

CONFIGURE ONEDRIVE IN WINDOWS 11

Most people will sign into Windows 11 using a Microsoft account. Among other things, that means that OneDrive, Microsoft's cloud storage service, will be configured for that account and available in the file system via File Explorer and to compatible apps. (Note that OneDrive is not functioning when you are on your Local Account.)

But it's likely that you will want to perform some additional OneDrive configuration related to two specific features right away.

Configure OneDrive backup

OneDrive Backup backs up three important folders—Desktop, Documents, and Pictures—to your OneDrive cloud storage. And it will keep those folders synced across multiple PCs if you always sign into them with your Microsoft account. This can be useful, of course, but it's not always configured in an ideal way.

Here's the problem: when you first set up Windows 11, you were either given the option to enable OneDrive backup (Windows 11 Pro) or, if you use Windows 11 Home, it was simply enabled for you.

This may not be what you want, but you can configure OneDrive to not back up those folders. Or to only back up one or two of those folders.

To do so:

1. Find the OneDrive system icon in the system notification area (to the right of the Taskbar), which can be tricky since it's hidden by default.
2. You can display hidden system icons by selecting "Show hidden icons" (the caret-shaped icon to the left of the Network, Volume, and Power icons.)
3. Select the OneDrive icon (looks like a small cloud), which opens a OneDrive pane,
4. Navigate to Settings & Help (the gear-shaped icon)
5. Click on Settings.
6. When the Microsoft OneDrive window opens, navigate to the Backup tab.
7. Select the "Manage backup" button in the Important PC Folders section. The Manage folder backup window opens.
8. Here, you can enable or stop the backup of any of the three folders that OneDrive can back up.

9. If you don't wish to backup any of these folders to OneDrive, for example, simply select the "Stop backup" link under all three in turn, and verify the decision as prompted.

Configure OneDrive for offline use (Optional)

Windows 11 makes the contents of your OneDrive storage available in File Explorer by default. But whatever files and folders you have in OneDrive are not downloaded to your PC, because that might take up a lot of space. Instead, they are all available on-demand by default. This way, you can see your files and folders, and when you try to open a file, it will be downloaded to your PC and will then be available at all times, even when your PC is offline, and any changes you make will be synced to OneDrive.

This system may work well for some. But you may also want to mark some individual files or, more likely, some selection of OneDrive-based folders that could be full of files, to be available at all times.

To do so:

1. Find the files/folders in File Explorer (your OneDrive-based content is available via the "OneDrive - Personal" link in File Explorer's navigation pane.
2. Then right-click them in turn and select "Always keep on this device" from the context menu that appears.