

# File Backup Options



Have you experienced a program that you were working in suddenly close and discovered your work wasn't saved? Many of us have had that happen. It can be catastrophic. Saving your information in more than one location is good insurance for your hard work and time in case anything goes wrong with your computer. Software can be reinstalled on your computer, but lost data could be lost forever.

## Importance of Backup

Would you lose any important files if something happened to your computer? For most of us, the answer is yes. Files that are on your computer are fragile. Saving your files in more than one location keeps them safe if your computer fails.

Files can be lost in a number of ways. Your computer could crash, a virus could corrupt files on your computer, or the hard drive could fail without warning. Users often back up their files to their computer's hard drive, but if the computer has a total breakdown, your information will not be protected.

Having your files organized in folders on your computer will simplify the process of backing up your files. To make sure your files are well protected, you should consider having the original file, a backup of the original, and a backup of the backup. If you follow this method, then you should have three copies of your files. It is important to update your backup files whenever you make changes to the original files.

Drives that are used daily for file transfer should not be used as your main backup. Drives do break, wear out, or get lost over time. You need a separate drive that serves as a backup.

## Backup Options

There are various ways to back up files. External drives (USB drives or hard drives) and online backup are two options. As you are thinking about what files to back up, consider those files that you can't afford to lose. Some examples of these might be pictures, documents that may need to be updated often, research papers, and personal information.



USB drive

External drives are usually plug-and-play, so it is a matter of connecting the drive to your computer through a USB port and saving your information to that particular drive. External hard drives provide an easy option to backing up files. You must first purchase an external hard drive. External drives come in different data storage amounts. They can range from 500 gigabytes (GB) to several terabytes (TB). External hard drive brands include Western Digital, Seagate, Toshiba, and Transcend.



External drive

USB drives can store several hundred gigabytes of data. There are a variety of brands to choose from when purchasing a USB drive. Some USB brands include Sandisk, Kingston, PNY, and Samsung.

Doing a little research before purchasing an external drive will save you time and money in the long run.

There are advantages and disadvantage to backup drives. For instance, drives can be lost, stolen, or fail to work properly. Backup drives also do not have any type of security, unless they are encrypted. Some benefits of backup drives are that your data is accessible offline and they usually come with automatic backup software.

Online options are also available for backing up files. By saving files online, you are not at risk of losing your information in the event that something goes wrong with your computer. The online files that you have saved will be accessible from another computer or mobile device that has Internet access. Online services for saving files provide the user some free storage, and, if you run out of space, you have the option to purchase additional storage for your files. Online backup options, also called cloud services, give you the freedom of not having to have an external drive with you in order to access your files. Be mindful that, in order to access files saved in the cloud, you need an Internet connection. Data backed up in the cloud is secured by the company and susceptible to damage or failure. Some examples of cloud storage are Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, and iCloud for Apple products.

While working on files on your computer, it is important to save your information often. Backups are a great way to protect your investment in your files.

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