Backup ideas for personal computers

Sharing backup info ChemIT staff have come across which may help others backing up their personal computers.

See also

- Backup cloud services like Google and DropBox.com

Backing up your valuable data is critical

- You make a mistake and delete or change a file.
- Your laptop is stolen.
- Your hard drive fails. It's not a question of "if", only a question of "when":
  - https://www.backblaze.com/blog/hard-drive-reliability-update-september-2014/

KEY TAKE-HOME: If particular data is important to you, you must have it in more than one place. No single location you own can be considered sufficient.

- Secured copies of your valuable data in different locations keeps your data safe!
- If you don't have a copy of your valuable data, DO SO NOW, even if manual.
  - Do this anyway you can, just do it! USB thumb drive or removable drive, sync folders (Box.com, OneDrive, etc), emailing yourself key files, etc. Then set up on-going backups, per below.

Doing personal backups can usually be easy

1. Establish an automatic method for backups.
   - See below for Cornell-funded services good for doing this.
   - If you have to think about copying files, such as manually copying files to a USB drive when you think of it, "it's not backup".
2. Verify your backups, perhaps with calendar entry reminders to check.
   a. Often, with cloud-based sync services such as the Cornell-funded services below, this is easy.

Examples using Cornell-funded services

These are cloud-based, sync client-enabled services, similar to Dropbox.com.

NOTE: For students and many others, these services go away when you leave Cornell.

- OneDrive for Business (as of Dec 2015, not ideal for Mac users)
  - About:
    - http://www.it.cornell.edu/services/onedrive/
  - Login:
    - http://outlook.cornell.edu/
- Box (good for Macs or Windows)
  - About:
    - http://www.it.cornell.edu/services/box/
  - Login:
    - http://cornell.box.com/

Information for those who no longer have access to Cornell-funded services

Examples some folks have had experience with

- CrashPlan
- Do you have one you'd recommend? Notify Chemistry IT to add it to this list!

Other examples we'd like to hear others have had experience with

- https://www.backblaze.com/best-online-backup-service.html

Other resources

Mac users can especially benefit from this one-page cheat-sheet, or get the entire book:

- http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/backing-up

Guide from a vendor:

- https://www.backblaze.com/data-backup/backup-your-computer.html

See also

- Hard disk recovery options
- Reducing hard drive failures and consequences on server