



## Backups Part 1

*That Thing you mean to do ....by Ed Mueller*

Backing up the files on your computer is something people always say they mean to do but don't end up doing it. Some people do manage to do it occasionally, but that may be of little help when an unscheduled full scale PC disaster strikes.

It's important to briefly discuss why backups are so important. There are several things that can happen that will cause you to need to rely on a good backup.

1. **Fire.** It's not a pleasant thought, but it does happen.
2. **Break-in.** Your PC is stolen and with it your files.
3. **Hard drive crash.** The hard drive in your computer, where your files are stored is a moving metallic disk that has a motor that can fail. In fact manufacturers of hard drives produce a MTBF (Mean Time Between Failure) specification for every hard drive.
4. **Virus or Malicious Program.** You some how got a program on your PC that has wiped out everything. This happens often, especially to people who download a lot and have out-of-date antivirus programs.
5. **Accidental Deletion.** This happens to all of us. You thought you were deleting one thing, but you deleted something different.
6. **Audit.** Not anything anyone wants, but maybe you need to go back a couple of years in you files for some reason. A good electronic copy saves a lot of time over searching through paper.

So we know there are good reasons for backups, so why don't we all backup? Maybe we don't have the hardware? The answer is usually yes, yes we do. Backups can be done using a CD Writer, DVD Writer, USB Hard Drive, or USB Key (larger capacity versions). It's safe to say the majority of PCs today have at least a CD Writer and in most cases a DVD Writer.

Here is a breakdown of the merits of each method:

Method	Capacity	Speed	Re-usable	Cost
CD-R Disc	700mb	3.6Mb/Sec	No	\$0.80/gb
USB Key	2gb+ (typical)	8Mb/Sec	Yes	\$10/gb
DVD-R Disc	8.5Gb (dual layer)	10.8Mb/Sec	No	\$0.15/gb
USB Hard drive	320gb+ (typical)	66Mb/Sec	Yes	\$0.04/gb

USB Hard drives are the clear winner, when a choice is available. USB hard drives cost the least to run, have the most capacity, and most importantly can be taken offsite (to work, to the neighbors or relatives) for safe keeping (good to protect against fires and break ins!).

Once you have a backup device and media (where required) the key is to setup an automated backup schedule that way the backups happen regularly without relying on you ☺ If you own Windows XP Pro or Vista Premium Microsoft has included a backup program located on your Start Menu under Programs -> Accessories -> system tools -> Backup. The Windows backup tool allows for scheduled backups of your pc and other on your network!

If you do not have a backup program ask us about Genie-Soft ( see right column).

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### PSI Networks

Recommends the

Award-winning  
Genie-Soft Backup Manager



Which features:

**Ease of Use:** To simplify things, GBM scans your system for important data such as emails, photos, media, Windows settings, Favorites and so forth. Now there is no need to search for your important data, GBM finds it for you before it is too late.

**On-the-Fly Backup:** Mirroring and incremental backups are executed swiftly on-the-fly with enhanced and **smart indexing** of files based on a **timestamp** comparison instead of the traditional archive bit comparison that may lead to missed files that should otherwise have been part of the backup. Backup is performed using the quick and efficient 64-bit Zip archive engine that can encrypt the archive up to 256-bit in one simple and single process.

**Backup to virtually any media:** USB Harddrives, Zip, REV, NAS, CD-R, CD-RW, DVD±RW, DVD±R, DVD-RAM, Blu-ray, HD-DVD discs or directly to CD/DVDs using **packet writing** support.



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always have a backup plan