



... Created by Mike Bloomfield

'Totally Backup your P.C.'

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Here is an article to help you totally backup your data in three easy steps!

This article is effective for Microsoft Windows XP, XP Pro, Windows 2000, NT, ME, 98, 98SE and all versions of Windows95.

These are the three steps we will cover...

- 1. Firstly, identifying what is your valuable data?!**
- 2. Finding the data.**
- 3. Copying this data on to a removable media and then testing that the backup has worked correctly.**

This article is aimed at the home user and although it could also be adapted to help a home office or small business user, the purpose is to back up a home P.C.





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Overview

Backup is where we take a copy of our valuable data, such as documents, accounts information or digital photos on to a removable media, for example CD-ROM.

The main considerations in selecting a backup device are...

- ◇ **Type of data to be backed up**
- ◇ **Quality of media and device**
- ◇ **Speed of backup procedure**
- ◇ **Size of media**
- ◇ **Ease of operation**
- ◇ **Cost of device and media**

However, we will most likely be working with whatever we can find that will help us that is already in your computer! Buying new gear needs to be done very selectively these days.





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Questions relating to the above points...

Do I need to backup just data or the whole system?

Most people assume it better to backup the whole system, but this is not necessarily correct. Often I find people trying to copy 'Windows' and 'Program Files' folders, in earnest belief that they will have then copied their entire system and programs.

Ever lost data from a floppy disk?

Floppy disks are magnetic; if I leave a large magnet on your disk, your data will leave that disk! Most CD-R disks left data up in the direct sunlight will loose the data on them! Pick something reliable.

Can I afford to spend 60mins to backup?

If I ask you to burn 3 CD-R (only 2.1GB) on an X8 Speed CD-RW device it will take you 1 hour. On a tape drive or with intelligent software, it could be scheduled to backup without you even being there!

How big is my data?

If you are intending to backup your email or use Outlook in Microsoft Office, chances are that it will not fit on one floppy disk! If you have a digital camera, you may find you need a bigger media, such as CD-R or even DVD-R.

Can you operate the backup system?

Seriously, if you need an I.Q. of 154 and 3 technology degrees to work out the software, we're missing the point. Backup needs to be fast, fun and simple.





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How much?

Let's not get caught up with buying very expensive devices and media if this is not appropriate.

The 1, 2, 3 step Backup

STEP 1

If you sit back and imagine your P.C. has just melted into cyberspace, what have you got left? What do you miss? What is irreplaceable? These are the type of questions that will help you identify that which is important to you!

Typically, here is a traditional dataset...

- ◇ ***My Accounting and/or Stocks and Shares Software***
- ◇ ***My Address Book and Email – Outlook, Outlook Express, Incredimail, Eudora or Netscape Mail perhaps.***
- ◇ ***My Documents, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Publisher***
- ◇ ***My Favourites***
- ◇ ***The stuff I left on the Desktop in a little folder called 'stuff'!***
- ◇ ***My digital camera photos***
- ◇ ***My music downloads***
- ◇ ***My Family Tree software which took 45 weeks of toil to compose***
- ◇ ***My saved games***
- ◇ ***Other important data specific to you – perhaps your movies!***





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STEP 2

Where do I find these files and folders?

Now there's a question. There are several ways to locate your data, but let's start with the generic one-size fits all approach.

Accounting programs have a name, such as MYOB or QuickBooks. Usually the same name contains all the files that have your data – backup the whole folder. If you're not sure, telephone the maker of the software and ask where the data folder or files are to be found.

Address Book and email again depends on the program you use, Outlook Express is different to Outlook and Eudora and Incredimail are different again. Also Windows XP and Windows 98 for example handle where they save the data differently.

So, close down all programs and go START, SEARCH for files and folders, all files and folders and type in outlook or *.pst. If using Windows XP, please use the more advanced options button and tick the box 'search hidden files and folders'. This will locate your Outlook files, and *.jpg will find most photos, *.xls will find your spreadsheets, *.doc will find MS-Word documents, *.mdb will find MS-Access, *.wab will find the address book, *.dbx or *.mbx will most likely locate your email folders if we have n't already!

*.dat would locate my MYOB files, *.mp3 might find my music or *.wav, *.avi, *.mov, *. Mpeg or mpg, my video files.

Now, if you want to take this further, let's search for favorites or favourites. Search for whatever you like.

Not sure – contact the software vendor and ask where is the data?





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STEP 3

Now how do I backup?

Again this will depend on your device.

Typically, this will be on to a floppy disk, CD, DVD or into a USB storage device.

In Windows XP often you can simply right click the file or folder and 'send to' CD or 3.5 Floppy. Otherwise, read the help section of the software that came with the device, such as Nero or Easy CD Creator or NTI Backup etc! This is well worth doing.

Took me 3 times with Nero, but then I owned the process!!!

This article is started but not finished. Please email me your opinion on how to make this more helpful to everybody and I will improve it and re submit it again and again, as it gets better and better!

Please support Murray Olds and 2UE for letting us give you this advice for *free*. Every time you ask for me back, I promise I will give you a free article.

Kind Regards,

Mike Bloomfield

