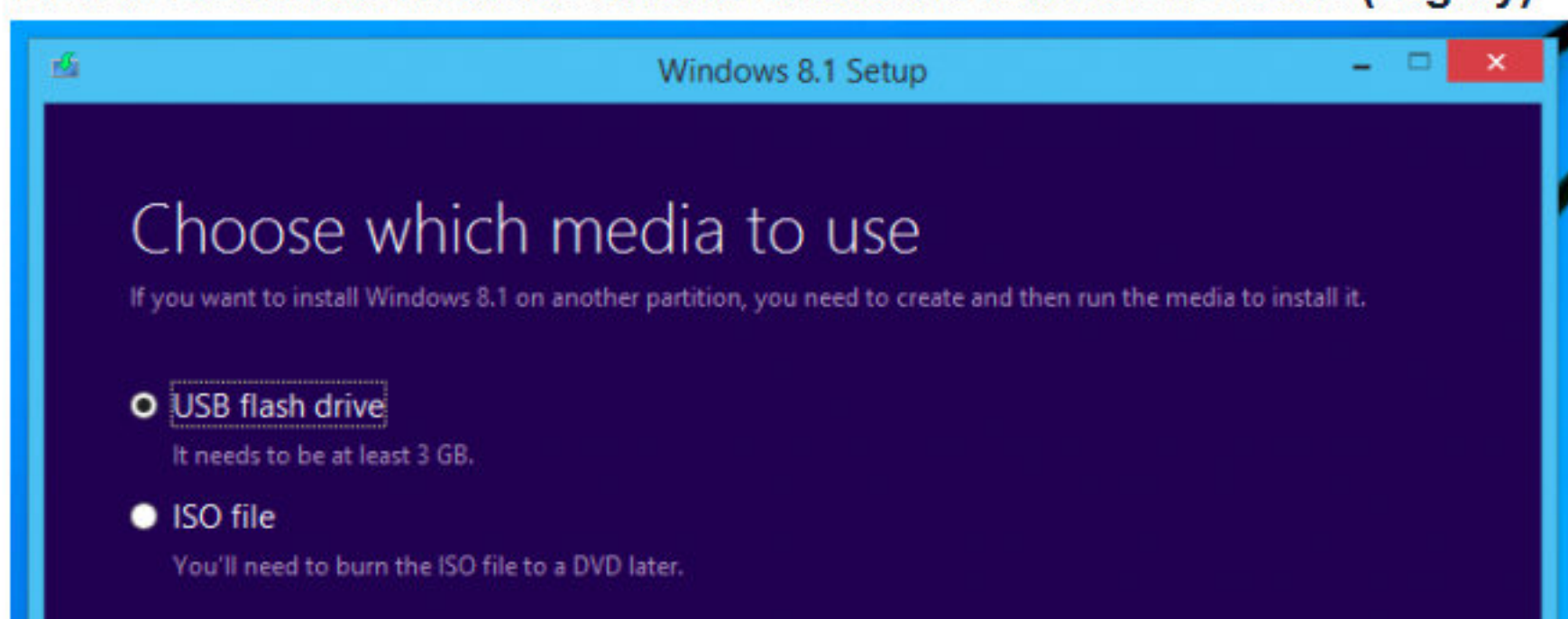




How to Download Windows 8.x and Create a Bootable DVD / USB (Legally)

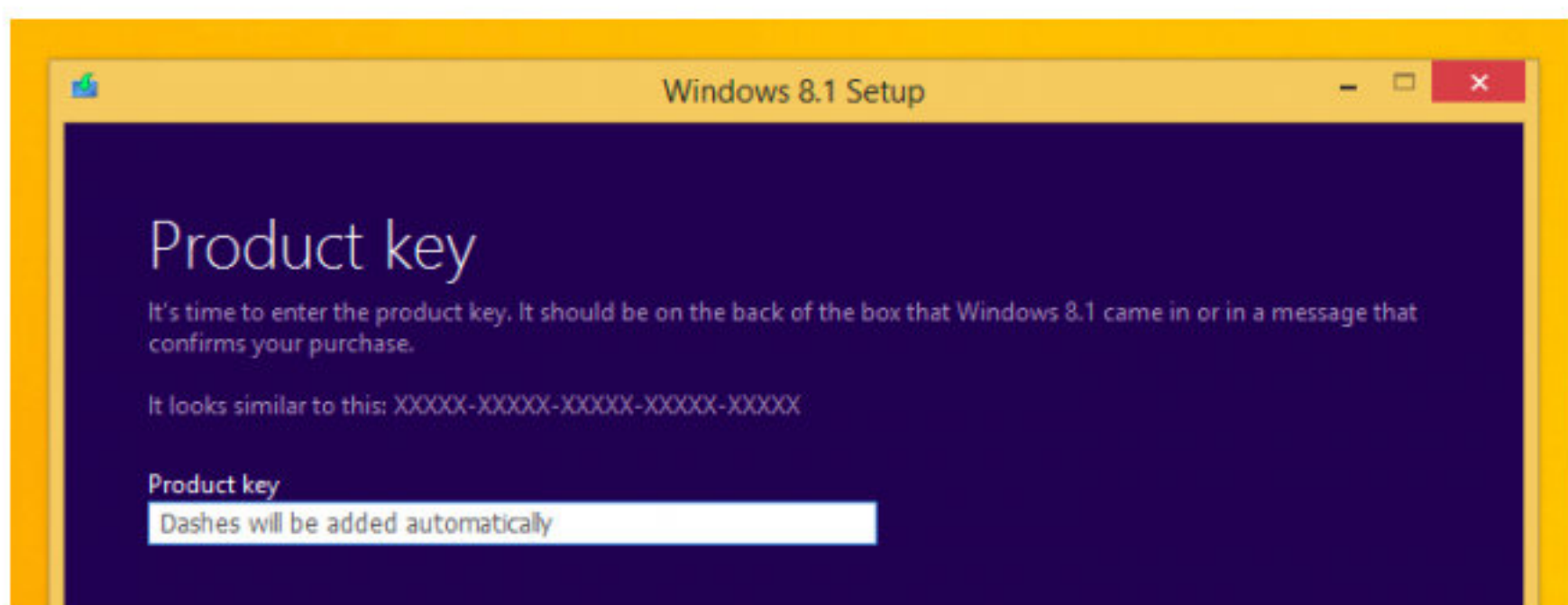


Over the years, readers have written in asking how to download Windows and make a bootable install disk, and we've always had to tell them that there isn't a great way to do that. Microsoft has finally fixed this problem in Windows 8.x, and here is how to do it.

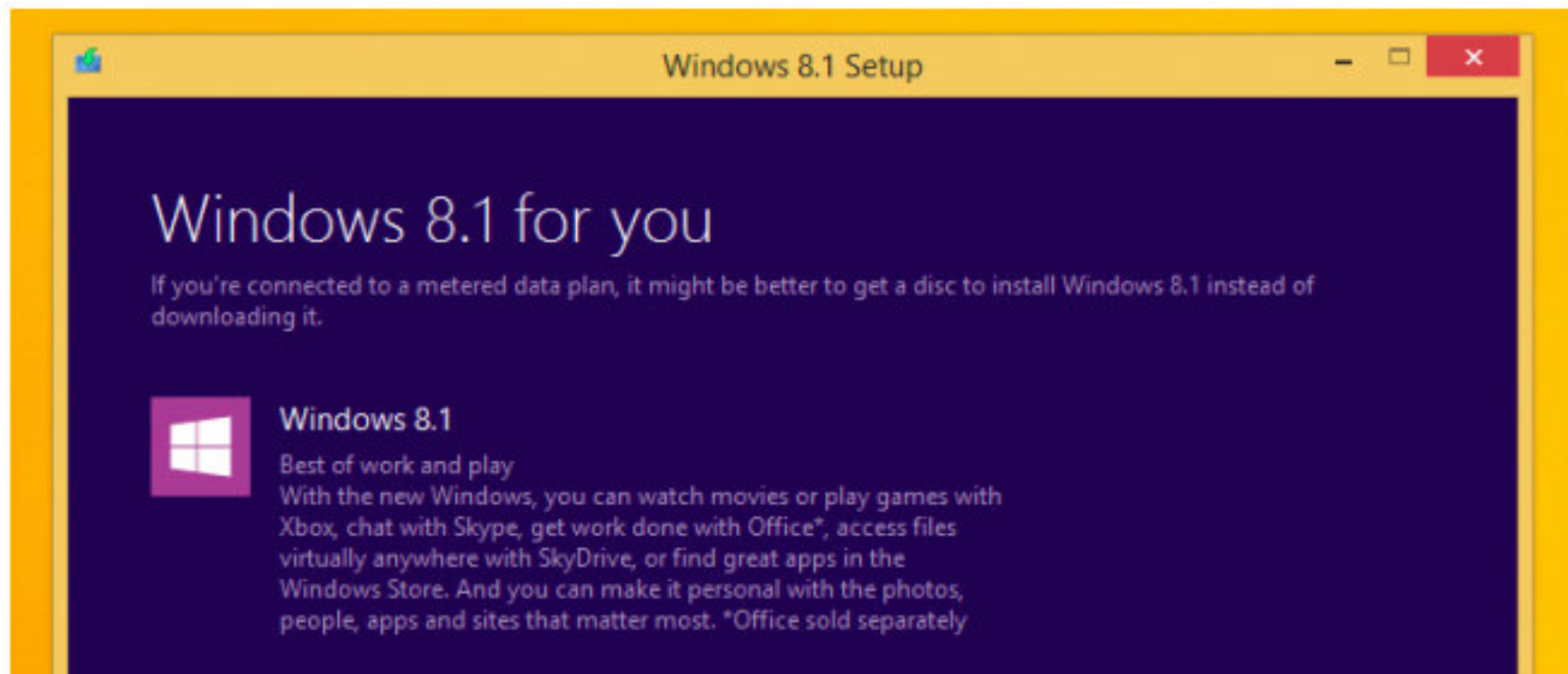
First you'll want to go to the following URL and download the web installer:

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-8/upgrade-product-key-only>

Once you launch the executable, it is going to ask you for a product key. You do have one of those, right? I mean, we're not helping anybody pirate a copy of Windows, after all.

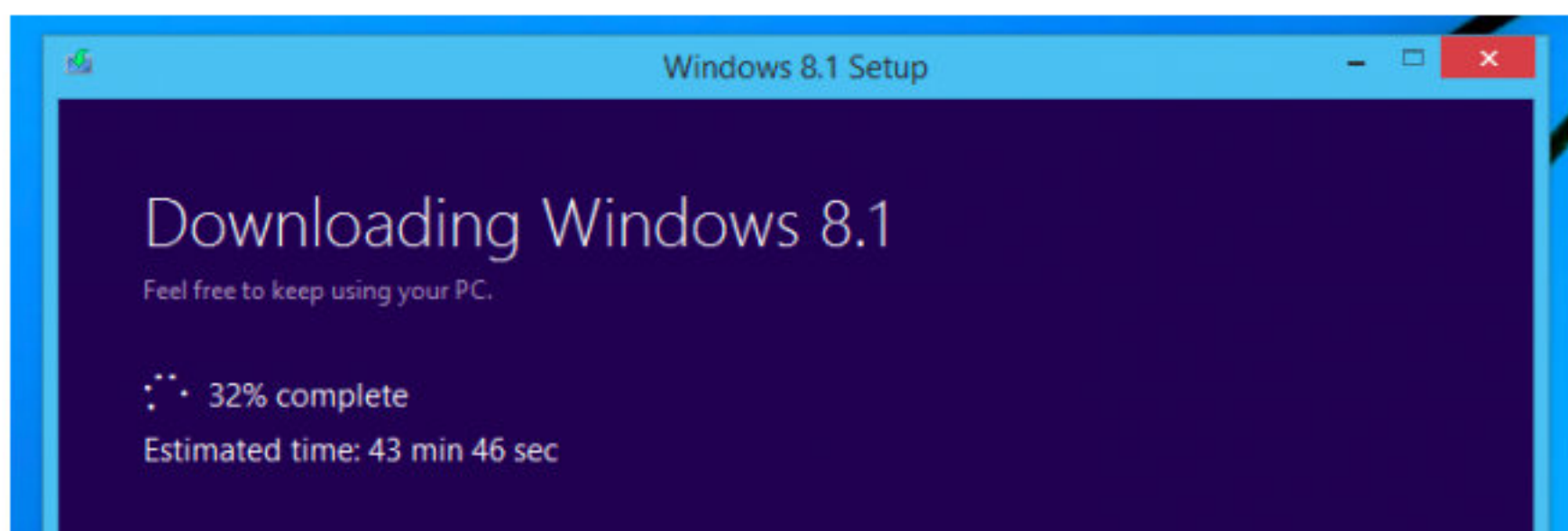


Once you plug in the product key, it'll show you the version of Windows that your product key is good for. Proceed to the next step.

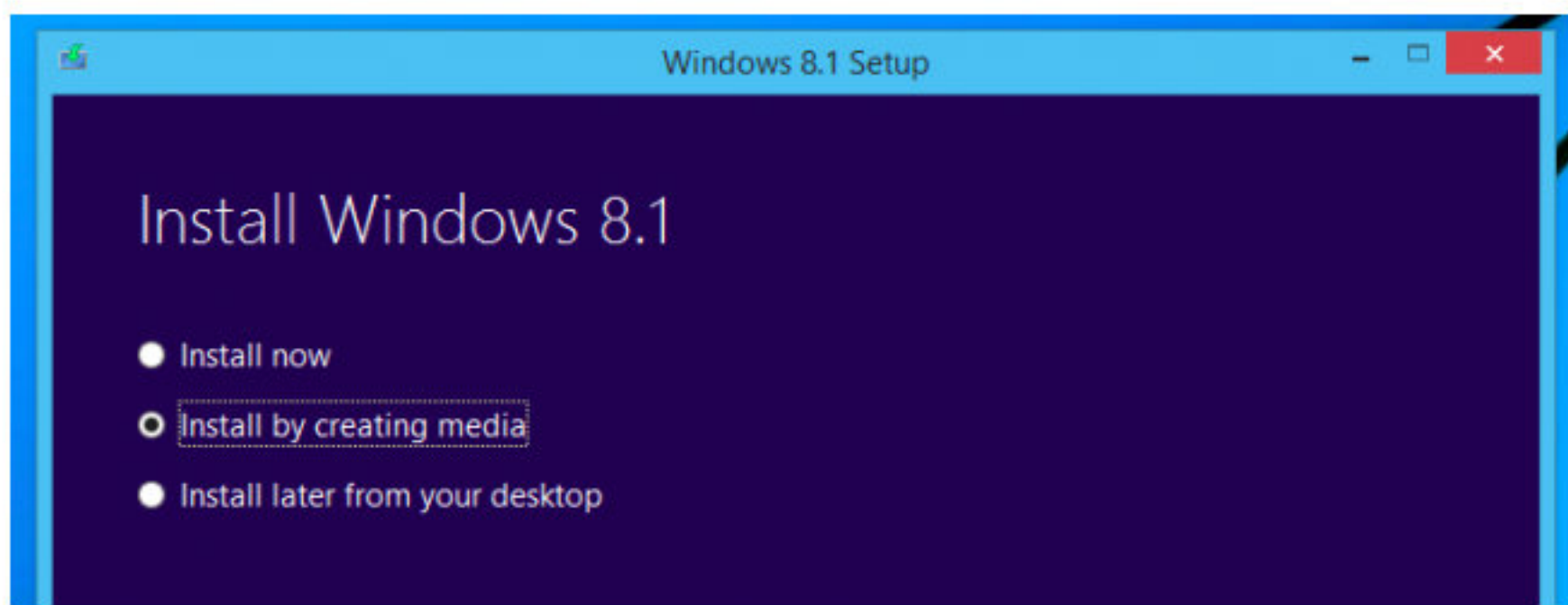


You might notice that the background on our screenshots changed to blue. That's because the awful default background for Windows 8.1 was getting on our nerves, and we just couldn't take it anymore.

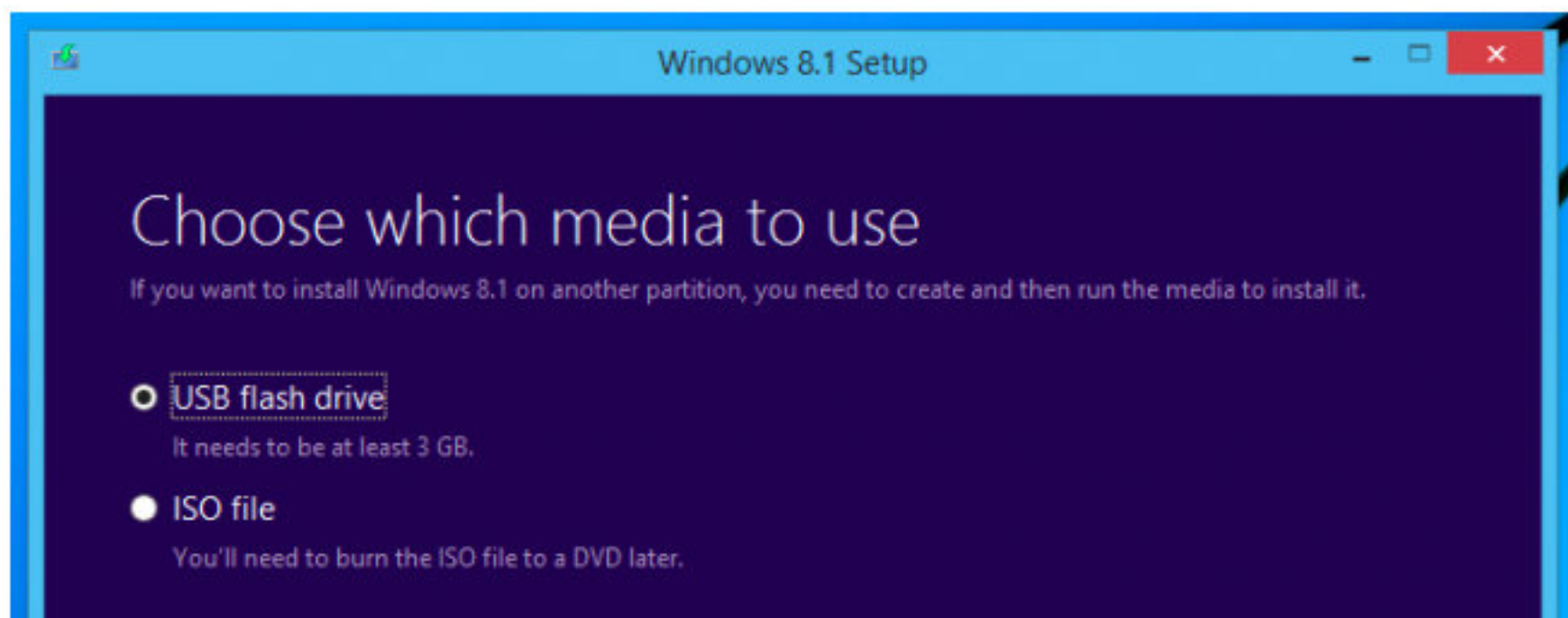
The setup program will download your copy of Windows 8 or 8.1, depending on which one you chose.



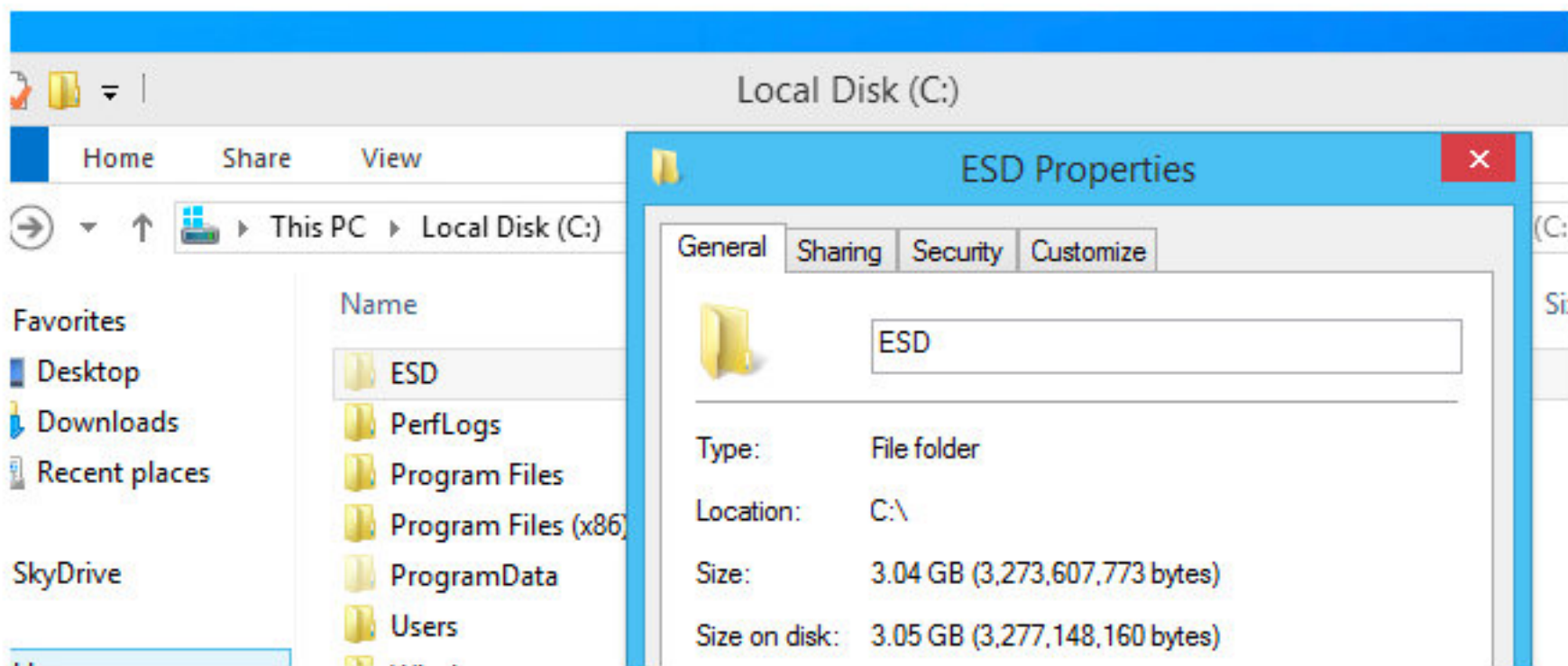
Now you'll be asked if you want to install now, later, or create media. That's the one we want to choose.



At this point, you can either choose to put the installer directly onto a USB drive, which will make a bootable version. Or you can choose to create an ISO file, which [you can burn to a DVD](#). We recommend the bootable USB version.



Now that you're all done, you might notice that there is a new folder called ESD in the root of your drive, and it is taking up 3 GB of space. You can remove this, but once you do, the installer will get weird and stop working.



So you can delete it if you want, but just know that the installer won't work, and won't re-download for some reason. We'll look into it, but it's not the most important thing.