How do I use MIT's PGP Desktop for Windows to whole disk encrypt external storage drives?

Q: How do I use MIT's PGP Desktop for Windows to whole disk encrypt external storage drives?

⚠️ PGP is no longer being offered on the software grid. Support is being phased out and will discontinue at the end of 2016.

Answer

PGP Desktop allows you to encrypt disks, other than just your computer's internal hard drive, using Whole Disk Encryption. This includes USB flash drives and external portable storage devices. It is especially important to encrypt these devices if they contain sensitive information, as they are easy to misplace or have stolen and, in the case of external portable hard drives, may be used for backup of sensitive information that you have on your encrypted computer, so they must be encrypted as well.

⚠️ **Warning**: After an external portable hard drive or USB memory stick is encrypted using PGP Whole Disk Encryption, any computer that you want to use to access your portable storage MUST have PGP Desktop installed.
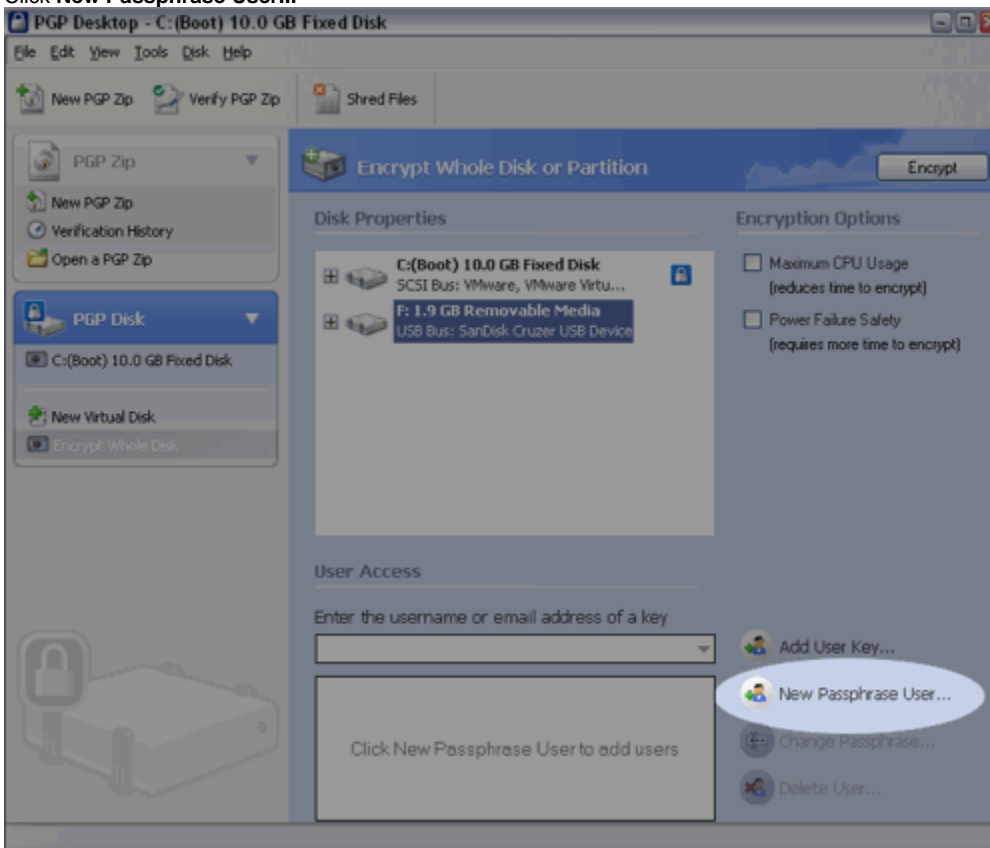
To create an encrypted disk:

1. Double click the **PGP Desktop Lock icon** in the system tray (lower right hand corner).
2. Click **PGP Disk** from the menu on the left and click "**Encrypt Whole Disk...**".
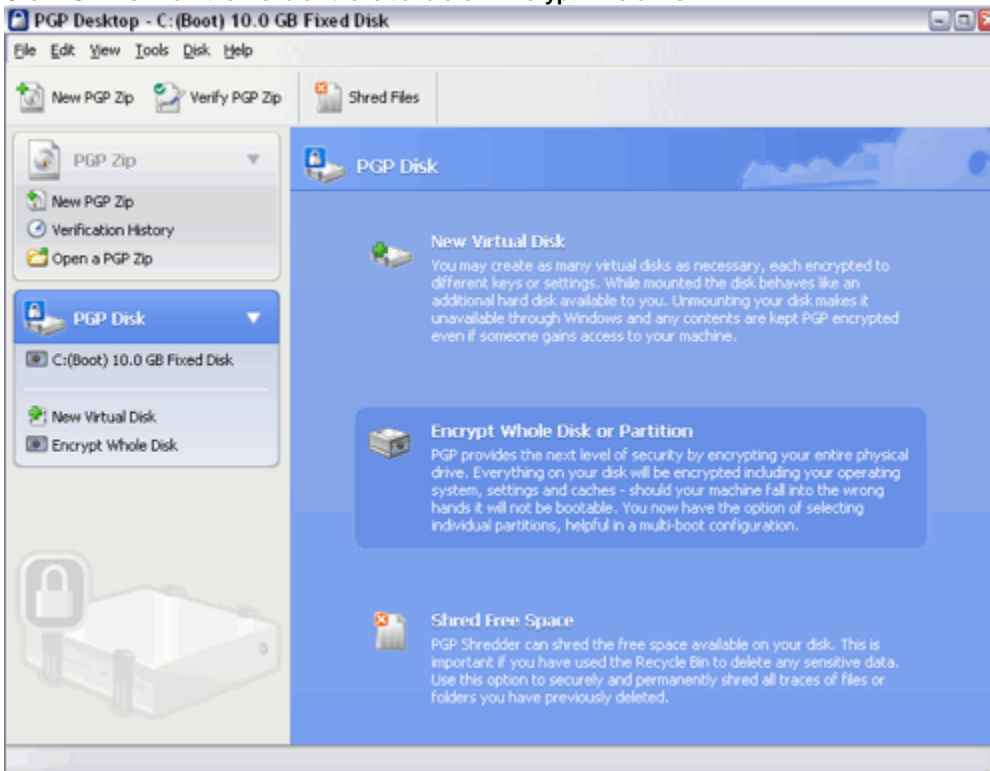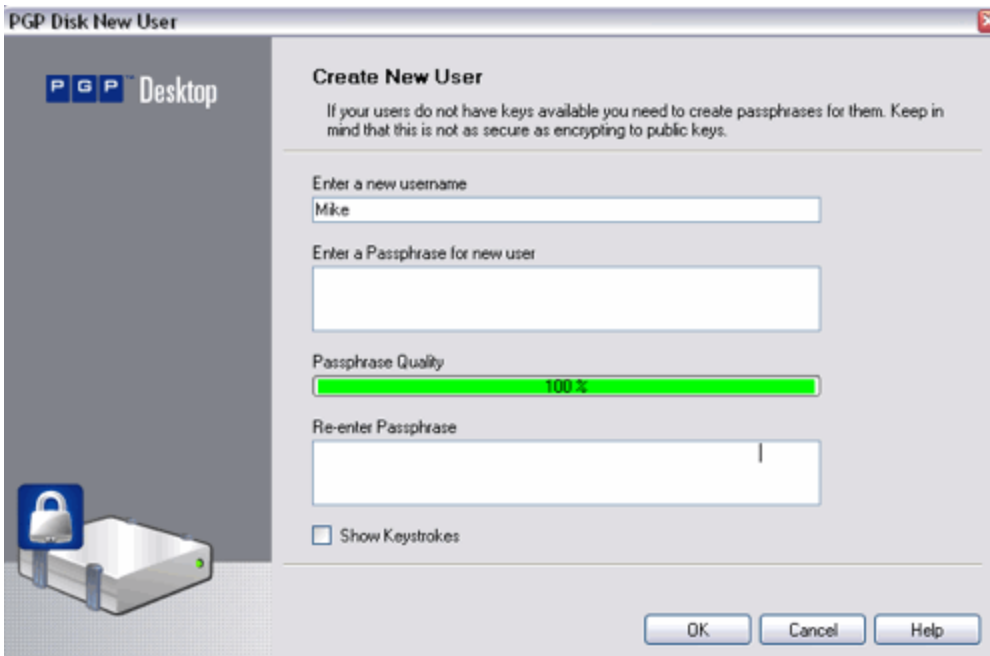

3. **Select the device** you want encrypted in the Disk Properties window.
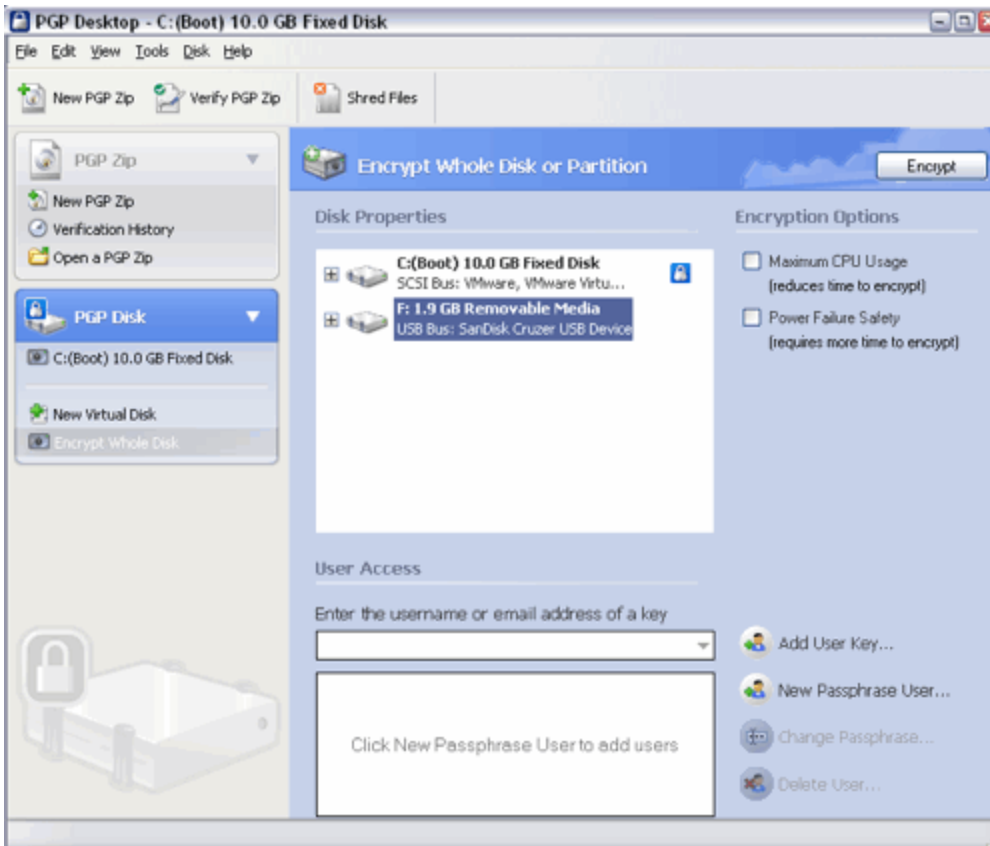
4. Click **New Passphrase User...**

5. Enter a username and a strong passphrase. A whole sentence is best. Remember, this is the only thing that keeps the data protected. You will not see the password as you type it unless you select "Show Keystrokes". Click **OK**.

6. Once the device you want encrypted is selected and a Passphrase User has been created, click the **Encrypt** button in the upper right corner of the window.
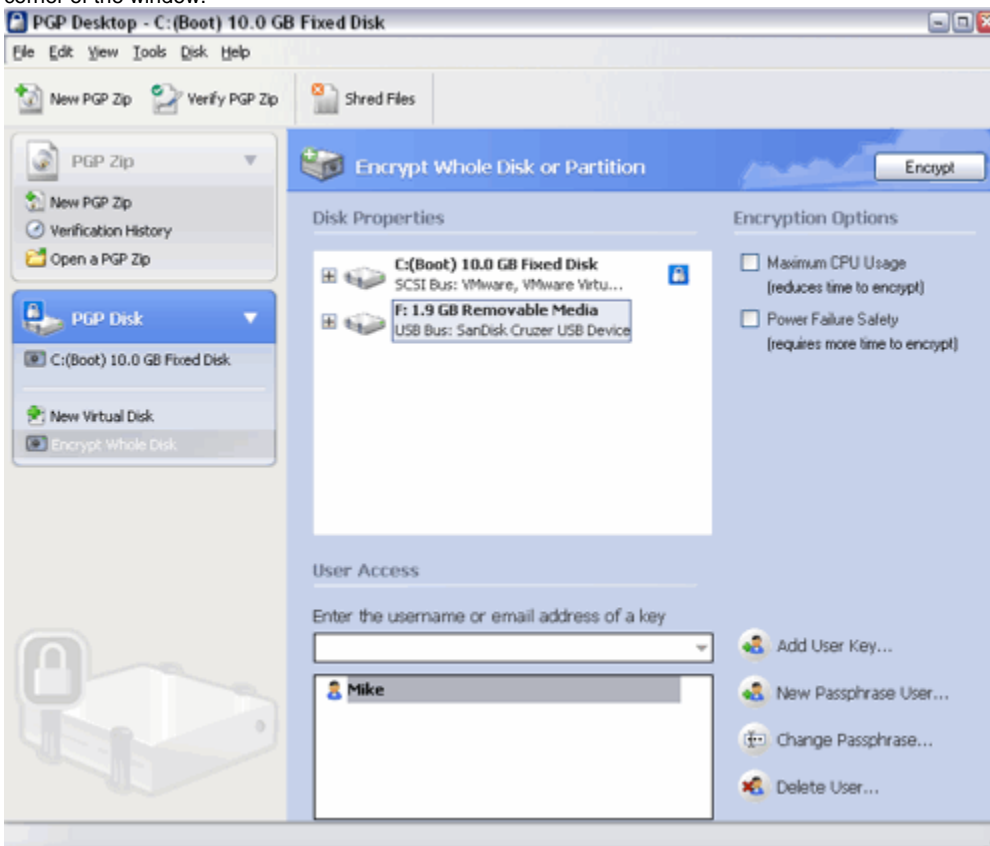
Result: PGP Desktop will begin encrypting the disk. The status of the encryption progress will be shown, as well as an estimated time to completion. When finished, the entire contents of the disk will be encrypted.
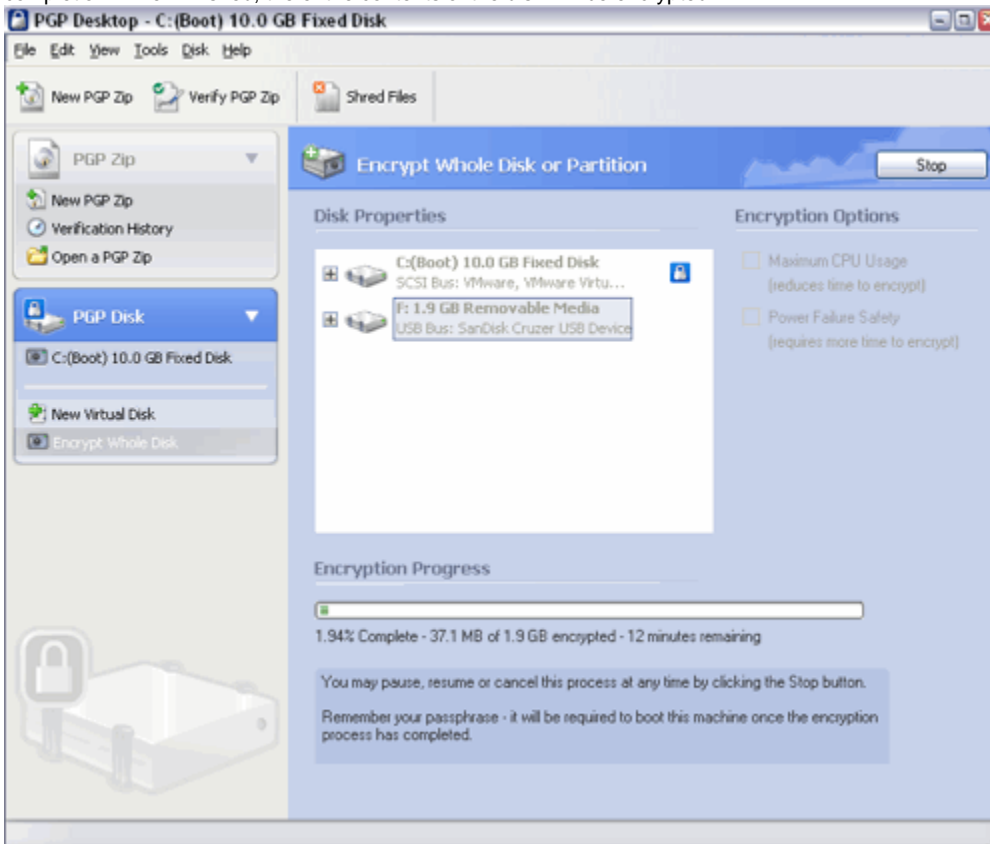
See Also

- Encryption Landing Page

Additional Information
More information on PGP can be found on the PGP Desktop page. If you don't find your answer, contact pgp-help@mit.edu.