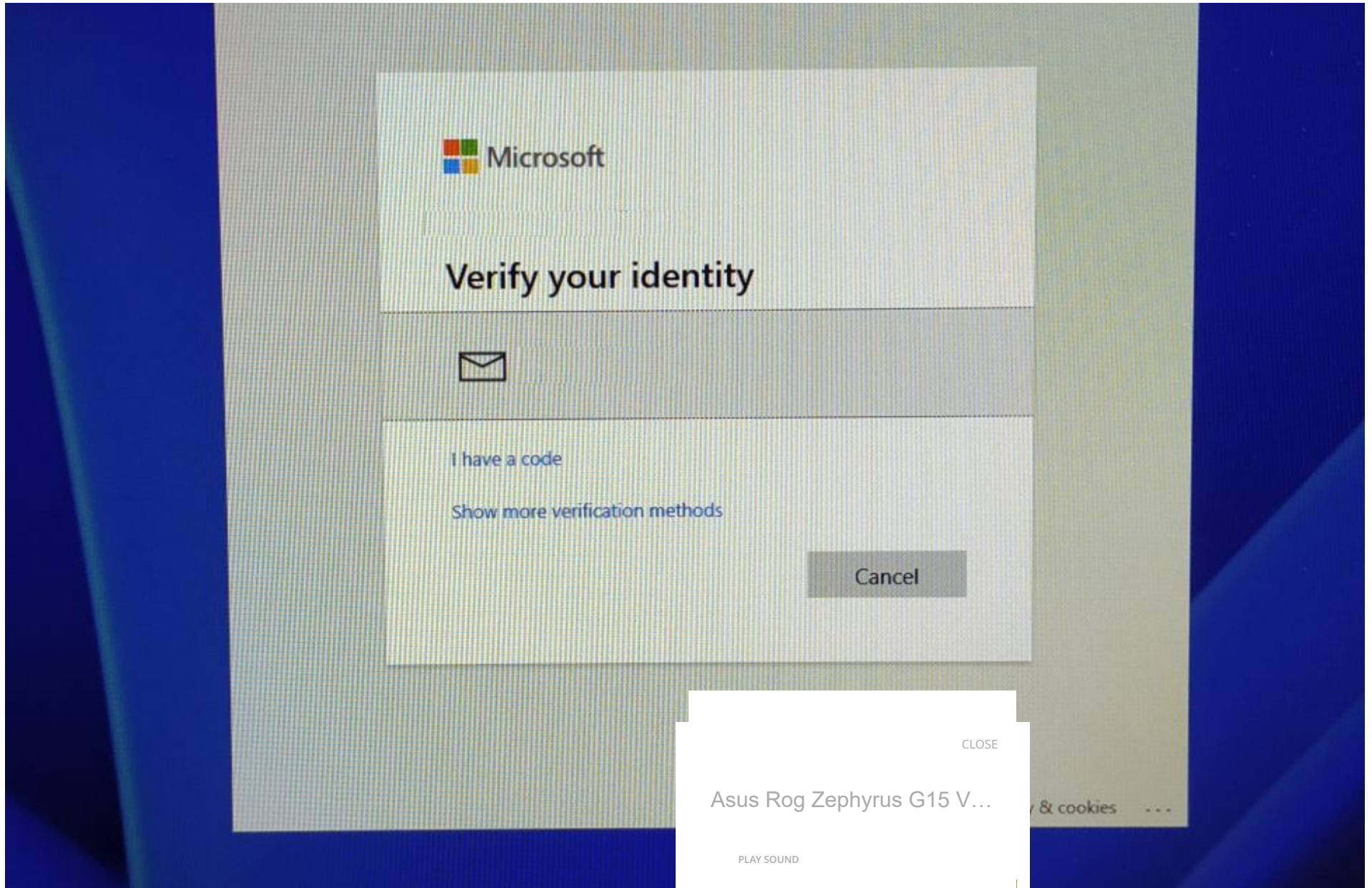
3. Enter the account details used when setting up Windows 11, in our case it was a Microsoft account.



(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

4. Click on Email < Email Address > to send a verification email to your account.

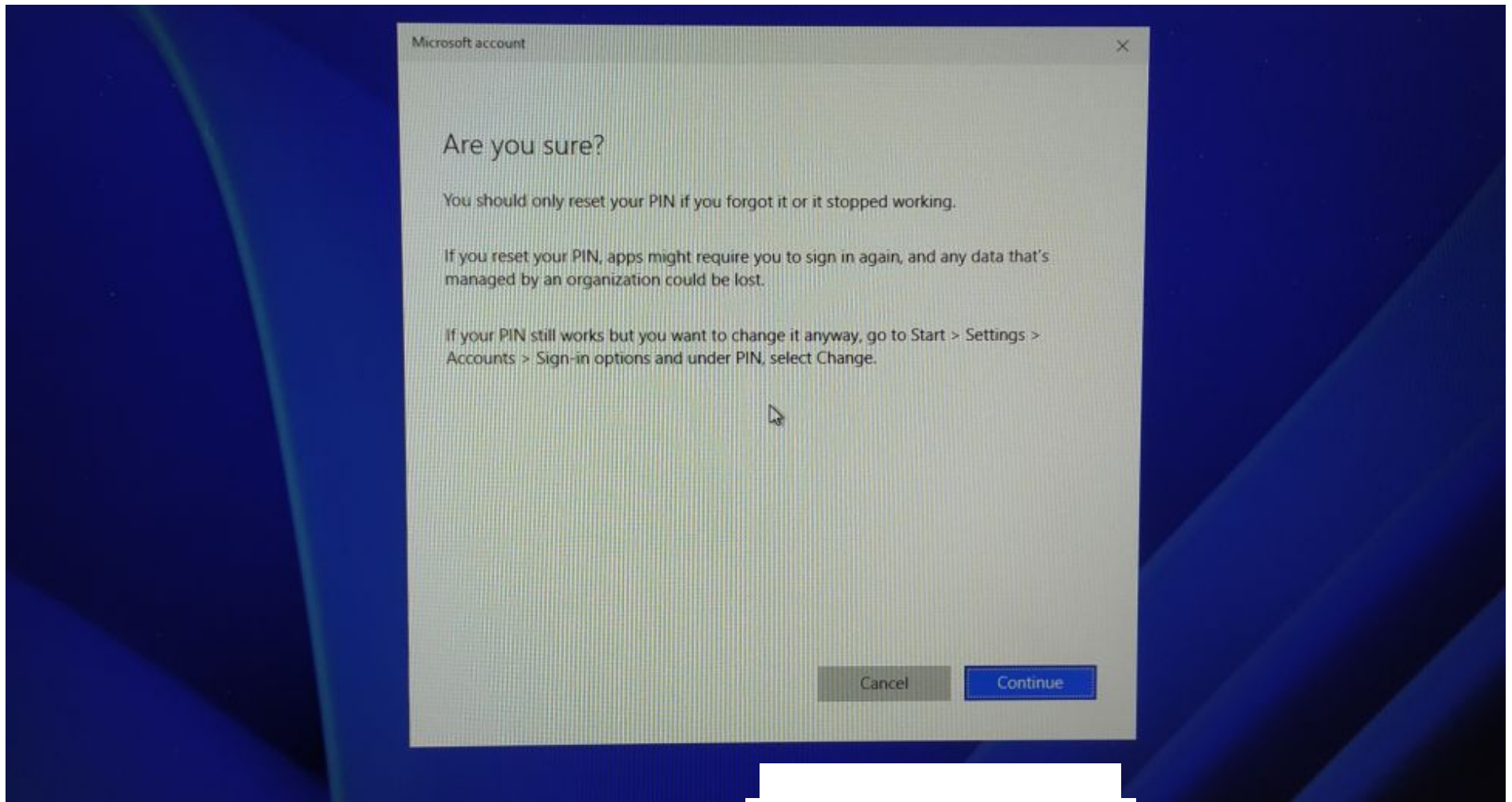




(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

5. On another device open your verification email and type the code into the Wi

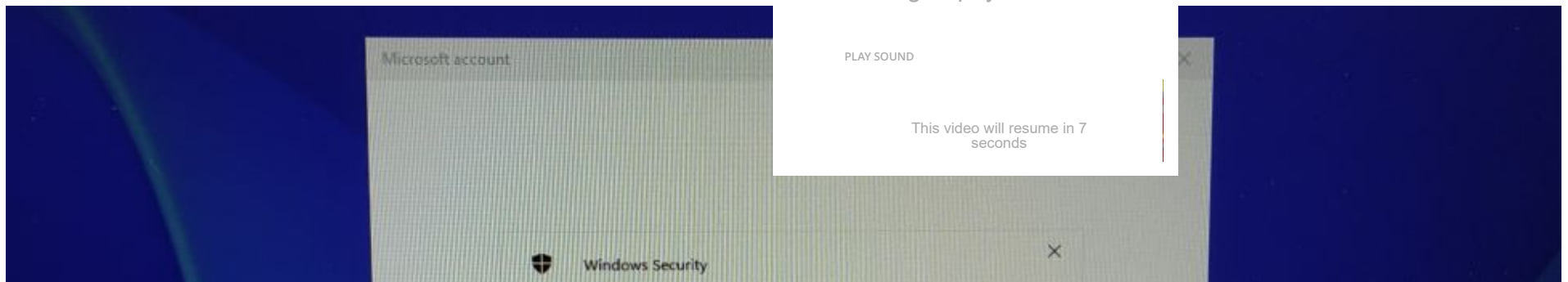
6. When asked to reset your pin, click Continue.

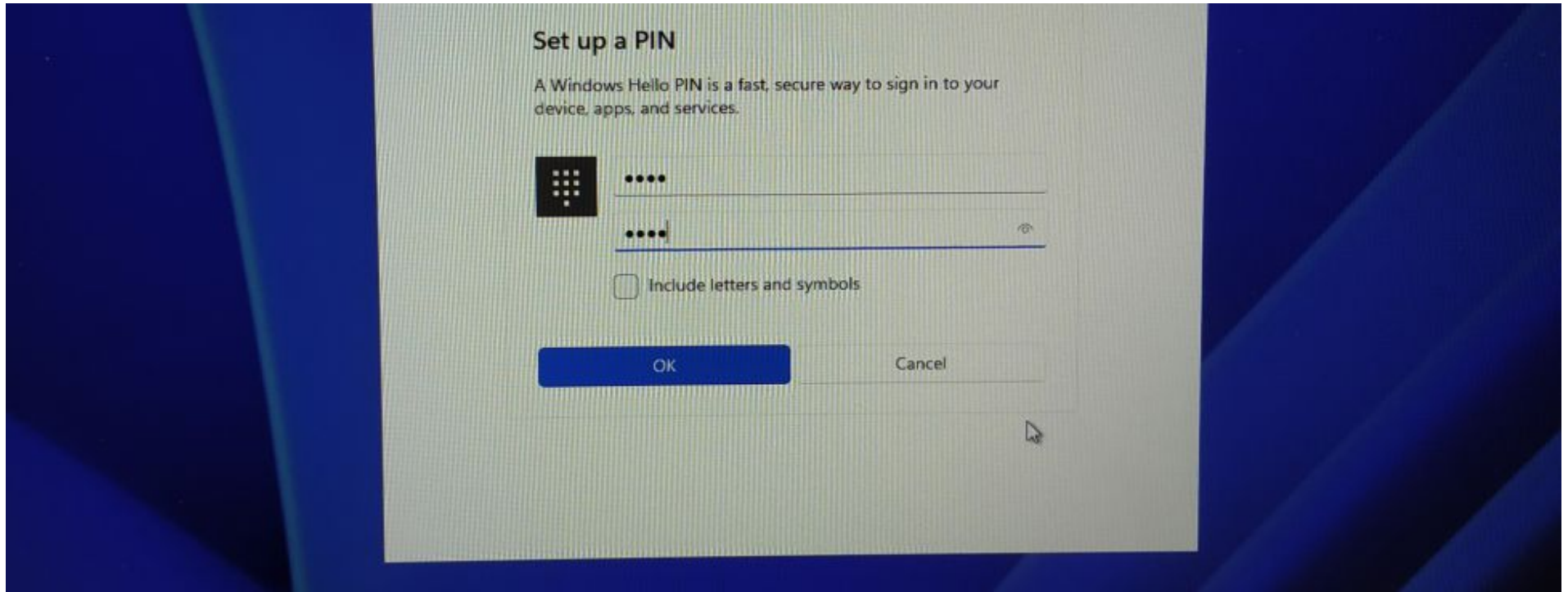


(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

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7. Create a new pin and click Ok to continue the login process.





(Image credit: Tom's Hardware)

You will have to repeat this process every time you move from one PC to another. However, if you are booting the USB disk on the same PC over and over again, you won't.

More Windows 11 Tutorials:

- [How to Get a Windows 11 ISO File and Do a Clean Install](#)
- [How to Enable God Mode in Windows 11 or 10](#)
- [How to Uninstall Windows 11 and Return to 10](#)
- [How to Clean Install Windows 11, No Product Key Required](#)
- [How to Install Windows 11 in a Virtual Machine](#)

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Les Pounder

Les Pounder is an associate editor at Tom's Hardware. He is a creative technologist and for seven years has created projects to educate and inspire minds both young and old. He has worked with the Raspberry Pi Foundation to write and deliver their teacher training program "Picademy".

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Krotow

And how activation will work then? Microsoft Account?

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USAFRet

Krotow said:

And how activation will work then? Microsoft Account?

That's what it appears to be.
Licensed to you, not necessarily the hardware.

Hence:
"Click on Setup my PIN on the login screen to start the verification process. "

And then - "Send a verification email..." blah blah

So, not as seamless as "Plug into any random...

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Alvar "Miles" Udell

That's strange because Microsoft software is supposed to be keyed to the mo

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CLOSE in after I swapped motherboards...

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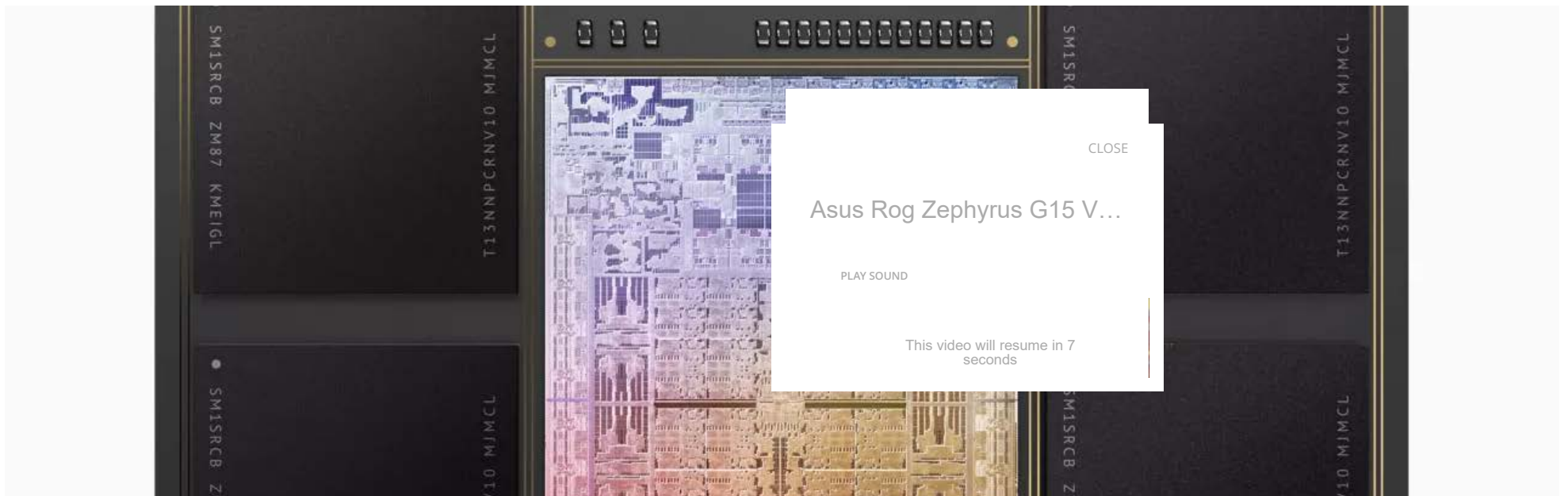
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