

# Administrator Password Recovery for 300 and 500 Series Managed Switches

## Objective

In situations where the administrator password is lost or forgotten, you can manually reset the password through the Command Line Interface (CLI) of the switch. This requires a physical connection to the console port of the device so that the user can power cycle the switch, enter the boot menu, and start the password recovery procedure. This procedure allows the user to login to the device without password authentication.

The objective of this document is to show you how to recover and configure the administrator password for 300 and 500 Series Managed Switches.

**Note:** Cisco 200 Series Small Business Managed Switches do not support the CLI.

## Applicable Devices

- Cisco Small Business 300 Series Managed Switches
- Cisco Small Business 500 Series Managed Switches

## Software Versions

- 1.2.7.76

**Note:** The password recovery procedure is the same for all software versions. It is not dependent on a specific software version.

## Recovering the Network Administrator Password

Step 1. Access the CLI via a local console connection. For more information on how to access the CLI in this manner, please refer to [Access the CLI for 300 and 500 Switches via PuTTY Using a Console Connection](#).

**Note:** You must have access to the local console connection to recover the administrator password. You cannot recover the administrator password remotely from a Telnet or Secure Shell (SSH) session to the management interface.

Step 2. Power cycle the switch by unplugging the power cord and plugging it back in to the back of the device. After a couple of seconds you should see the Cisco ASCII logo with a prompt to escape the Autoboot loader. Press **Return** or **Esc** immediately to enter the Startup Menu.



```
Startup Menu
[1] Download Software
[2] Erase Flash File
[3] Password Recovery Procedure
[4] Set Terminal Baud-Rate
[5] Stack menu
[6] System Mode menu
[7] Back
Enter your choice or press 'ESC' to exit:
Current password will be ignored!
==== Press Enter To Continue ====
```

Step 4. Press **Enter** to go back to the Startup Menu, and then press **Esc** to exit. This will start the Autoboot sequence.

```
Startup Menu
[1] Download Software
[2] Erase Flash File
[3] Password Recovery Procedure
[4] Set Terminal Baud-Rate
[5] Stack menu
[6] System Mode menu
[7] Back
Enter your choice or press 'ESC' to exit:
```

Step 5. After the switch has fully booted, you will be in password recovery mode. However, before changing any usernames or passwords, enter the following commands to avoid overwriting the existing configuration on the switch:

```
switchb2d86b>enable
switchb2d86b#copy startup-config running-config
```

**Note:** In order to use backspace in the CLI, use the arrow keys to highlight the desired character and then hit **Backspace** to delete the character. You can also hold down **Backspace** to continuously delete characters to the right of the highlighted cursor.

Step 6. In order to change the administrator password, you must enter configuration mode. To enter configuration mode, enter the following command:

```
switchb2d86b#copy startup-config running-config
....!
641 bytes copied in 00:00:05 [hh:mm:ss]

switchb2d86b#14-Mar-2013 16:02:30 %COPY-I-FILECPY: Files Copy - source URL flash://startup-conf
ig destination URL running-config, aggregated (1)
14-Mar-2013 16:02:35 %COPY-N-TRAP: The copy operation was completed successfully, aggregated (1
)

switchb2d86b#config
switchb2d86b(config)#
```

Step 7. Enter the following command to change the password of any given user:

**Note:** Default password complexity settings require that the password contain at least 3 character classes such as a capital letter, a lowercase letter, and a number.

```
switchb2d86b#config
switchb2d86b(config)#username username1 password Password1
switchb2d86b(config)#
```

**Note:** The command in the screenshot above sets the password for *username1* to *Password1*. If *username1* does not exist as a user on the switch, a new user account is created.

Step 8. Enter the following commands to exit configuration mode and write to the configuration file.

```
switchb2d86b(config)#exit
switchb2d86b#write
Overwrite file [startup-config]... (Y/N) [N] ?
```

Step 9. Enter **Y** to overwrite the startup configuration file.

Step 10. Enter the following command to reboot the system so that you can log in with your newly configured username and password:

```
Overwrite file [startup-config]... (Y/N) [N] ?Y
14-Mar-2013 16:08:22 %COPY-I-FILECPY: Files Copy - source URL running-config destination URL fl
ash://startup-config
14-Mar-2013 16:08:24 %COPY-N-TRAP: The copy operation was completed successfully
Copy succeeded
switchb2d86b#reload
```

Step 11. Enter **Y** to continue. Your device will then reboot.

```
switchb2d86b#reload
This command will reset the whole system and disconnect your current session. Do you want to co
ntinue ? (Y/N) [N] Y
Shutting down ...
```