



## What is a Data Backup?

- WinZip
- WinZip Enterprise

**Note:** a **WinZip Pro** or **WinZip Enterprise** license is required to use WinZip Backups

*This article may be useful to anyone considering any type of data backup. The included information, however, is specific to WinZip Backups.*

A **data backup** is the result of copying or archiving files and folders for the purpose of being able to restore them in case of data loss.

Data loss can be caused by many things ranging from computer viruses to hardware failures to file corruption to fire, flood, or theft (etc). If you are responsible for business data, a loss may involve critical financial, customer, and company data. If the data is on a personal computer, you could lose financial data and other key files, pictures, music, etc that would be hard to replace.

As part of a data backup plan, you should consider the following:

- What data (files and folders) to back up
- What compression method to use
- How often to run your backups
- What type of backups to run\*
- What kind of media on which to store the backups
- Where to store the backup data for safekeeping

\*For information about types of backups to consider, along with examples of possible data backup strategies, see [Backup types and strategy examples](#). You may also want to see the scenarios listed in [Restoring Data from Backups](#).

## **What data should I back up?**

In general, you should back up any work or data that can't be replaced easily. Some examples are word processing documents, spreadsheets, databases (for financial data), customer data, and personal files such as pictures, music files, emails, etc.

As a rule of thumb, do not back up programs or system folders. Programs will need to be reinstalled before you can run them, and system folders can be restored from your operating system install disc. Be sure to save program installation discs, operating system discs, and registration information in a safe place. If you have downloaded any of your applications, you should save the installation files whenever possible.

## **What compression method should I use?**

You can use **Best method** compression with any or your backups. This will ensure that your Zip files will be as small as possible. If you have a preferred compression method or if you would like the Zip files to be created more quickly, you have the option to choose a different method.

Please keep in mind that some files won't compress very much. For backups that include highly compressed files, such as music files, video files, and many install files, you may want to choose a compression method of **Super fast** or even **No compression**. These will be much quicker at creating your Zip file backups.

## How often should I run my backups?

The frequency to run your backups depends on how often the data changes.

- Business data that changes frequently may need daily or hourly backups
- Data that changes every few days might use a weekly or even monthly backup
- For some data, you might run your backup whenever you make a change

WinZip Backups allow you to schedule your backups to run automatically at specified times, so that you don't have to remember to run them manually. However, you may want to get in the habit of running certain backups, like a backup of your pictures, manually right after you add new files.

## What kind of media should I use, and where should I store my backups?

We won't fully address these two questions since they are beyond the scope of WinZip. However, you can store your backup Zip files on any file storage media you have available. The most common examples for a home user would be an additional local hard drive, an external hard drive, optical discs (CDs, DVDs, or Blu-ray discs), or flash drives. Keep in mind that you should not store backups on the same hard drive as the files that you're backing up. If you do and anything happens to that hard drive, you will have lost both the originals and the backups. The wizard used for WinZip Backups makes it easy to create archives on another hard drive, a network folder, a cloud service, or on optical discs.

A best practice for storing backups is to keep a copy of the backup files on-site (in your home or office) for easy access and a copy off-site in case of fire, flood, or other damage to your location which could damage or destroy the on-site backup copy.

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