

## How should I back up?

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For starters, any backup is better than no backup. But if you're planning to start off safeguarding your data, you might as well do it right. Typical options are:

### **Back up to removable media (CD/DVD/USB)**

While this might work for really small amounts of data, it is not automatic (relies on human intervention). Typically, you take a full backup each time (not just the changes), and most importantly, the data is often still on-site. In case of a disaster, your backups are of little help!

### **External Hard Drives**

are a better option to CD/DVD/USB as they can store larger amounts of data and are more reliable. However they still rely on human intervention and taking a full backup each time.

### **Back up to tape**

Enough has been written about the pitfalls of tape backups – from people running into burning buildings to recover tapes they never bothered sending offsite to stolen tapes with credit card details to tape deterioration that was discovered when a customer needed to restore his data. Besides, tape restores are cumbersome and require system admin intervention even if all you want is to restore a single file before that meeting in the afternoon.

**The best option, really, is backing up 'Disk to Disk (D2D)' ...**

### **Back up to an on-site machine (backup server)**

Certainly an improvement! As long as you have the right software, you should be able to backup automatically, incrementally and securely, and restore painlessly and quickly. But bear in mind that your data is still 'on-site'. In case of a natural disaster / calamity / theft / vandalism, that's of no help unless you're replicating your data to a remote server...

### **Back up to a remote server (online backup)**

The safest of the lot since your data is off-site and there is an online backup service provider focused on facilitating your backup & restore operations. However there will be a monthly fee attached.