

Advice from Middle Aged Female Tech
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I have been in the industry with my own company since 1994. The entire time I have worked in this field there have been very few times any two techs ever agree completely. The advice I give here is based on my experiences, testing, and what I know works.

Today's Subject: **Spring Cleaning and Backups**

YES, it is important to spring clean your computer, tablet, phone. Get rid of bad pictures, outdated, never to be used again emails, and a general cleanup of trash that has been left on your computer. This trash fills up your hard drive, and can even slow down your computer, check what is open and running when you boot up your computer. Believe me I have seen enough computers where there are upwards to 12,000 email or more in a person's inbox, once it gets that many, it is hard to sort, file, or delete for there are too many to go through, if you do it every month, it is much easier to get a handle on it. Make folders, sort them out, make things MUCH easier to find and locate when you have to. Your DELETE box in your mail IS NOT a storage folder, some setting delete the "delete" box upon exit, then the emails are gone forever.

Every time you turn on your computer, your computer makes a note of what you opened, what you did, where you saved what you did, last web site you went to, and every font you used. These are called cache, not like the cash you use to buy things either, even though it is pronounced the same. These things tally up in your computer, till you clean it out. There are many ways to do this, the easiest is to use a free little cleaner called CCleaner, and you can download it at <http://ccleaner.com>. I would recommend that you use this once a week, not just in the spring!

Backup, backup, backup – You just can't say it enough, it never seems important till something happens and all your email, document and precious pictures are gone.

There are several ways and ALL free programs to back up your stuff. I use syncback free (<http://www.2brightsparks.com/syncback/>), its free, highly rated and works VERY well for me.

Windows 7 and 8 have a backup program built right in, it is temperamental, and not always reliable for everyone, though it is rated quite high, it has not been as smooth and easy for my customers or I. There is FBackup (<http://www.fbackup.com/>), Genie Timeline Free 2013 (http://www.genie9.com/free_products/Download.aspx) and many more. You can do a search on Google for ratings and what is best for you and your situation.

There is always the much advertised on line or cloud backup. I have trouble relying on that for several reasons.

1. You have to have an internet connection, an account, and usually costs more and more the more you store on online. If you have a computer crash, more than likely you don't have immediate access to an internet connection to restore your hard drive.
2. Who really has control over that "cloud" server? Pakistan? China? Russia? What if that server goes down? It is OUT of your control, and where as if you had a physical hard drive it is in your hand, and easily accessed.
3. What if the internet connection you have is less than 10mb download speed? You have a brand new 6gb video of your baby girl walking for the 1st time, it would take you nearly all day to upload it, and if you had an external hard drive back up, you have it stored in seconds.
- 4.

Cloud services and backups are good for some things – and great for some things – but not as your 1st or only backup plan.

1. If you have a business that several people need to access documents or files, the cloud services are a great way to go. (not as only, as a share and 2nd backup)
2. If you share your pictures with facebook, google+, or MySpace – it is great, it is there, everyone can see it and get it, and it is shared. Doesn't mean you shouldn't BACK up with a physical hard drive you have control over.

Always, always investigate, see what your colleagues are doing, what your friends are doing, and of course THINK FOR YOURSELF, weigh the issues, for this is YOUR stuff, YOUR pictures, YOUR emails, I don't want to see you lose them.

I am always about saving money and not spending it on things you don't need to

Remember ANY questions, email me at: Montgomery@Hollyecho.com. If possible, I will include the answer to your questions in my next article.