Erasing data when dumping or handing over your computer
Back up all your data to two places (eg Cloud, USB drive, new computer).

Dumping
Smash the hard disk. If your data are stored on SSD or eMMC disk you would have to disassemble the PC, find the device then smash it. Better off smashing up the entire laptop.

Handing computer over to someone else
Best method
Windows 10
- **Clean install Windows using Reset**
  Go Start > Settings > Update & security > Recovery > Reset this PC > Get started
  Click "Remove everything"
  If you see the option "Your PC has more than one drive", choose "All drives"
  Choose "Remove files and clean the drive"
  Click "Next" on the warning screen
  Click "Reset"
- **If the "Reset" function doesn't work, try the "WINRE" mode.**
  Go Start > Settings > Update & security > Recovery > Advanced startup
  Click "Restart now", the operating system will reboot and into "WINRE (Windows Recovery Environment)" mode
  Select "Troubleshoot"
  Select "Reset this PC".
- **If this doesn't work you can try "Start afresh .."**
  Go Start > Settings > Update & security > Recovery
  Click "Start afresh with a clean installation of Windows"

  Windows 7, Vista, XP
   - Revert to factory settings using Windows install disk or recovery application supplied by manufacturer.

Manual method
1. Shift > Delete all folders/files in Docs, Pics, Videos, Music (so they don't go in recycle bin)
2. Shift/Delete unwanted folders/files from Desktop and elsewhere you have stored them
3. Set up a new Local account called "User", make it Admin ([see instructions here](#))
4. Login to the new Admin account
5. Remove all other Windows accounts - this will remove documents, browser histories, favourites, logged in email & cloud services etc.
6. Uninstall unwanted applications
7. Check c:\users folders that user data was, in fact, deleted for removed accounts. If not, delete the contents of Documents, Pictures, Videos and Music folders for each user
8. Empty Recycle bin
9. Use *CCleaner Drive Wiper* tool to erase free space of your hard drive so that deleted files cannot be recovered.
   - Select Tools > Drive Wiper, Choose "Free Space Only"
   - Choose the type of security you require (Simple Overwrite is ok for most situations)
10. *NB, don't use CCleaner for any other purpose unless you know what you are doing and how to recover a damaged system.*   *John Allen*