

How to Set Up Dropbox Storage

Modern computer users frequently work across multiple computers and devices. Even people who don't consider themselves technophiles might use a computer at home, a different computer at work, and a smartphone on the side. If you have documents you want to access in all these places, it gets frustrating making sure you always have the latest version of your documents on hand.

Dropbox lets you access your files no matter what computer or device you're on. Essentially, you have a folder on your computer called Dropbox. The Dropbox app monitors that folder and keeps a backup copy of its contents on the web. You then have access to current copies of everything in your Dropbox from any other computer or device on which you're running Dropbox. It's also a handy way to make sure your files are always in a safe location. If you lose your internet connection, the files are stored on your computer; if your computer dies, the web has backup copies. You can also share your DropBox files with friends who have DropBox.

Setting up Dropbox isn't complicated, but some folks can find it intimidating. Essentially, you just download the Dropbox app to your computer or device, create your account, make sure you can log into Dropbox on the web, and then add the service to any phones or tablets you use. The number of things you can do with Dropbox makes it worth taking the time to set up.

Start At The Website

The first step in setting up your Dropbox is to go to the Dropbox website.

There, you'll see a video extolling the features of the program and a big, Download Dropbox button. Press that, and you'll instantly be taken to a screen with easy instructions on how to install Dropbox on your computer. These instructions are customized for whichever operating system and browser you're using; the instructions will look different if you're using Chrome or Firefox, for example, since those two browsers have different interfaces for downloading.

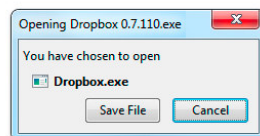


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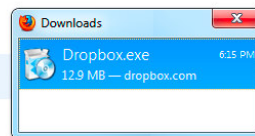
Downloading Dropbox...

Your Dropbox download should automatically start within seconds. If it doesn't, [restart the download](#).



1. Save the Dropbox application

Click Save File when prompted.



2. Open the Dropbox Installer

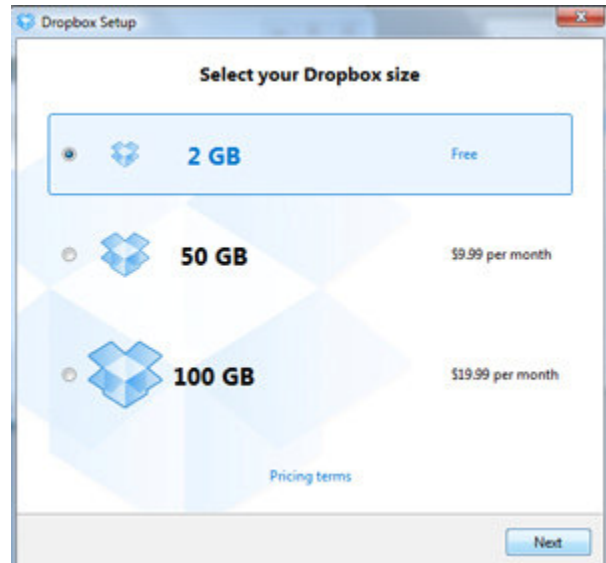
From your browser's Downloads window, double click the .exe file that just downloaded.



3. Follow Setup Instructions

Follow the instructions to get Dropbox set up on your computer and you will be good to go!

Once you've installed the Dropbox app on your computer, you will be asked if you have a Dropbox account. If you're using this guide, you probably don't already have an account, so choose "I don't have a Dropbox account." The app will guide you through creating your account; you'll need to enter your name and email address and choose a password. You'll also be asked for a Dropbox-specific nickname for your computer; most computers should already have some kind of name by default. However, if you want to be more creative with your computer name, the sky's the limit. Choosing a nickname in Dropbox *will not* alter your computer's setup, this is just so Dropbox can label files when you upload them.

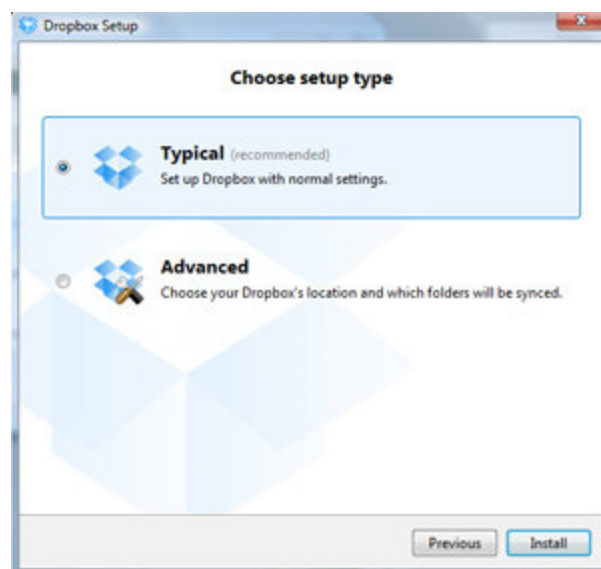


After entering your basic credentials, Dropbox will ask what amount of storage space you need. The free option is 2GB. 50GB costs \$9.99 per month, and 100GB is \$19.99 per month. Since you're creating your account for the first time and testing to see if you like the service, start with a 2GB free account. You can upgrade later if you need to. After choosing the amount of storage, you'll choose your setup type.

Which Folders to Sync

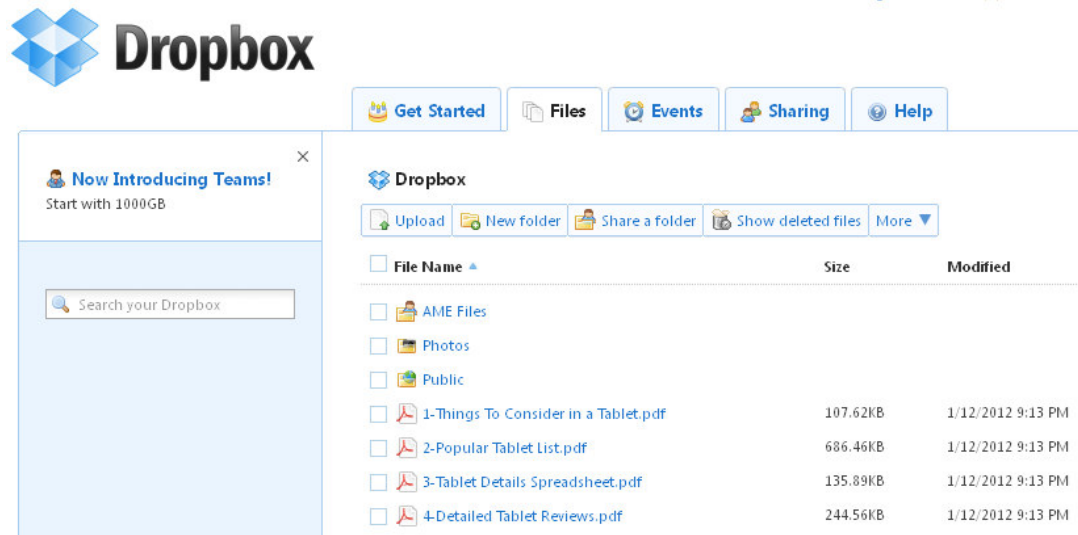
The difference between Typical or Advanced setup has to do with how Dropbox syncs the files between your online storage and your computer's hard drive. With Advanced setup, you can specifically choose which folders in your Dropbox are mirrored on your computer. For example, if you have music in your Dropbox that you don't want to copy to a particular computer, you can choose Advanced to keep that from happening.

If you go with a Typical setup, the entirety of your Dropbox storage will be mirrored to the computer.



Once Dropbox is installed it will create by default two folders, one called Photos and one called Public. You do not want to store your private documents in the Public folder as it is available for anybody on Dropbox to see. You will want to create a new folder for sharing your backup files with others.

Access Your Dropbox On The Web



You can access your Dropbox from any computer. Just log in to your account at the Dropbox website. As soon as you've entered your credentials, you'll be able to see all of your files in a list. You can navigate through your folder, similar to how you would on your computer. Choose Upload to move files from the computer into your Dropbox space.

It's a good idea to validate your online account access even before you add Dropbox to a second computer or even your smartphone.

Add Dropbox to Mobile Device

Dropbox has apps available for the iPhone, iPad, BlackBerry, and Android devices. Adding Dropbox to your mobile device is just as easy. Simply download the app to your mobile device and fire it up. You'll be asked to log in to your account. As soon as you've done so, you'll be able to see all your files. If your phone is capable of displaying those files, you can view them right from the Dropbox app.

Dropbox mobile

Apps for iPhone, iPad, Android, and BlackBerry keep your Dropbox at hand, even on the go.

- Bring your files with you when you're on the go.
- Edit files in your Dropbox from your phone.
- Easily upload your photos and videos to Dropbox.
- Share freely with family and friends.

Now Use It!

Once you've downloaded the app to your various computers and devices, you'll be able to start using it right away. It's a great way to back up important files and make sure you can access those files anywhere. You can add Dropbox to as many computers and devices as you'd like, which is much more convenient than constantly emailing files back and forth or fumbling with portable storage.

Your Stuff is Safe

Dropbox protects your files without you needing to think about it.

- Dropbox keeps a one-month history of your work.
- Any changes can be undone, and files can be undeleted.
- Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) and AES-256 bit encryption.

Simple Sharing

Shared folders allow people to work together on the same projects and documents.

- Invite friends, family or teammates to a folder. It'll be as if you saved the folder to their computers.
- See other people's changes instantly.
- Create photo galleries viewable by anyone you choose.
- Send a link to any file in your Dropbox using the Public folder.

How do I share folders with other people?

Dropbox lets you share your folders with others by creating a new shared folder or sharing an existing one. Once you add other members to the folder, it will appear in your friends or colleagues' own Dropbox just as it does in yours. Any changes made to the shared folder's contents will appear instantaneously to everyone who is a member of the folder.

Create a New Shared Folder

To create a new shared folder from the Dropbox website, click on the **Share a folder** button from the **Files** or **Sharing** tab of your Dropbox account.

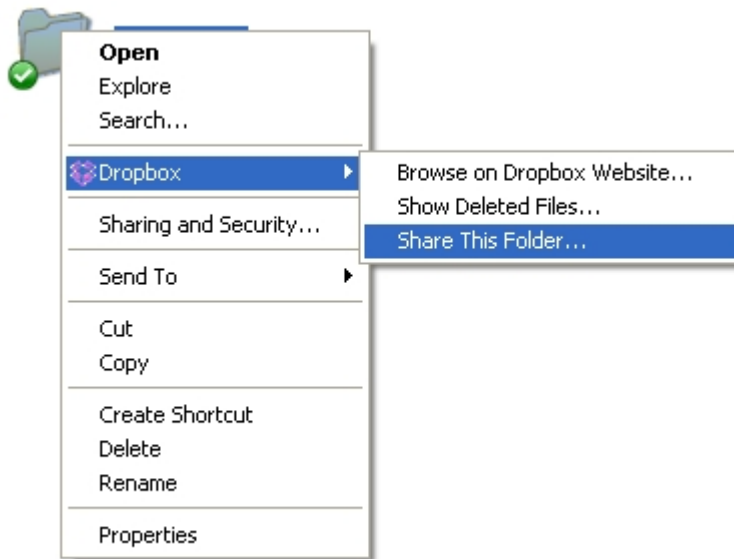
Share an Existing Folder

To share an existing folder, the folder has to be in your Dropbox folder. You can create a folder in your Dropbox folder just as you would anywhere else on your hard drive.

Using the Dropbox Desktop on Windows XP

1. Open your Dropbox folder
2. Right-click on the folder you want to share. This displays a drop-down menu
3. Select **Dropbox > Share This Folder...** This will send you to the sharing page on the Dropbox website

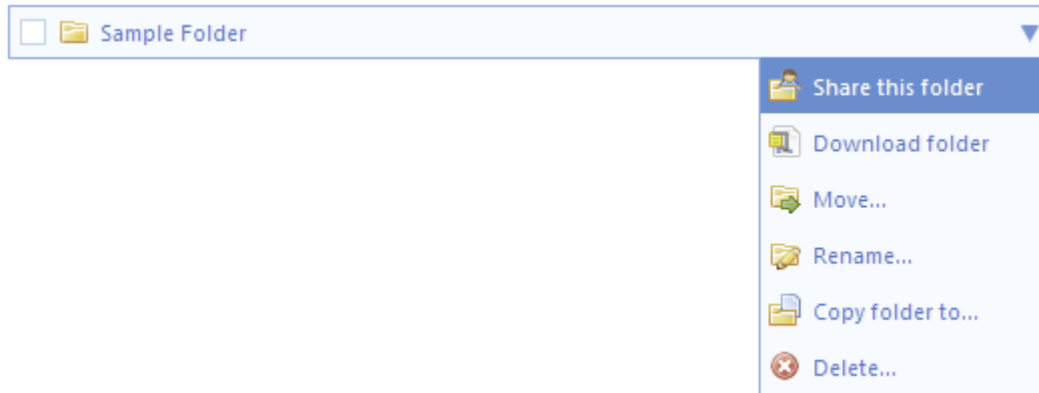
Select **Share This Folder...** from the contextual menu



4. Enter the email addresses of whomever you want to add to your shared folder
5. Add a personal message if you'd like and click **Share folder**

Using the Dropbox Website

1. Log in to your account and locate the folder you want to share
2. Move your mouse over the folder. Click on the triangle that appears when the folder is highlighted.
3. Choose **Share this folder** from the drop-down menu



Select *Share This Folder* from the website drop-down menu

4. Enter the email addresses of whomever you want to add to your shared folder
5. Add a personal message if you'd like and click *Share folder*

When you share a folder in one of the ways described above, Dropbox will immediately send email invitations to the addresses you provided. These invitations tell the recipients that you've shared a folder with them and gives them a link to accept your invite.

Once they accept your invitation, the folder will appear in their Dropbox account.

For Our Advanced Users

- You can't share a folder from within your Public folder
- You can't share a folder inside another shared folder. The folder is already shared
- Anyone you've invited to a folder can then add, delete or change files within that folder
- Anyone you've invited to a folder can then invite others to join the folder
- Only the creator of the shared folder can remove people from the folder
- If two people both open and edit a file in a shared folder at the same time, Dropbox will save both of their changes, but in separate files. It does not try to automatically combine or merge changes.

How secure is Dropbox?

Your files are actually safer while stored in your Dropbox than on your computer in some cases. Dropbox takes the security of your files and their software very seriously. Your files are backed-up, stored securely, and password-protected.

Other Dropbox users can't see your private files in Dropbox unless you deliberately invite them or put them in your Public folder. Everything in your Public folder is, by definition, accessible to anyone.

Dropbox employees are prohibited from viewing the content of files you store in your Dropbox account, and are only permitted to view file metadata (e.g., file names and locations).

Dropbox uses modern encryption methods to both transfer and store your data.

- Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) and AES-256 bit encryption
- Dropbox website and client software have been hardened against attacks from hackers
- Public files are only viewable by people who have a link to the file(s). Public folders are not browseable or searchable

Dropbox uses Amazon's Simple Storage Service (S3) for storage, which has a robust security policy of its own.

How do I add files to my Dropbox?

When you install the Dropbox desktop application, it creates a new folder on your computer. It works like any other folder on your hard drive, except everything in your Dropbox folder automatically syncs to the web and to any other computer with Dropbox installed.

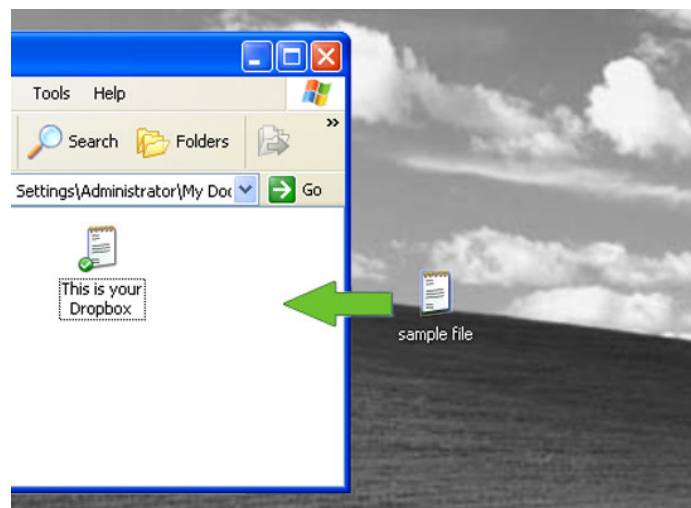
It's easy. **Move your files into your Dropbox by dragging and dropping them into your Dropbox folder.** That's it. The files you dropped in will automatically be backed up online and synced to your other computers. You don't have to do anything. You can even save files directly to your Dropbox folder from any application.

Dropbox is better than a network drive. Files in your Dropbox stay on your computer's hard drive, so you can always access your files even if you are offline. Dropbox works in the background and will automatically sync any new changes the next time you are online.

On Windows XP

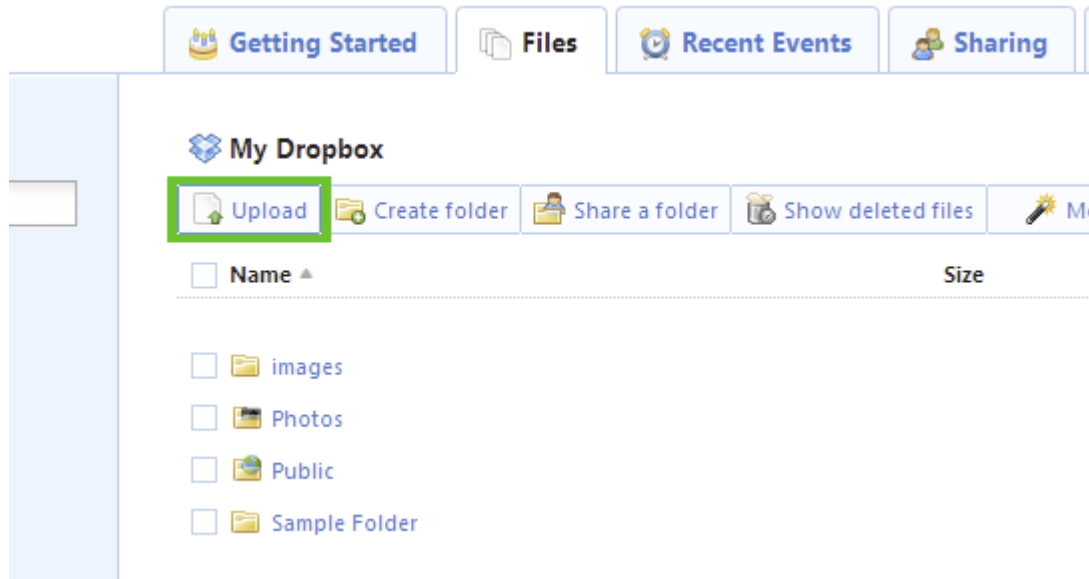
After installation on Windows, a *My Dropbox* folder will be located inside your *My Documents* folder by default.

Drag your files directly into your Dropbox



Add files using the website

1. Log in to the Dropbox website.
2. Using the interactive file browser, click the **Upload** button. A window will appear.



The upload window

3. Click the **Choose Files** button and then select the files on your computer that you'd like to add to your Dropbox.
4. Choose as many files as you like, and then click the **Start Upload** button.

The window will disappear, your files will start uploading, and you'll be shown a progress indicator. That's it, you've added files to your Dropbox!