

ONEDRIVE: MICROSOFT'S CLOUD STORAGE SOLUTION

Computer users have been limited in the way in which they can access files on separate systems. Traditionally, users store their files on a local hard drive (such as the C: drive). To use those files on a different computer, that computer *must have a network connection to the user's network drive*, or the user must transfer files using a removable drive such as a flash drive.

OneDrive is Microsoft's cloud storage solution. It's similar to products like Google Drive or Dropbox and is embedded in Windows 11. With OneDrive, you can synchronize your files and folders across all Windows devices as well as devices using Android or iOS. The files you store in your OneDrive folder are automatically uploaded to Microsoft's servers and then synchronized across all your devices on which OneDrive is installed and set up.

OneDrive offers 5GB of free storage space for every Microsoft account. You can also purchase more storage or take advantage of offers like the 1TB of storage space available to Office 365 subscribers.

ACCESS ONEDRIVE

When you activated your Windows 11 computer, you were expected to establish your Microsoft Account, including a username and password. In doing so, OneDrive was activated and made a part of your File Explorer (Windows + E).

If OneDrive is not present, you can start OneDrive and access your files in the cloud several ways. This one works on all Windows 11 devices:

1. Click the Start button, then go to AllApps.
2. Scroll down the list of apps until you find those starting with the letter O.
3. Find and click on OneDrive. This action will take you to your OneDrive folder in File Explorer.

ADDING FILES TO ONEDRIVE

Uploading your files to OneDrive is as easy as copying/pasting them to the OneDrive folder. Here's how:

1. Open File Explorer (Windows + E).
2. Browse to the file that you want to upload to OneDrive.

3. Right-click on the target file and select **copy** from the horizontal menu.
4. Move to the Navigation pane on the left side of the File Explorer window and right-click on OneDrive.
5. From the horizontal menu that opens, click on **paste**.

VIEW A FILE OR FOLDER AT ONEDRIVE.COM (THE CLOUD)

If you want to view the contents of a file or folder on the OneDrive website instead of viewing it locally, you can do so.

Follow these steps:

1. Open a browser. (It does not have to be Microsoft Edge or Internet Explorer.)
2. Access your favorite search engine.
3. Search for **onedrive.com**.
4. If you are not signed on to your Microsoft account, you will need to do so to access your OneDrive account.

UPLOAD FILES

Uploading your files to the OneDrive cloud is as easy as copying them to the OneDrive folder on your computer's File Explorer. Here's how:

1. Open File Explorer (Windows + E).
2. Browse to the file that you want to upload to OneDrive.
3. Right-click on the target file and select **copy** from the horizontal menu.
4. Move to the Navigation pane on the left side of the File Explorer window and right-click on OneDrive.
5. From the menu that opens, click on **paste**.
6. The folder or file that you paste to the OneDrive folder will automatically make its way to the OneDrive cloud storage (OneDrive.com) reserved for your Microsoft Account.

You can use the special OneDrive folder on your PC to move or copy any of your files to your OneDrive. This is useful if you are going to be away from your computer but still require access to a file. Because the OneDrive is accessible anywhere you have web access, you can view and work with your file without using your computer.

SHARE A ONEDRIVE LINK

To share a file or folder with someone, you can generate a sharing link on OneDrive. OneDrive automatically generates this link and stores it on the Clipboard. (You will want to activate the Windows 11 clipboard via Settings, then Clipboard). You can paste it anywhere you want, for example, in an email message. If you share a file, anyone who receives the link can edit that file; if you share a folder, anyone who receives the link can view that folder.

Here's how to quickly generate a sharing link on OneDrive and share it with others:

1. Open OneDrive.
2. Browse to the OneDrive file or folder that you want to share.
3. Right-click the file or folder you want to share.
4. In the menu that appears, click Share a OneDrive link. A notification appears showing that the link is ready to paste.
5. Open the email app where you want to use this link.
6. Paste the link into that app and send the link to the intended person.

STOP ONEDRIVE FROM STARTING AUTOMATICALLY

If you don't plan to use OneDrive regularly, you can stop it from running automatically each time you start and sign into Windows 11.

Follow these steps:

1. Right-click on the taskbar, click Task Manager.
2. In the next view, click on Startup Apps.
3. Right-click the OneDrive shortcut. The right-click menu appears.
4. Click Disable.