

Backing up your files under Windows XP



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Abstract

Procedures for saving copies of online files under Windows.

This publication is available in Web form¹ and also as a PDF document². Please forward any comments to tcc-doc@nmt.edu.

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1. Why back up your files?

It's a good idea to save your files offline periodically. The Tech Computer Center backs up user files daily, but accidents can happen. Hard disk drives are not to be trusted. Having two or three copies of important work, preferably in different locations, can give you a lot of peace of mind.

2. Backing up to CD-R

To make backup copies of your files on a CD-R, follow these instructions.

1. Find a workstation in Speare 5 that has a CD-R drive. These machines all have two CD drives. At this writing, machines **speare5-1-2** and **speare5-1-3** are so equipped. The User Consultant can help you find the right machine.
2. If the workstation is not in Windows XP, reboot it. From the Fedora login screen, click on the *Reboot* button along the bottom of the screen. From the "GNU GRUB" screen, select the *Windows XP* entry with the down-arrow or up-arrow keys, and press *Enter*.
3. Log in to Windows XP with your TCC user name and password.
4. Load a blank CD-R into the CD-R drive.
5. From the *Start* menu, select *My Computer*.
6. Select the files or folders you want to back up. If all your files will fit on a single CD-R, you can simply go to your U: structure and use *Edit* → *Select All*.

¹ <http://www.nmt.edu/tcc/help/pubs/cdr-xp/>

² <http://www.nmt.edu/tcc/help/pubs/cdr-xp/cdr-xp.pdf>

To back up selected files, navigate through your files and folders, using *Control*-click to select or unselect the folders or files you want to save.

7. Check to be sure that your backup will fit on the storage media. A CD-R will hold about 640 megabytes. To see how much space your backup will occupy, right-click on any of your selected files, and select *Properties*. You will see the number of files selected and the total space requirements. (This may take a few minutes if you have a lot of data.)

If you've selected more files than will fit, you will need to back them up in separate pieces. Reduce your selection, checking the space requirements with the *Properties* menu, until your selection will fit.

8. Now that you have selected the files and folders you want to save, select *File* → *Send To*. You will see a submenu showing all the places you can send the selected files. Select the CD-R drive from this menu; it will probably have a letter something like E: or F:.

Your files will be copied to a staging area before burning to CD. This may take a few minutes if you have a lot of data.

9. When your files are copied to the staging area for the CD-R drive, a balloon will appear at the bottom right corner of the screen saying "You have files waiting to be written to the CD. To see the files now, click this balloon." If you are ready to burn the CD, click the balloon.

If you are not ready to burn the CD-R, you can always get back to the burn step by navigating back to the top-level *My Computer* menu and clicking on the icon for the CD-R drive.

10. In the window for the CD-R drive, assuming you have a blank CD-R in the drive, you will see an icon labeled *Files Ready to Be Written to the CD*. Under the *CD Writing Tasks* menu, select *Write these files to CD*.
11. A *CD Writing Wizard* window will appear. Edit the *CD Name* field to give your CD-R a name. Names can be up to 16 characters long and cannot contain any of the characters "\/:*?|<>".
12. Click the *Next* button. It will take a few minutes to write the CD.
13. When the CD has finished writing, the drawer will open automatically. Click *Finish* on the *CD Writing Wizard*. Remove the CD and be sure to label it with a Sharpie or other permanent marker so you'll know what is on it.

3. Backing up to USB storage

Another option for file backup is one of the small storage devices that has a USB jack at one end. These are generally small enough to fit easily in a pocket and hold anywhere from a few dozen megabytes to gigabytes.

To copy files from your account to a USB backup, follow these steps.

1. Find a workstation that has a USB jack on its front panel. If you are unfamiliar with this connector, the User Consultant will help you.

If the workstation is running Linux, refer to the previous section for instructions on rebooting into Windows XP.

2. Log in to Windows XP using your TCC user name and password.
3. Plug your USB device into the USB jack. A popup will appear that says "Found New Hardware/Flash Disk".
4. From the *Start* menu, select *My Computer*.


You will see an icon labeled "Removable Disk (G:)", or possibly a different drive letter such as H: or F:, depending on the workstation's hardware configuration.

If you aren't sure how much space remains on your USB device, you can click on the *Details* submenu on the left side to see the remaining capacity.

5. Navigate normally through the *My Computer* panel, starting with your U: drive where all your files are kept. Select the files you want to save using *Shift*-click. (If you change your mind, you can unselect a file with another *Shift*-click.)

If you're not sure whether the files you have selected will fit on your storage device, you can click on the *Details* menu on the left sidebar to show the storage requirements of the files you've selected.

6. Under *File and Folder Tasks*, select *Copy the selected items*.
7. In the *Copy Items* panel, select the icon for the USB device that you noted in Step 4 (p. 2). Then click the *Copy* button.
8. When you're through copying files to the USB device, look in the bottom right corner of your taskbar

for the *Safely Remove Hardware* icon, which looks like this: 

Click on this icon and it will display a list of the removable drives. Find the USB drive's letter and select it.

When the balloon appears saying it is safe to remove it, you can unplug your USB device.

To restore files from a USB device, use the same procedure, but select the files on the USB and use *Copy Items* to the desired destination in your U: drive.

