

# How to properly backup your Windows 11 computer

While Windows Backup is a good backup solution for Windows 11, it has its limitations. That's why you should rely on the following 3-step process to properly back up your Windows 11 PC.

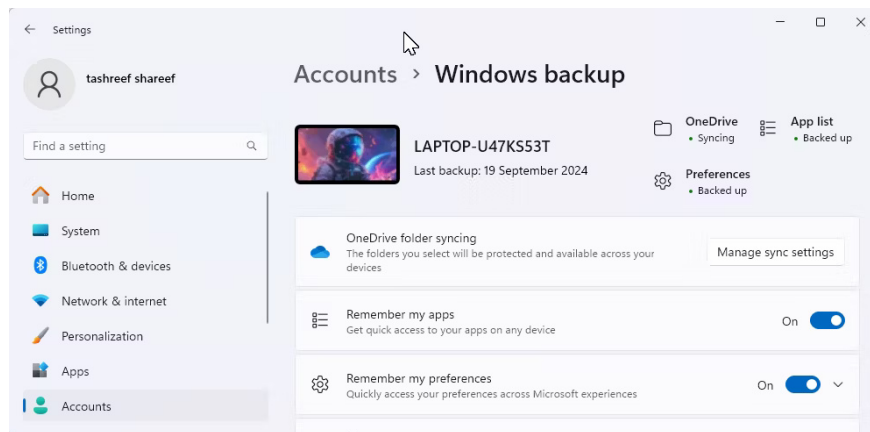
Here's how to do it with Windows Backup, File History, and third-party solutions.

## 1. Use Windows Backup

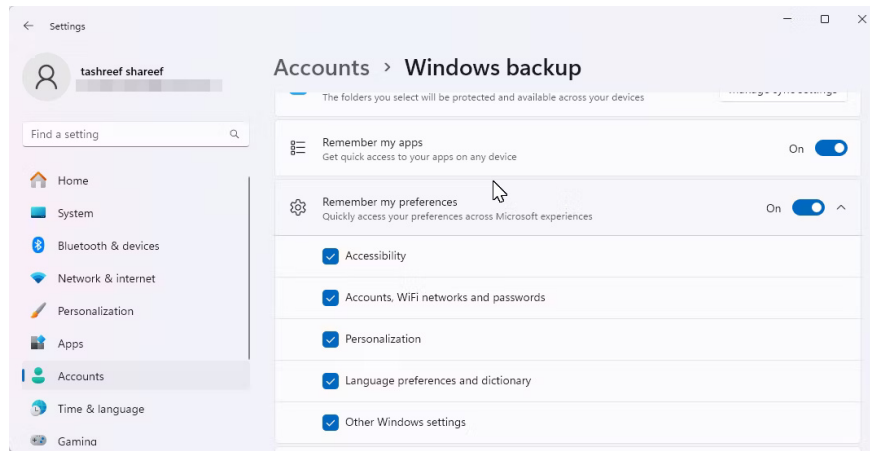
Windows Backup is the native backup option available in Windows 11. By default, it backs up all folders in the "Users" folder, such as Pictures, Documents, Music, and Videos, along with system settings, preferences, app lists, and saved login information to OneDrive.

To configure Windows Backup, follow these steps:

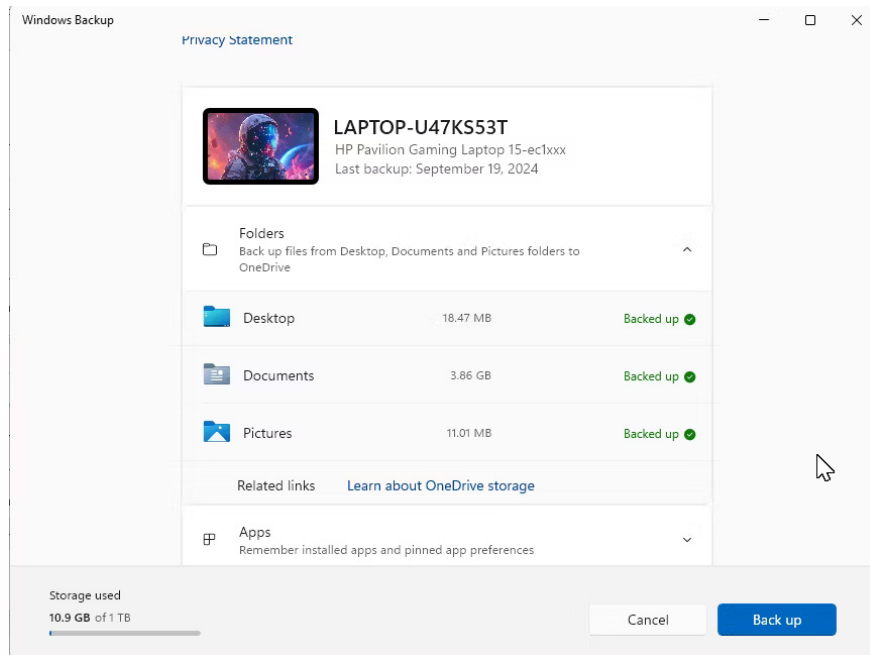
1. Go to Start menu > **Settings** > **Accounts** . Then, scroll down on the right and click **Windows backup** . Make sure you're signed in to your OneDrive account.
2. Click **Manage sync settings** next to **OneDrive folder syncing** . Then, select the folders to back up. Note that this also updates your OneDrive backup options.



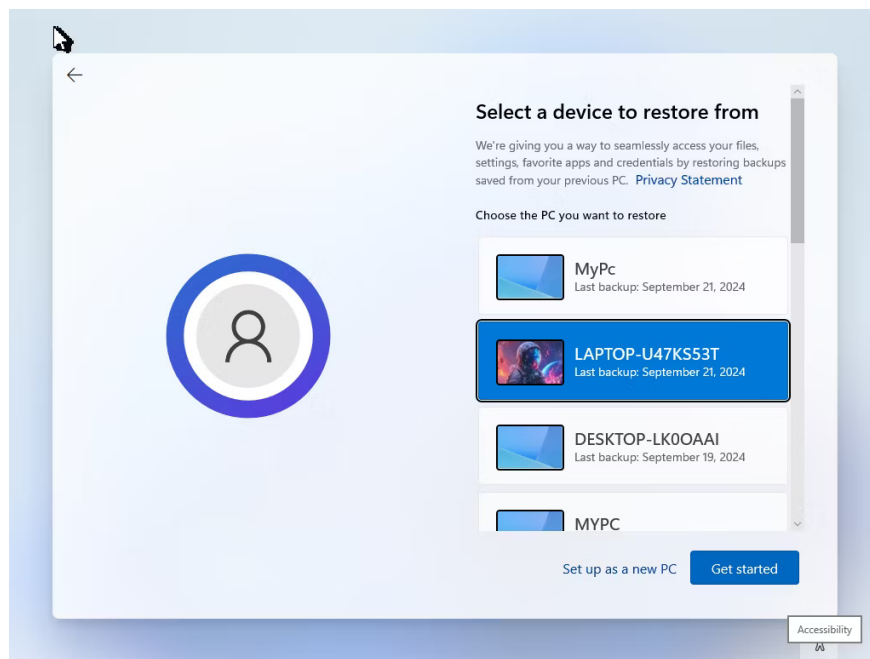
1. To back up your app list, turn on **Remember my apps** . Then, turn on the **Remember my preferences** switch to back up your system preferences. You can expand this option to select specific options you don't want to back up.



1. With Windows backup settings configured, click the Start menu icon, type **Windows Backup** , and open it from the search results. If prompted, sign in with your Microsoft account. Click **Back up** to start the backup process.

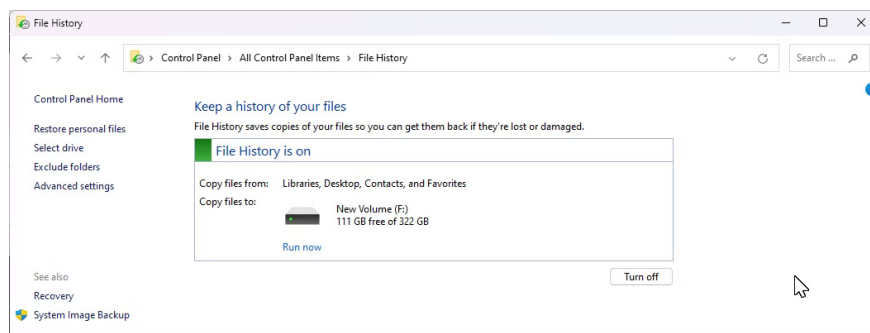


Once complete, you can restore your backup after a reset or clean installation of Windows. In the Windows setup wizard, sign in with your Microsoft Account. On the **Restore from your PC backup** screen , select the PC backup you want to restore, and then click **Restore from this PC** .



## 2. Back up files to external storage using File History

File History is another important part of your backup strategy. When enabled, it detects any changes made to files in your user directory and backs them up as often as you want. This way, you can restore older versions of changed files if needed.



Since it's not configured by default, you'll need to enable and set up File History via the Control Panel in Windows 11. You can customize the backup frequency — from every few minutes to every 24 hours — and decide when to delete older backups to manage storage efficiently.

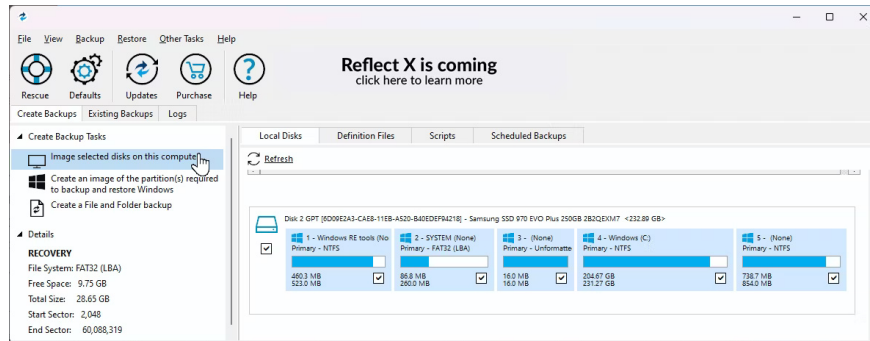
## 3. Create a full system image backup

An image backup will back up your entire drive to an external hard drive. In the rare event that your internal hard drive fails, you can use a recovery drive to restore all of your data, including your Windows installation, from the image backup.

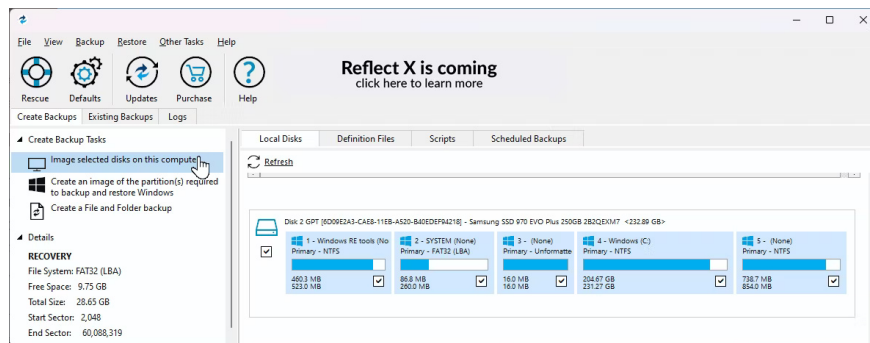
Use Macrium Reflect to create image backups. This premium app offers a 30-day free trial. After the trial ends, the app switches to **Restore Only** mode, allowing you to restore any previously created backups. However, you won't be able to create new backups without a license.

To get started, visit the Macrium Reflect homepage, click **Free Trial** , then select **64-bit** . You may need to register and verify your account before you can download the installer. Run the installer and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the installation.

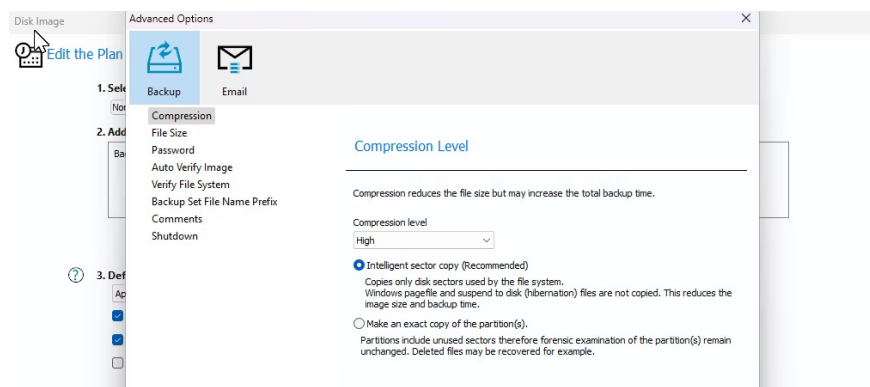
To create an image backup, connect an external storage device to your computer. Launch Macrium Reflect and select all the drives you want to back up. Then, click the **Image selected disks on this computer** option on the left.



In the **Destination** section , click the **Folder** icon and select your backup drive. Make sure the correct storage drive is selected. You have the option to name your backup.



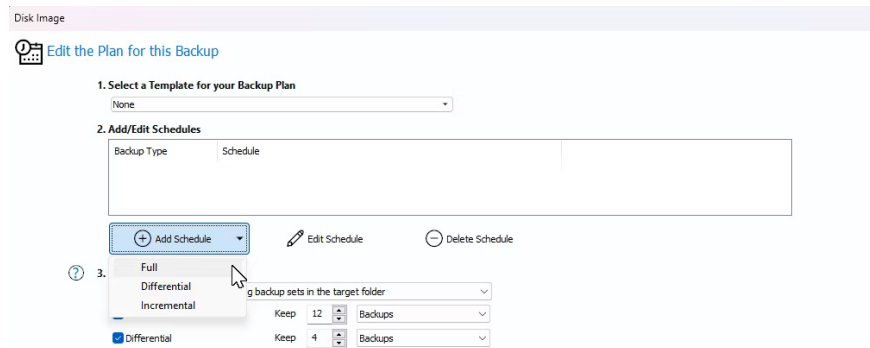
Click **Advanced Options** to customize your backup options. Go to the **Compression** tab in the sidebar, click the **Compression level** drop-down list , and select **High** to reduce the backup file size. You can even set a password for your backup from the **Password** tab .



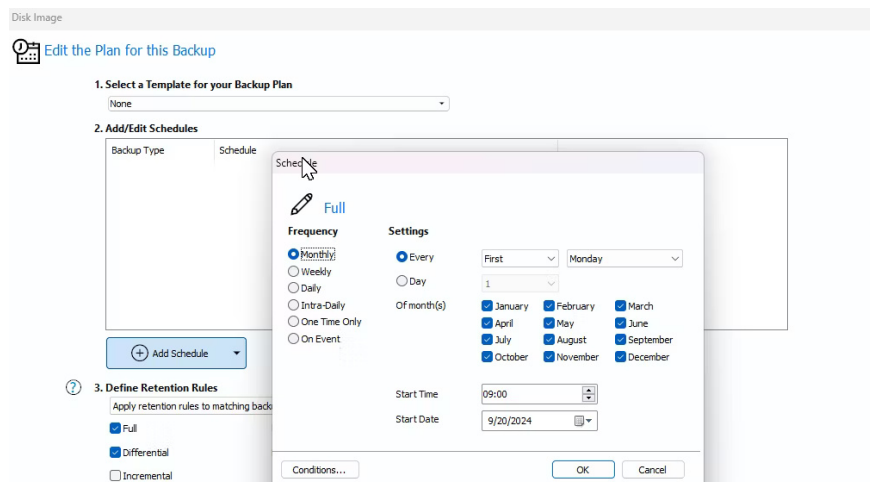
Click **Auto Verify Image** on the left sidebar, then select **Verify image backup file directly after creation** to verify the integrity of the image after creation. In the **Shutdown** tab , you can choose to shut down your computer after the backup is complete. Click **OK** to save the changes, then click **Next** .

Macrium Reflect supports backup plans ( **Incremental** , **Differential** or **Full** ), allowing you to configure automatic backups. However, this is optional. If you want to backup manually, select **None** .

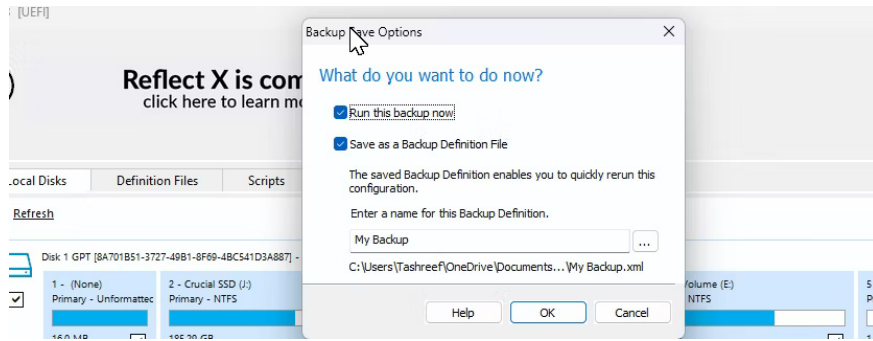
It's best to create a full backup once a month, and if you want to do so, you'll need to create a schedule. Under **Add/Edit Schedules** , click **Add Schedule** , then select **Full** .



Set **Frequency** to **Monthly** , then leave the other options at their defaults. You can make minor changes here as you like. When you're done, click **OK** .



Ideally, you should keep at least three full backups. However, this may vary depending on how often you make changes to your computer. Click **Next** , review the summary of your backup plan, and then click **Finish** . Enter a name for your backup definition, and then click **OK** .



Depending on the storage type and size of the backup, this process may take some time to complete. When you need to perform a restore, you will need a rescue media to boot into the Macrium Reflect Recovery Environment and restore from the backed up disk image.

Relying on a single backup source can be risky. The ideal strategy includes the built-in Windows Backup tool, File History, and full image backups using Macrium Reflect. Having multiple backups in multiple locations can be a lifesaver in most cases.

You finished reading the article "**How to properly backup your Windows 11 computer**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.