

BACKUP YOUR IMPORTANT FILES WITH WINDOWS 10's FILE HISTORY

(a second drive is required)

Caveat: This program will not copy **applications** to another drive. You must use a program like Acronis to clone your entire system to another drive.

File History automatically backs up files that are in your Documents, Pictures, Music, Videos, email contacts, web favorites, Microsoft OneDrive files and files on your desktop. If the originals are lost, damaged, or deleted, you can restore all of them. You can also find different versions of your files from a specific point in time. Over time, you'll have a complete history of your files.

With File History turned on, you will be able to archive copies of older versions of your files and do so automatically and in the background while you work. It is, for all intents and purposes, a real-time backup tool.

By default it preserves only those files in your Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos folders. You can add other folders if you wish, but only by adding them to one of the major folders listed here. (You can also exclude folders that you don't want, for example, your videos, to be backed up.)

File History requires an extra internal hard drive or some kind of external storage: a large-capacity USB flash drive, USB hard drive, or network drive. The more space you devote to File History, the deeper your backup will go.

Here's how to get started with it:

1. Type **file history** from the Start box.
2. Click the *Backup Settings* link that appears in the search results.
3. By default, the feature is turned off. Have ready whatever storage device you intend to use (an internal hard drive, an external hard drive or a large capacity flash drive).
4. Then click the *Refresh* icon next to the address bar. If you're using network storage, click *Use network location* instead, then choose your desired drive.
5. Click the button marked *Turn on*.

6. File History will make an initial backup of your folders, then scan those folders once every 10 minutes and make additional backups of any new or changed files it finds.

If you need to recover your files, just return to the File History window and click *More options*, then *Restore files from a current backup* near the bottom of the next page. (You can also manually navigate into the File History folder created on your storage drive, but you'll have to click through numerous sub-folders to find your data.)

This is a decidedly handy feature that's worth devoting a large-capacity flash drive to, if only to preserve your most precious documents.