



# Do You Have a Personal Backup Plan?

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The only way to protect yourself against valuable data loss is through regular backups. Ideally, important files should be backed up at minimum once a week, or every day, depending on how critical they are to you. This can be done manually, automatically, or using combination of the two methods. (Briefly review this 2017 backup awareness survey to see how often most computer owners backup their data. Do you fall into the daily, weekly, monthly, annually, or never category?)

When it comes to backups, just like security, you want to find a balance of being thorough but efficient. We have all heard disastrous stories of losing homework due to the blue screen of death or a misplaced cell phone that tragically stored the only copy of family photos. In addition, you could fall victim to ransomware or another malicious attack that leaves you with no choice but to reimagine your computer. It never hurts to consider your backup strategy and come up with a plan that leaves you feeling safe and secure. Here are some tips to get you started.

- ▶ Data loss happens all the time, but it is entirely preventable. You just need to create a backup plan.
- ▶ Your critical data should never reside in a single place.
- ▶ The ideal backup strategy will typically include both an online backup service (e.g., Dropbox, Box, OneDrive, Google Drive, CrashPlan, iCloud) and an offline backup utility (e.g., external hard drives, flash drives) to ensure your data is secure no matter what happens to your mobile device or computer.
- ▶ Running consistent, automatic backups is a straightforward process that will take little time to set up and will require even less to maintain.
- ▶ Backups can be configured to run in real time when files on your computer are changed.
- ▶ Routinely test your backup solution to ensure you can recover your data in the event that you do actually need to restore from a backup.