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Articles

Data Recovery Tips and Tricks

Data loss is a plague that can hit anyone and anytime, regardless of technical prowess, handling care, operating system or hardware configuration. In many cases, data loss is caused by factors that are out of our reach and unfortunately, in some of these cases data recovery is impossible. A burnt out hard disk is the clearest example that comes to mind. It's often not your fault that it breaks down and data recovery is impossible. This is a rare case still and most data loss problems can be fixed with the help of data recovery tools, professional software, some technical knowledge and a bit of common sense. Let's go through a few data recovery tips and tricks that might help you recover those accidentally deleted files and keep you from deleting them again.

Backup, backup and more backup!

Constant and organized backup is the only way you can save some data that would be otherwise impossible to recover, due to a physical problem like the one described above. But backing up data is not as easy as it seems at first glance. First of all, you need to organize a backup system, like copying your essential data from your hard disk to CDs, flash disks, DVDs or another external destination.

One thing that will prove very useful is keeping all your data on a small number of different external destinations. If you burn each document or excel file you create on a different disk as backup and you'll need it later on, there's two things that can go wrong: A. You won't find the specific disk within the sea of disks where you keep your backup and B. The disk may get physically damaged itself after a while. Try keeping everything on a single DVD (you can burn data on a disk and leave it open for future burning), assuming 4.7 GB are enough for what most people consider essential data on their computers. Also make a backup for the backup, just in case something bad happens to it, like a spilt can of coffee on the DVD drawer (way more common than you might think!)

Using data recovery software vs. using the services of a professional data recovery company

The decision is yours to make, but unless you absolutely know what you're doing and know how to use the data recovery software by yourself, it's best if you employ a professional company to do it for you. Don't build a technical ego just because you managed to install Windows by yourself, with data recovery, you'll be dealing with much more sensitive matters. If you fumble up your Windows installation process, you can simply start over. If you accidentally remove every chance of recovering a bunch of files, there's no turning back.

Use your operating system's data recovery options

Both Mac and PC operating systems such as OS/X or Windows have built-in data recovery tools that can be helpful in case of logical or human error-related data loss. Sometimes you'll find them easier to use than professional data recovery software, mainly because they're built under the same structure as the operating system, so you're already familiar with the interface. However, in what regards recovery options and efficiency, you can't compare the standard operating system tools with a professional data recovery program so if your data loss issue is more complex, you're probably better off using the latter.

[Back to Articles Section](#)