



Cannot connect macOS internal/external partition to Windows virtual machine

- Parallels Desktop for Mac Standard Edition
- Parallels Desktop for Mac Pro Edition
- Parallels Desktop for Mac Business Edition

Symptoms

I have multiple internal/external partitions in macOS, I cannot connect them to Parallels Desktop as additional disks therefore they are not visible in Windows.

Cause

On one hand Apple directly supports three different partition schemes: GUID (Globally Unique Identifier) partition table, Apple Partition Map, and Master Boot Record, however Windows is usually partitioned in either MBR or GPT (two different partition table).

On the other hand those Apple partitions are then formatted with a file system such as Apple File System (APFS) and macOS extended (HFS Plus) while Windows partitions are formatted with as FAT32, ExFAT and NTFS.

Having all these different disk formatting types on both sides **limit macOS** to read and write to the unsupported formats out of the box, therefore it makes it impossible to connect disks with APFS and HFS Plus file system in Windows.

Resolution

Method 1

As a workaround it is possible to configure Windows virtual machine to be able to see macOS partitions in Windows using Parallels Desktop Sharing feature.

Open [the virtual machine's configuration](#) > **Options** > **Sharing** > **Share Mac** > under **Share folders** select **All disks**.

NOTE: If partitions did not appear, restart Windows virtual machine.

Method 2

Since Parallels Desktop 15 it is possible to connect internal/external partitions to Windows virtual machine as physical disks.

1. Shut down Windows machine > open its configuration > **Hardware** > **Hard Disk** > as **Source** choose the auto-detected internal/external partition in **Physical disk** list.

2. If you get an error message that **Disk cannot be connected as it is formatted for use with macOS**, please reformat it to ExFAT to be able to connect it to Windows virtual machine.

IMPORTANT: if you are going to format the drive which has data on it, make sure to transfer it to the Mac or another drive, upon formatting to ExFAT **all existing data on the drive will be erased.**

NOTE: you want to add the partition as the second disk please see [KB 117649](#).

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