

Computer Tips

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Backing Up Your Data—2

Continuing our discussion on what to backup when backing up your data...

Aside from your documents, photos, emails, and program data, some also suggest backing up your Windows operating system. Unless it is part of a complete hard drive image, backing up your Windows files is not necessary, as you can always reinstall your Windows operating system.

This brings us to what type of data backup should you be doing. There are several backup methods, each with their pros and cons. What type of backup you do, will depend on what type of storage device you will be using for your backup. Lets go through these now.

Your current Hard drive. One way to backup your data is to create a folder on your current hard drive, called Backup, and copy all your photos, documents, music and videos to that folder. This type of backup will help if your Windows becomes corrupt, and the default locations for your photos, documents, etc is lost. But simply backing up your personal information to another location the same hard drive has a few risks. What if the hard drive fails? What if a virus corrupts the entire file system? Any folder within that file system will also become inaccessible, including your backup folder.

Another Partition. A better option is to backup your data to use the same hard drive, but create a separate partition, away from your main Windows installation. This way any corruption, virus, or spyware will not affect your backup. Some ASUS laptops have their hard drives partitioned already this way, giving you a separate data partition for storage and backup. While this way of backing up your data is better, it is not perfect. What if the hard drive itself were to fail. Then you have lost both the Windows and the data backup partition.

An External Hard Drive. The best way of backing up your data is the using an external hard drive, giving a separate location away from your main hard drive to store your data. There are many brands of external backup drives, some better than others, but all perform the same function. Some drives come with backup software preinstalled. We prefer to perform a manual backup, or use the built-in Windows backup options, as we have seen corrupt or incomplete backups created with third-party programs. External drives come in 3 main sizes—500GB, 1TB (1000GB) or 2TB (2000GB). These sizes are sufficient for most backup purposes. *To be continued...*

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