

Backups 9-5-2017

By Dick Evans, www.rwevans.com, dick.evans@yahoo.com

There are a number of ways to backup the information on your computer. And backing it up is very important. Some of the information on your computer may not be important, but there are some files you do not want to lose. Under Windows your information is stored in a folder with your name. When you click on the file folder icon on the taskbar your folders display in the right pane of File Manager.

Of course, you always have the option to save files in any folder available and even to create new folders to use. Applications can be set to save new files created in other than the default folders.

What needs to be backed up are folders you use to save files in. If you have a copy of all of them and something happens to your computer, you can grab your backup and get all your information back. At least all up to the date you did the backup. This is why frequent backups are important.

Any external device can be used to save a copy of your data. CD's can be used only hold 700mb of information. DVD's hold more. But better is to use a USB flash drive or external hard disk. 16gb flash drives only cost about \$10, so that might be the most cost effective way to save your data using File Manager.

With the entry of the "cloud" over the last few years, backup is easier and can happen automatically as you use your computer. However, this is only backing up your data files. What about the applications you have added?

At least once a month, I run an application called **Macrium Reflect** to make an image backup my computer. It copies the entire contents of the hard disk drives to a single compressed file on an external hard drive. It is built in such a way that a crashed hard drive can be replaced and the image used to restore everything to the new hard drive. The system works just the way it did on the day the image was made. You can also use the image to locate individual data files and restore them back.

However, anything you have done since the image is not anywhere except on your hard drive. So if you have an issue either with the hard drive or just a corrupted file, you have no way to get it back. Unless...

Many have been using USB flash drives to save their important data like tax forms and important letters. But this is only as good as the last time you remembered to update the flash drive.

There are many cloud storage web sites that allow you either for free or for a monthly fee upload anything to their cloud.

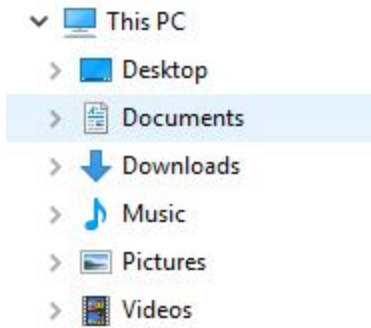
OneDrive comes with Windows 10 and has 5gb of free space. Anything you save to your OneDrive folder gets synced to the Microsoft Live cloud. The files remain on your PC in the OneDrive folder and a copy placed in the cloud.

Dropbox is another one. You get 2gb free and can up that to 1tb for \$99 per year. If you download the App to your PC, anything you save to your DropBox folder gets synced to your Dropbox account. The files remain on your PC in the Dropbox folder and a copy placed in the cloud.

I use **Google Photos** to store my photos. With a free Google account you have an unlimited amount of cloud to store all your photos. If you download their application to your PC, your photos will automatically be synced to their cloud. The image files remain on your PC and copies placed in the cloud.

Although I use all of the above, I automatically save my day-to-day data using **Mozy Free**. I don't have to drag anything to a special folder or even think about it. It just happens. So if I lose everything on my hard disk, I can restore it from my latest image using Reflect and then restore all my day-to-day data from Mozy. And I have had to do just that a couple of years ago when my hard disk crashed in my laptop.

Let's review again what I mean by data. Simply put, if it is not a program (application), it is information of some type. Your data is what needs to be backed up and you find it in folders under your user name. If you have multiple users on your PC, you need to backup each one.



Desktop contains all the items on your desktop--shortcuts and whatever else you have saved to the desktop.

Documents is where most programs save what they create, like Microsoft Office and LibreOffice. And if you are like most of the users I know, your data in this folder is generally only a few hundred megabytes.

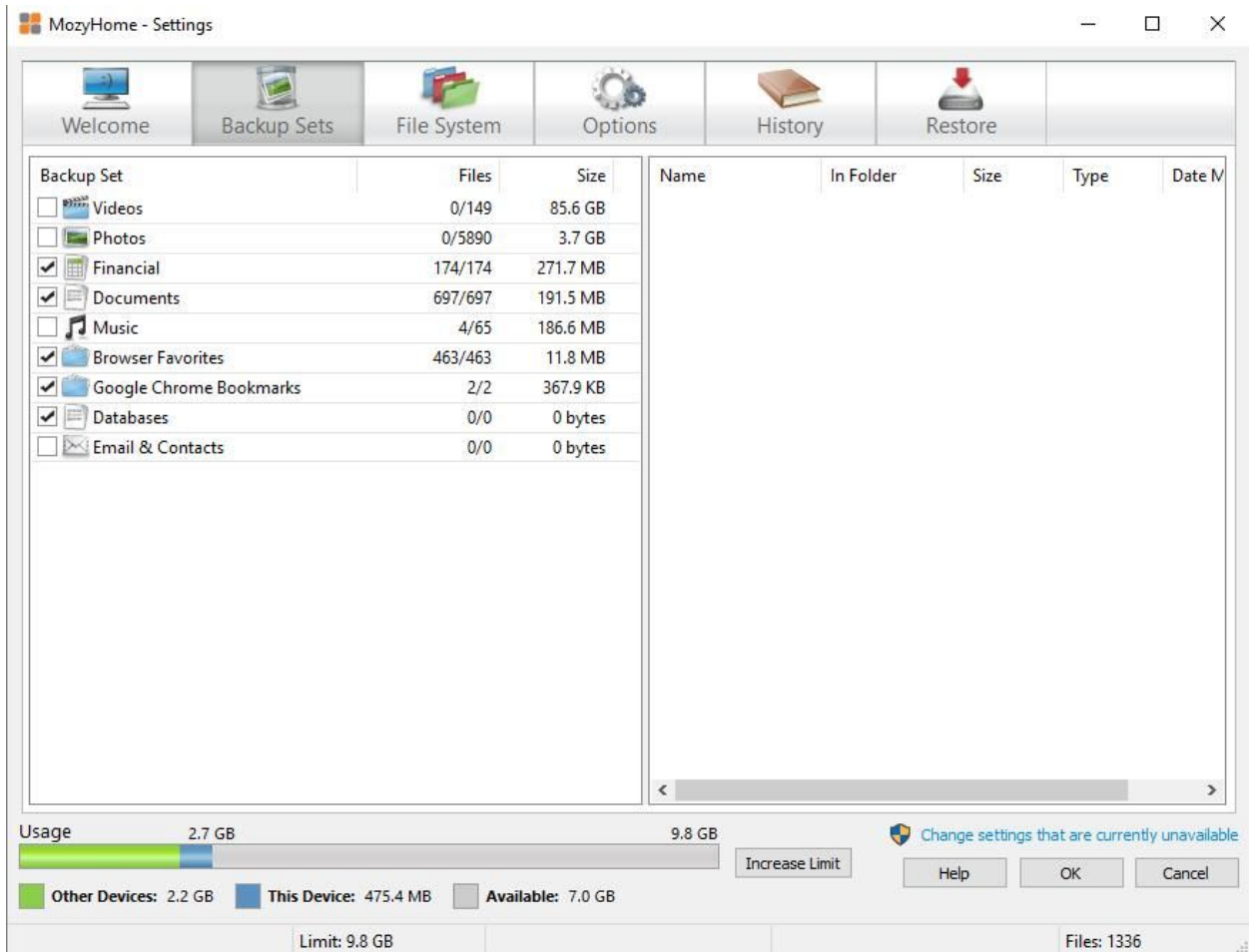
Downloads contains everything you have downloaded from the web. When something important is filed there it is a good idea to move it to a folder in Documents. That way you can easily find it and it will be backed up with Mozy.

Music can contain a large number of files and take up a good deal of space, but if you really want them backed up daily you can add an additional 50gb of space for \$5.99 a month. But remember that all your files, including your music are in your latest Reflect image backup. So if you just added a new album to your music library, make a new image and you will have it backed up without having Mozy do it.

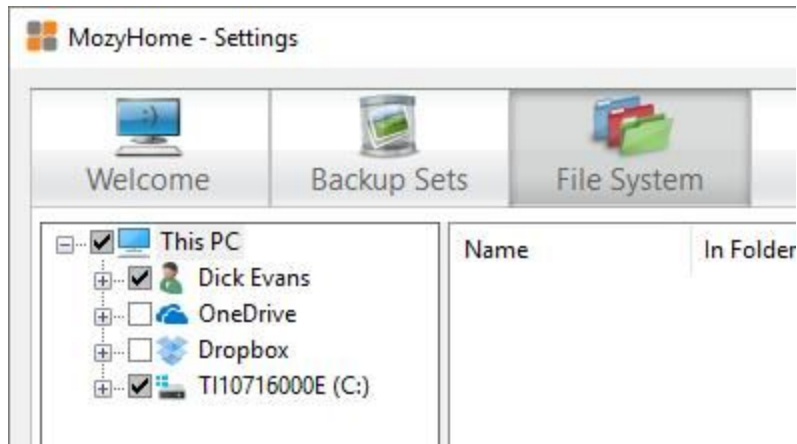
Pictures can take up the most room and I do not suggest using Mozy to back them up. I use [Google Photos](#) and have the App on my Cell Phone. Everytime I take a picture it uploads to my free cloud space in my Google account. And the space it takes does not count against the 15gb of free space every Google user receives. There is an App for the PC as well that will upload any pictures you have on your PC to Google Photos.

Videos can be super large especially if you are one that downloads movies to your hard drive. If you take short movies on your cell phone, they will be backed up to Google Photos if you are using that App on your phone. If you have a lot of movies on your hard drive, treat them like what I said about music. Do more frequent images with Reflect and do not use Mozy to store them. Better yet, stop downloading movies and use a free application like Kodi to stream them.

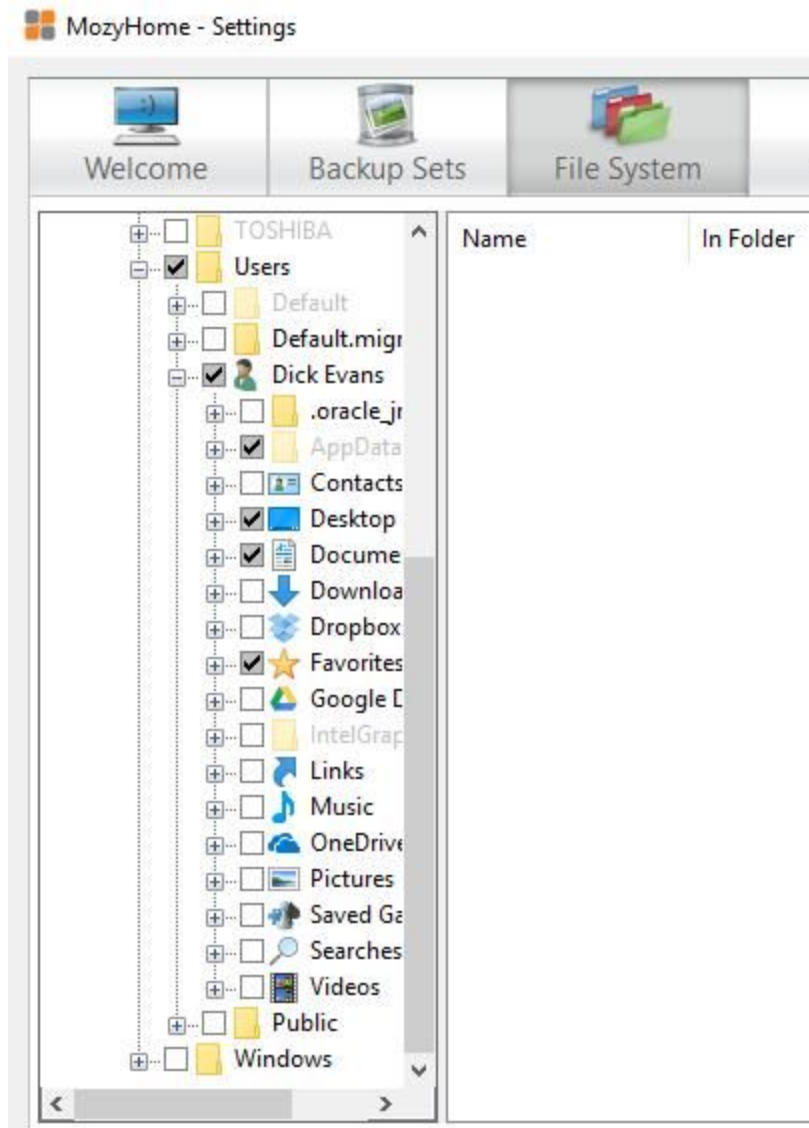
<http://mozy.com/free> use code GFBU22 and you will get an additional .25gb of free space for yourself and for me, too. Thanks.



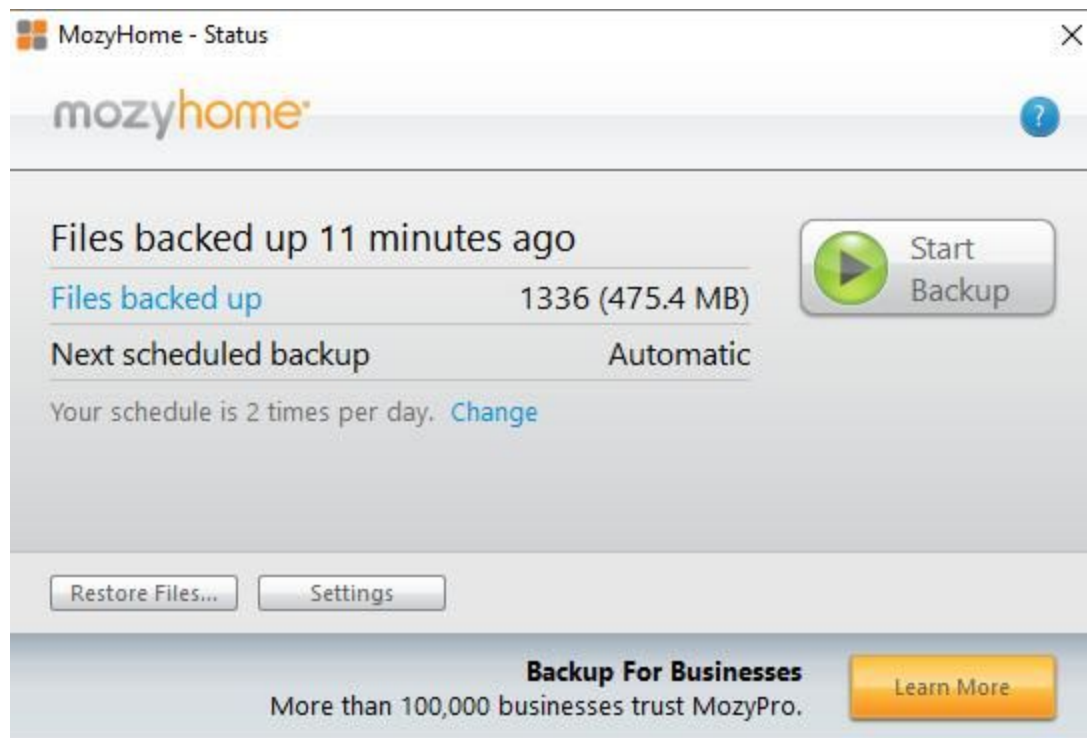
Once you have installed Mozy you get to determine the backup sets you want. Mozy will assume you want all data folders backed up and that will probably take more than the 2.25gb of free space. Uncheck what you do not need to have Mozy handle for you.



Open the File System list and then drill down on your User Name.



Now check the folders, even down to the file level of what you want Mozy to handle for you.



When Mozy runs, it displays a completion message showing you what it backed up for you. And from here you can go to settings and make changes.

Give it a try. It works great for me!