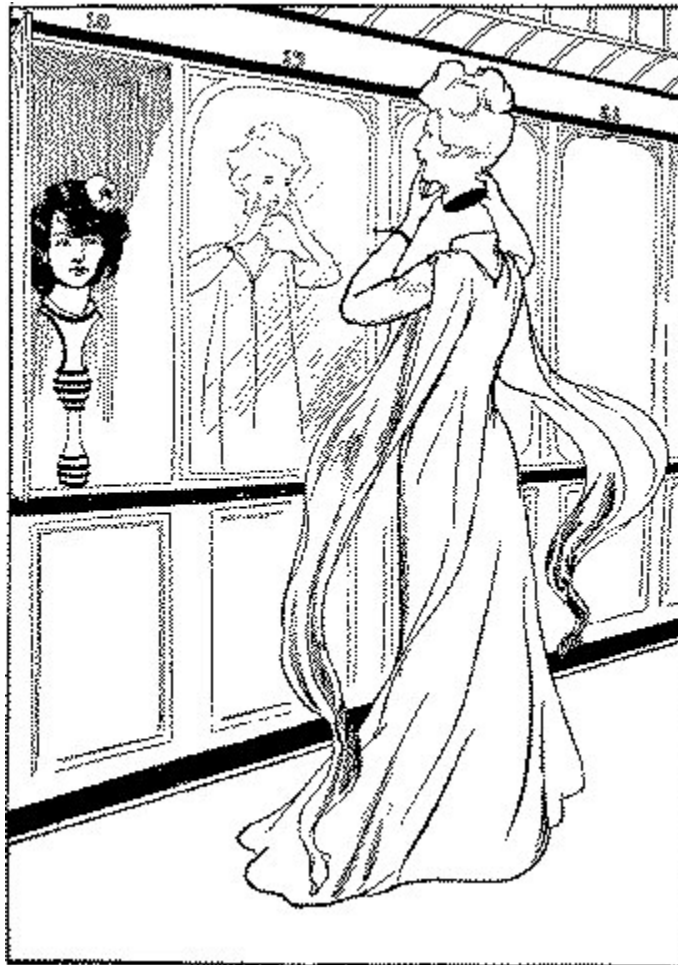
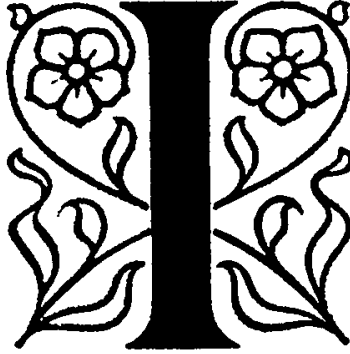


The New York Society Library Presents:



Basic Computer Backup

Ingrid Richter, Head of Systems
systems@nysoclib.org



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BASIC COMPUTER BACKUP



PRE-STEP 0a:

Why do I need to back up my computer?

Imagine the worst-case computer scenario: your computer or laptop is tossed into the East River (or, more likely, your hardware will break down, or your computer will catch a nasty virus or be stolen or destroyed).

If you have a recent backup and a new or spare computer, you could be up and running immediately. If you don't have a backup, you'll have to recreate all of your work from scratch.

PRE-STEP 0b:

How often should I back up my computer?

If you use your computer every day, try backing it up at least once a week. Back up your computer whenever you've made major changes to it (i.e. writing a novel, downloading pictures of your family, etc.) and you don't want to lose all that work. For some people, that means every day. For others, once a month might be fine. There's no rule on backups, so find one that works best for you.

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STEP 01: **Keep all your files in one location**

Don't worry about backing up your entire computer - only back up your unique information (i.e. letters, pictures, financial information, etc.)

To make backups easier, store all of your original files in one folder on your computer. This folder can be divided into as many different sub-folders and categories as you want.

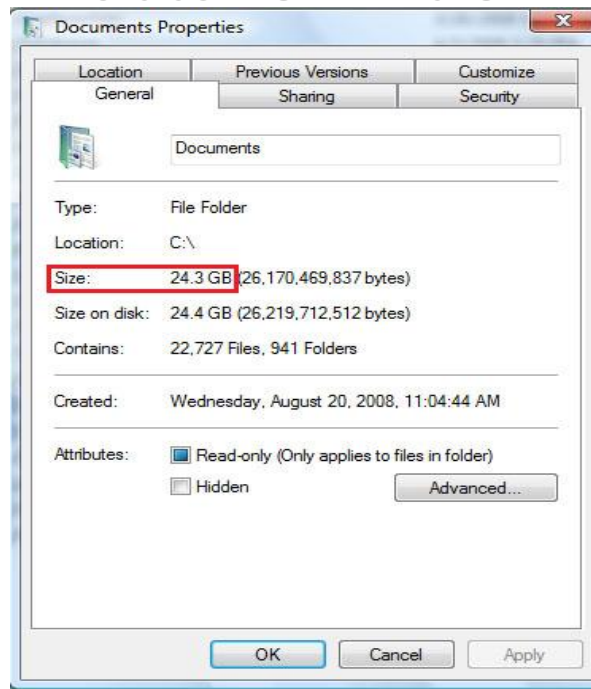
You can create the folder anywhere you want, but PCs have a few default locations: Windows XP users have the "My Documents" folder. Windows Vista users have the "Documents" folder. Use this folder to make backup easier. Microsoft products like to default to this folder.

Default folders:

C:\Documents	(Windows Vista users)
C:\My Documents	(Windows 98/XP users)
C:\Documents and Settings\username\username Documents	(Windows XP users with multiple accounts)

Note: Do not store original documents on your Windows Desktop - this is a systems folder that can be overwritten if you have to reinstall software. Instead, store shortcuts to your documents on the Desktop. This will help protect your files.

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STEP 02: **Calculate the size of your backup**

It is a good idea to know the size of your backup before you start copying files for backup.

To find your files, double-click on "My Computer" (or click Start→ Run and type C:\) and look for any of these folders:

- C:\Documents
- C:\My Documents
- C:\Documents and Settings\username\username Documents

Once you have located your folder, right-click on the main folder ("Documents" or "My Documents") and select "Properties" from the drop-down menu.

This will calculate the size of all the files in your folder. Write down this number for future reference.

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STEP 03: **Decide on the backup media**

Once you know size of your backup, you can decide on the media you wish to use. There are advantages and disadvantages to each. Backup media options include:

- CD/DVD discs or floppy disks
- USB Flash Drives & external hard drives
- Online Storage

Floppy drives store 1.4 MB and are no longer being installed on computers. Try to avoid backing anything up to a floppy or zip disk and move any original information you have off these disks.

CDs and DVDs are decent for storage up to a certain size (650 MB for CDs and 4.6 GB for DVDs). CDs and DVDs can be easily damaged, however, and are too fragile to use as a permanent solution. Also, CD/DVD drives are becoming scarce on new laptops. You might want to look into another option.

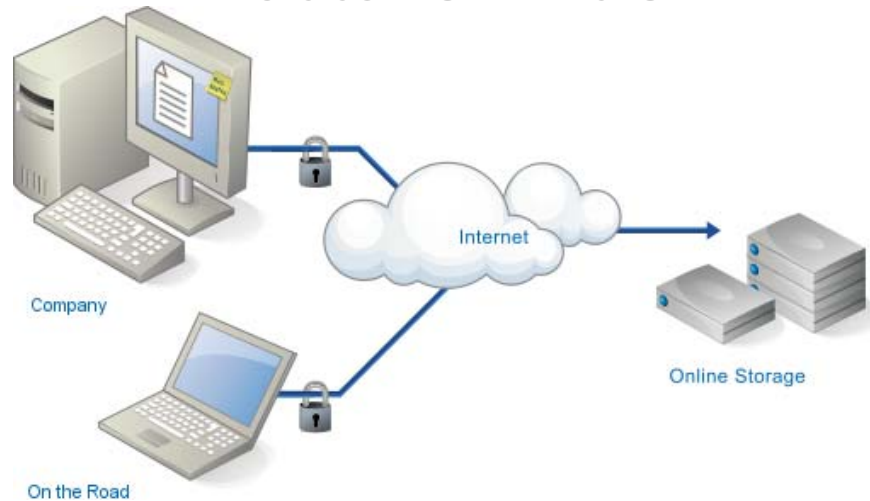


USB FLASH DRIVES

USB flash drives and external hard drives are my favorite form of backup. They're small, portable and easy to use. They come in a variety of sizes, shapes and colors. They're also quite cheap, and can be read on almost all computers. When you plug in a USB flash drive or external hard drive, it will show up as a new drive on your computer.

To check out prices and compare models on USB flash drives, go to Amazon.com and search for "USB flash drive." The cheapest flash drive is \$1 for 2 GB of storage; the cheapest external hard drive will run around \$47 for 50 GB of storage.

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STEP 04:

Consider an online storage option

Online storage is an interesting new choice for backup. You log onto an online account and store your documents on their server. You can access these documents anywhere with an Internet connection.

Google Docs

<http://docs.google.com>

Google Docs is free to use (you just need a Google Account), but it does have some limitations on the size of the document. Documents must be under 500k in size, but users can have as many as 5,000 documents in their account.

There is a class being taught on Google Docs on Wednesday, April 22, 2009 if you are interested in more information about this option.

Google isn't the only option for online storage. The two services below offer up to 2 GB of storage space for free, then charge for additional storage.

Dropbox

<http://www.getdropbox.com/>

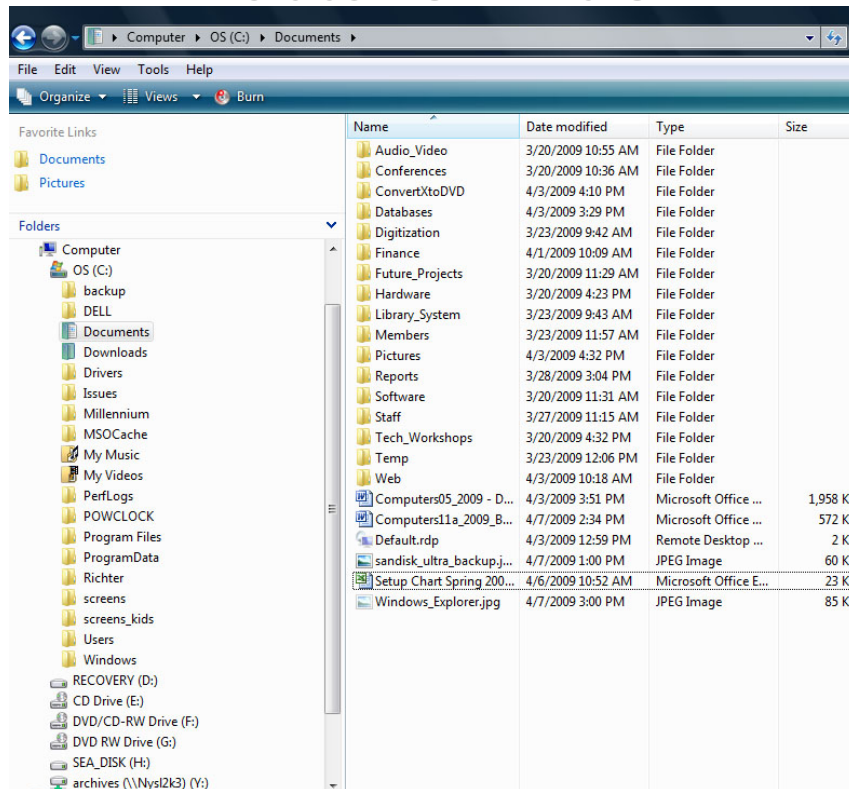
Dropbox lets you synchronize and share 2GB of your files, photos and music for free.

Mozy

<http://mozy.com/>

Mozy gives you 2 GB of free backup space to back up photos, music, and documents, on your home computer and offers unlimited backup storage for \$4.95/month.

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STEP 05:

Open Windows Explorer

Start → Programs → Accessories → Windows Explorer

Windows Explorer gives you a graphical view of your computer's contents. It is an excellent program for moving and renaming files and folders on your hard drive and is, in my opinion, one of the most essential programs in Windows.

The disk drives and folders appear on the left side; the right side displays the contents of the folder. To expand folders on the left, click on the folder or on the plus sign next to the folder; to hide folders, click the minus sign.

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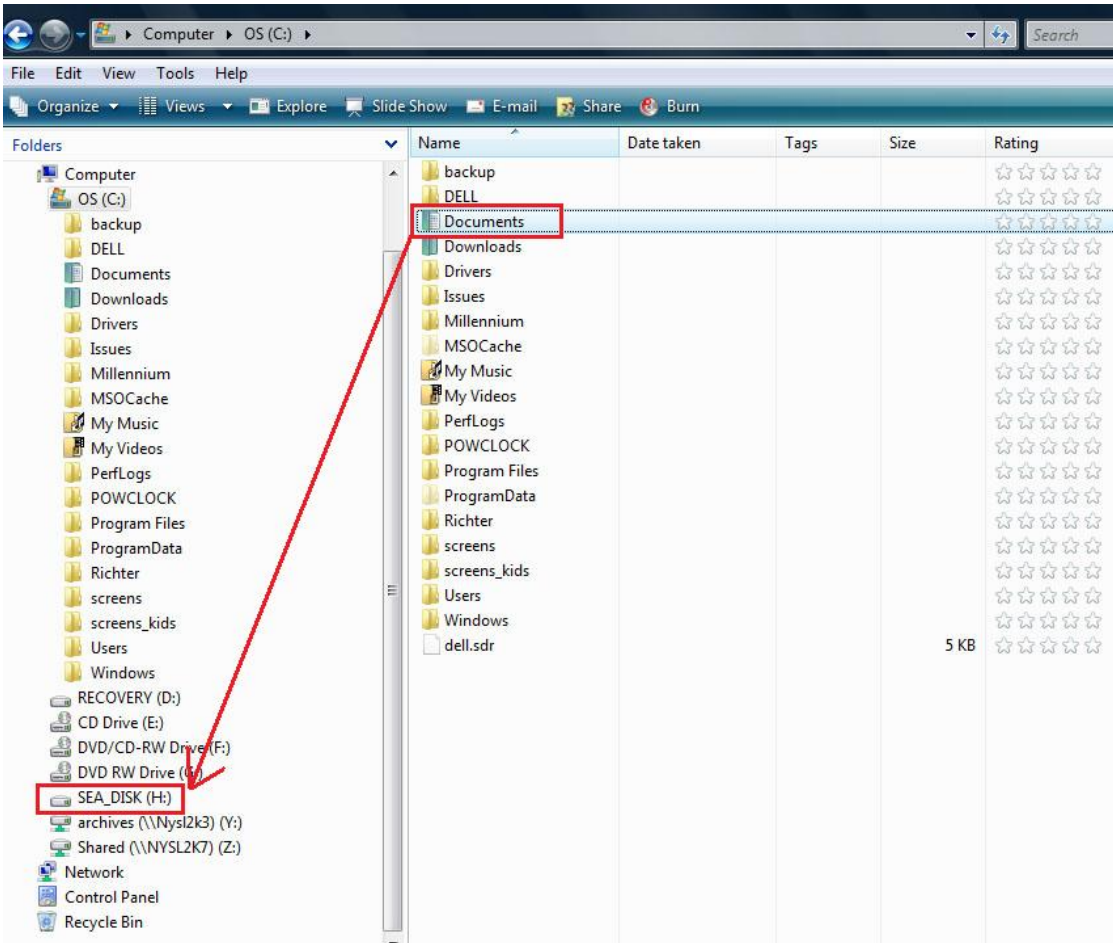


STEP 06: **Plug in your backup media**

When you plug in your USB drive (or external hard drive) for the first time, your computer will automatically install the software. If you are using an older computer (Windows 98 or below), you will need to have the installation CD that comes when you purchase a USB flash drive or external hard drive.

Once your computer has recognized your backup media, look for a new drive on the left-hand side of Windows Explorer (it's generally an F: or G: drive and will be called something like "Removable Disk")

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STEP 07:

Move your folder onto the backup media

In Windows Explorer, click on the Local Disk (C: drive). Find your Documents folder with all your original files.

To copy files from one location to the other, just drag the folder (or files) across the middle divider (usually from right to left). This will move a folder if it's on the same hard drive, or copy a folder if it's on a different hard drive.

If you have an older copy of the file on your USB flash drive or external hard drive, Windows Explorer will ask if you want to keep the old document or replace it with the new document (you'll almost always want to replace it).

Once the backup is complete, double-click on the backup media to make sure all the files have transferred properly. Test it out by opening one of the files.

And that's it for backup! Keep the USB Flash Drive or external hard drive in a location away from your computer and you're all set in case something happens to your computer.

**BASIC COMPUTER BACKUP
NOTES:**