



# Erasing file systems on BlackBerry devices

## Technical Overview



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## Types of file storage systems on BlackBerry devices

Type of memory	Description
flash memory (internal to device)	<p>Flash memory is a file system that stores application and user data on the BlackBerry® device. It cannot be physically removed from the BlackBerry device. Sections of flash memory can store files that the user downloads or saves manually to device memory.</p> <p>An NV store (non-volatile store) persists in flash memory and can only be overwritten by the BlackBerry device operating system. Third-party application code cannot write to the NV store. The device erases flash memory during a device wipe.</p>
memory card file system (external to device)	<p>Stores files that the user saves manually on the BlackBerry device. The user might save files to an external memory file system (for example, a removable media card).</p> <p>External memory file systems can be installed, accessed, encrypted, and formatted on the BlackBerry device. The BlackBerry device does not format or erase external memory file systems during an administrator-initiated device wipe unless the Media Card Format On Device Wipe IT policy rule is set.</p>

## User data that the BlackBerry device stores

The BlackBerry device stores user data items, including the following:

Item	Description
AutoText	all text that automatically replaces the text a BlackBerry device user types
BlackBerry® Browser	<p>content that web sites or third-party applications push to the BlackBerry device</p> <p>web sites that the user saves on the BlackBerry device</p> <p>browser cache</p>
calendar	<p>subject</p> <p>location</p> <p>organizer</p> <p>attendees</p> <p>notes included in the appointment or meeting request</p>
contacts (in the address book)	<p>all information except the contact title and category</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Set the Force Include Address Book In Content Protection IT policy rule to True to prevent the BlackBerry device user from turning off the Include Contacts option on the BlackBerry device. The BlackBerry device permits the Caller ID and Bluetooth® Address Book transfer features to work when content protection is turned on and the BlackBerry device is locked.</p>

Item	Description
email	subject email addresses message body attachments
memo list	title information included in the body of the note
RSA SecurID® Library	the contents of the .sdtid file seed stored in flash memory
tasks	subject information included in the body of the task
third-party application data	all data associated with third-party applications that are installed on the BlackBerry device

## Types of remote BlackBerry device wipes

The BlackBerry device wipe process is designed to delete all data in internal memory and overwrite that memory with zeroes.

Type	Description
security wipe of device flash memory (standard security wipe)	This method of removing BlackBerry device data is initiated by the BlackBerry® Enterprise Server administrator remotely, or by the BlackBerry device user locally on the BlackBerry device. See "Erasing data from BlackBerry device memory and making the BlackBerry device unavailable" on page 5 for more information.
factory default device wipe	This method of removing BlackBerry device data is initiated by the BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator remotely using the Reset to Factory Defaults on Wipe IT policy rule (previously named the Remote Wipe Reset to Factory Defaults IT policy rule). See "Resetting a BlackBerry device to factory default settings" on page 6 for more information.
security wipe of device memory and media card (standard security wipe with option to format media card selected)	This method of removing BlackBerry device data is initiated by the BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator remotely, or by the BlackBerry device user locally on the BlackBerry device. The user can also choose to delete only the files stored on the media card. See "Removing files from the media card during a user-initiated security wipe" on page 6 for more information.
security wipe of data and third-party applications (standard security wipe with option to delete third-party applications selected on device)	This method of removing BlackBerry device data is initiated by the BlackBerry device user locally on the BlackBerry device. The BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator can achieve the same result by performing a factory default device wipe. See "Removing third-party applications during a user-initiated security wipe" on page 6 for more information.
security wipe of data on a content-protected device (standard security wipe on a content-protected device)	If content protection is turned on, during a security wipe the BlackBerry device uses a memory scrub process to overwrite the BlackBerry device flash memory file system.

The BlackBerry device performs the following actions, depending on the method used to wipe the device memory:

BlackBerry device action	Description
deletes user data	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes all user data in flash memory.
deletes corporate PIN-to-PIN encryption key	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes its references to the corporate peer-to-peer, or PIN-to-PIN, encryption key in memory.
deletes the device transport encryption key	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes its references to the device transport encryption key in memory.
unbinds the smart card (if applicable)	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes the smart card binding information from the NV store so that a user can authenticate with the BlackBerry device using a new smart card.

BlackBerry device action	Description
unbinds the IT policy	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes the IT policy public key from its NV store so that it can receive a new IT policy and IT policy public key from a BlackBerry Enterprise Server.
password history	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes its references to past BlackBerry device password hashes in memory.
stored BlackBerry MDS device policy	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes its BlackBerry® Mobile Data System device policy from its NV store.
deletes stored IT policy	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes its stored IT policy.
deletes third-party applications	The BlackBerry device permanently deletes all third-party applications stored on the BlackBerry device.
deletes files on the media card	The BlackBerry device formats the media card, which is an external file system.
overwrites BlackBerry device memory if content protection is turned on	The BlackBerry device uses a memory scrub process to overwrite the BlackBerry device flash memory file system.

For more information, see “Deleting all device data from the BlackBerry device memory” in the *BlackBerry Enterprise Solution Security Technical Overview*.

### Erasing data from BlackBerry device memory and making the BlackBerry device unavailable (standard security wipe)

A BlackBerry device that is not physically connected to a computer is designed to permanently delete its user and application data when any of the following events occur:

- The user clicks Wipe Device, Wipe Handheld, or one of the Security Wipe options (in the Security Options) on the BlackBerry device, depending on the BlackBerry® Device Software version.
  - To delete data from the messages application, contacts application, and all other flash memory, the user selects the Emails, Contacts, Etc check box.
  - To delete all third-party applications, the user selects the User Installed Applications check box.
  - To format the media card, the user selects the Media Card check box.
- The user types the password incorrectly more times than the Set Maximum Password Attempts IT policy rule allows on the BlackBerry device. (The default is ten attempts.)
- The BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator sends the Delete all device data and disable device IT administration command to the BlackBerry device from the BlackBerry® Administration Service.
- The BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator sends the Delete all device data and disable device IT administration command with a delay (in hours, up to 168 hours) to the BlackBerry device from the BlackBerry Administration Service.

A BlackBerry device is designed to erase its user and application data and all applications when it is physically connected to a computer and any of the following events occur:

- The BlackBerry device user runs the application loader tool in the BlackBerry® Desktop Software and types the password incorrectly more times than the Set Maximum Password Attempts IT policy rule allows in the application loader tool prompt. (The default is ten attempts.)
- The BlackBerry device user can also use the application loader tool in the BlackBerry Desktop Software to erase all user and application data on the BlackBerry device, but choose not to erase the BlackBerry device applications.

### Removing third-party applications during a user-initiated security wipe

In BlackBerry Device Software versions earlier than 5.0, when the user clicks Wipe Handheld (in the Security Options) on the BlackBerry device, the user can select the Include third party applications option at the same time. If the user selects this option, when the BlackBerry device permanently deletes its stored user data during the device wipe, it will also remove all of its third-party applications and application data.

In BlackBerry Device Software version 5.0 and later, when the user clicks Security Wipe (in the Security Options) on the BlackBerry device, the user can select the User Installed Applications check box alone or in combination with the other security wipe options.

If the user selects this option, the BlackBerry device removes all of its third-party applications and application data.

### Removing files from the media card during a user-initiated security wipe

In BlackBerry Device Software version 5.0 and later, when the user clicks Security Wipe (in the Security Options) on the BlackBerry device, the user can select the Media Card check box alone or in combination with the other security wipe options.

If the user selects this option, the BlackBerry device formats the media card.

### Requiring a delay on remote BlackBerry device wipes

The BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator can set the following IT policy rules to require that the remote BlackBerry device automatically delete its user and application data.

IT policy rule	Description
Secure Wipe Delay After IT Policy Received	Set this IT policy rule to a period of time, in hours, after which, if the BlackBerry device has not successfully received IT policy updates or IT administration commands, the BlackBerry device permanently deletes its user and application data.
Secure Wipe Delay After Lock	Set this IT policy rule to a period of time, in hours, after which, if the user has not unlocked the BlackBerry device, the BlackBerry device permanently deletes its user and application data.
Secure Wipe if Low Battery	Set this IT policy rule to require that, if the BlackBerry device battery power is insufficient to receive IT policy updates or IT administration commands, the BlackBerry device permanently deletes its user and application data.

### Resetting a BlackBerry device to factory default settings

The BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator can use the Reset to Factory Defaults on Wipe IT policy rule to require the BlackBerry device to return to factory default settings when it receives the Delete all device data and disable device IT administration command over the wireless network. When the BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator sets this rule to True and sends the Delete all device data and disable device IT administration command to the BlackBerry device from the BlackBerry Administration Service, the BlackBerry device reverts to its factory default settings and permanently deletes all of the following items:

- user data
- corporate PIN-to-PIN encryption key
- device transport encryption key
- smart card binding information

- password history
- stored BlackBerry MDS device policy
- record of time elapsed since the BlackBerry device was last turned on
- stored IT policy
- third-party applications and application data

When the BlackBerry device reverts to its factory default settings, it overwrites BlackBerry device internal memory and, if content protection is turned on, performs a scrub of BlackBerry device memory.

### Unbinding the smart card from the BlackBerry device

When the BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator or the user starts a BlackBerry device wipe, causing the BlackBerry device to erase its stored user and application data, the BlackBerry device permanently deletes the smart card binding information from the NV store so that a user can authenticate with the BlackBerry device using a new smart card.

The BlackBerry Enterprise Server administrator can permanently delete the smart card binding information from the BlackBerry device manually in the following ways.

Send the Delete all device data and disable device IT administration command to the BlackBerry device to permanently delete the binding between a user's current smart card and the BlackBerry device.

When the user turns off two-factor authentication, the BlackBerry device turns off two-factor authentication with the installed smart card and permanently deletes the smart card binding information from the BlackBerry device.

## Actions that the BlackBerry device performs during BlackBerry device wipe processes

When the BlackBerry device permanently deletes its stored user and application data, it performs specific actions, depending on the type of device wipe performed and the security wipe options selected:

Device wipe actions:	Type of device wipe			
	Standard security wipe			Factory default wipe
	with option to delete third-party applications	With option to format media card	without option to delete third-party applications and format media card files	
deletes internal user data	✓	✓		✓
deletes corporate PIN-to-PIN encryption key	✓	✓		✓
deletes device transport encryption key	✓	✓		✓
unbinds IT policy	✓	✓		✓
unbinds smart card	✓	✓		✓
deletes password history				✓
deletes stored BlackBerry MDS device policy				✓
deletes record of time elapsed since the BlackBerry device was last turned on				✓
deletes stored IT policy				✓
deletes third-party applications	✓		✓	✓
overwrites BlackBerry device memory	✓	✓	✓	✓
formats files stored on the media card (external memory)		✓	✓	✓ *
performs a scrub of BlackBerry device memory if content protection is turned on	✓	✓		✓

\* With option to format media card

For more information about performing a scrub of BlackBerry device memory, see "Deleting all device data from the BlackBerry device memory" in the *BlackBerry Enterprise Solution Security Technical Overview*.

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