

Library & Information Technology Services

Protecting Your Data: Backing Up and Saving in Multiple Places

It's happened to all of us – something happens and, all of a sudden, you are unable to access any of the files on your computer. Since you cannot prevent the unexpected from happening, you should back up your files often, saving and storing them in multiple locations. This is especially important to do with things that are very important and irreplaceable (i.e. pictures, theses, grant proposals, etc).

On the Bryn Mawr Network:

All community members have a **Home Directory**, (on Windows, mapped to the H:drive on Bryn Mawr Computers). You can access your Home Directory from both on- and off-campus, using either a personal computer or one that is provided by the College.

College-owned PC (on-campus):

- Go to **Start > Computer**.
- Double click on drive H:. Use this drive as you would your hard drive or any external drive

College-owned Mac (on-campus):

- Look on the Dock, immediately to the right of the Divider to find a stack icon bearing your username. Click on this icon to view the contents.
- To save to this drive, look for a mounted drive called Home, then navigate to Home>username. How this appears will vary from version to version of Mac OS X.

Personal Computers and Off-campus Computers:

- Go to <http://ingress.brynmawr.edu> and log in with your College username and password.
- Here you can either access a few files quickly by navigating your network drives in the browser itself, or you can install the VPN client and map your network drives for longer-term access.
- For more information regarding using network drives from off-campus, please consult <http://techbar.blogs.brynmawr.edu/1019>.

If you are having trouble accessing your H:drive, please contact the Help Desk (x7440).

External Hard Drive

An external hard drive attaches to the computer via a USB, eSATA, Firewire, or Thunderbolt port, allowing files to be kept safe if the computer and/or main hard drive are damaged or compromised and providing transportation for very large files.

These come in multiple sizes and form factors and can be purchased at most office supply or computer stores. If you need advice about purchasing one, stop by the Help Desk and talk to a staff member.

Having an external hard drive on which to save copies of large files and completed projects is highly recommended. Some drives come with automatic backup software, as do some computers (especially Macs) — automatic backups are always a good idea.

USB Flash Drive

A Flash Drive or USB key is a small external storage device that will allow you to access your files on any computer. These are small enough to fit in a pocket or on a keychain and are ubiquitously available online, in any bookstore, electronics store or office supply store very inexpensively. They come in a variety of storage sizes depending on your needs, and in all kinds of colors and styles.

These are good for file transport or temporary everyday storage and everyone should have a few on hand. However, other methods should be used for archiving.

CD/DVD

You can burn CDs and DVDs on any of the public computers on campus.

Internet File Services

In recent years, services such as DropBox, Box.net, and Microsoft SkyDrive have become quite popular for file transport and sharing. Other services like Carbonite provide “cloud” based backups. They are quick, automated, and often accessible from any Web browser. Read the terms of service carefully to make sure that your data is guaranteed to be safe and confidential, you maintain full rights and ownership, and you will not be charged or lose access to your data unexpectedly.

These services are great and often free, but do not use them as your only backup. It is not recommended to store College data or any College records including grades, financial data, etc. on this type of service.