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Cool Tools Café: Cloud Storage Demonstration

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Living in the Cloud

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<http://bit.ly/aall13dropbox>

Benefits

- **Access** – Cloud services allow you to upload your documents to the internet. Once uploaded, you can easily access your documents from just about any device, including most mobile devices, and from nearly any location (home, work, and more).
- **Integration** -- Many of the services described below integrate into popular mobile apps like DocstoGo and GoodReader. Save a document to the service from your desktop or laptop, then read and/or edit it on your mobile device.
- **Share** – Cloud services allow you to share folders or individual documents. You can share with designated users, or make your document public for anyone to access.
- **Revisions** -- Many of these services track document revisions and document history.

Issues

- **Security** – Storing documents in comprehensive services like Google may make users more vulnerable because hackers who manage to break into a Gmail account will likely have access to that user's Google Docs, for example. Choose the service with the features that best match your needs.
- **Privacy** – When you upload a document to a cloud service, you are entrusting the privacy of that document to the company. Some services can encrypt documents, meaning a special code is needed to read them. But even encrypting doesn't ensure privacy. For example, Dropbox generates its encryption code on its own servers, meaning it is theoretically possible for Dropbox to read your documents. Documents stored on SpiderOak, on the other hand, are encrypted on the user's computer. SpiderOak does not have access to the code needed to read them. Also, the NSA may have access to files on some of these services
- **Permanence** – There is no way to be sure that the document you upload to a cloud service will always be available. If your Gmail account is compromised, for example, you may lose all of your documents. Additionally, if a service is suspected of supporting piracy, all of its servers may be shut down.

[Dropbox](#)

What you can do with DropBox:

- Store files (of course)
- Install a “Dropbox” folder on your desktop computer (need admin access)
- Share files with others
- See timeline of everything you’ve done in Dropbox
- Restore previous versions of files
- Backup photos & videos from your mobile device
- Create shared photo albums
- Get additional free storage

[10 Things You Didn't Know Dropbox Could Do](#)

Not enough? Here are [62 more Dropbox tips](#).

Pricing

Referring friends gets you an additional 1 GB storage. You don’t have to ask your friends outright -- Dropbox is not a Facebook game. When you share a file in Dropbox, invite others who need access to join Dropbox - and start racking up free space. If a few GB is not enough, then you can buy more space:

100 G - \$9.99/mo or \$99/year

200 G - \$19.99/mo or \$199/year

500 G - \$49.99/mo or \$499/year

There are enterprise solutions as well.

Encryption

Dropbox uses its own encryption, but some users like greater security. These services allow users to encrypt files uploaded into Dropbox:

- [TrueCrypt](#)
- [Boxcryptor](#)

Mobile

Dropbox is available for [many mobile platforms](#).

You can also save files to Dropbox directly from certain mobile applications.

Other services

Box.net (<http://box.net>)

Similar to DropBox; popular for its business applications.

- Free accounts: 5 GB (note that file sizes are limited to 250 MB).
- Paid accounts: 25 GB for \$9.99/month, 50 GB for \$19.99/month with file size up to 1 GB; larger-scale business and enterprise accounts with additional features also available.

Google Drive (<http://docs.google.com>)

Store and access docs in your Google account.

- Free accounts: 15 GB storage (note that Google now uses a unified storage accounts and your exact amount of space may depend on a variety of factors).
- Paid accounts: 100 GB for \$4.99/month (accounts up to 16 TB also available); file size limits vary depending on file type.

SugarSync (<http://sugarsync.com>)

Popular service for syncing folders from your computer to the cloud, making those files available from any location.

- Free: 5GB
- Paid: Plans start at 60 GB for \$7.49/month (\$74.99/year) up to 250 GB (\$24.99/month, \$249.99/year). Business plans available.

SpiderOak (<http://spideroak.com>)

Provides greater security than most other services; works more like a back-up service than a file storage service but web access is available. Includes secure file sharing services.

- Free accounts: 2 GB; can be increased with the referral program
- Paid accounts: 100 GB for \$10/mo (\$100/year). Enterprise accounts available.

iCloud (<http://icloud.com>)

Integrates cloud storage services into iOS and Mac software and applications; not as versatile as general apps like Box.net, DropBox, and SugarSync.

- Free: 5 GB
- Paid: 10GB for \$20/year, 20 GB for \$40/year, or 50 GB for \$100/year.

SkyDrive (<http://skydrive.live.com>)

Microsoft's storage service

- 7 GB free
- 20 GB for \$10, 50 GB for \$25, 100 GB for \$50

Roll Your Own

Hosted Space

Website host accounts often come with a large amount (or even unlimited) free space - but you'll need to set up your own method to post and get files.

[Transporter](#)

A file server in a box - you control who has access to your files

[LibraryBox](#) - Kickstarter project

Another "server in a box" which should soon be available. I expect that it will cost less than Transporter

Raspberry Pi

With a bit of tech savvy, you can turn this \$35 computer into a [file server](#).

So... Many... Choices

Good thing we have Wikipedia: Compare [File Hosting Services](#) and select the one that works best for you.

Articles

[Dropbox, a lawyer's perspective](#), July 2013

Brent Rose, "The Best Way to Store Stuff in the Cloud," *Gizmodo*, Sept. 28, 2011, available at <http://gizmodo.com/5828035/the-best-way-to-store-stuff-in-the-cloud>. Reviews 10 popular cloud services.

[19 states say cloud computing is okay for lawyers, with provisos](#) (Paperless Chase, July 9, 2013)