

Data Recovery: Beginners Tips

Right now you probably in a lot of mental pain, and all youre concerned about is recovering your data as quickly as possible - so well refrain from comments on the wisdom of regular back ups. The time for preventative measures has gone - the issue at hand is data recovery.

First - a simple tip could save you a lot of money. Take out your rolodex and get hold of your tech-savvy friends. If youre in luck, theyll offer to help, and if youre really lucky, they might even have some disk recovery software.

If youre out of luck, then get out your wallet or purse out now because this is going to cost you. Also, be prepared for a lot of time being wasted - data recovery can take a long time.

The first thing to establish is what exactly is wrong with your hard disk:

- * Either your computer wont boot up, or
- * Your computer boots up OK but you cant see one of your other drives.

Lets see if we can eliminate the worst scenario. Listen closely to your hard drive - is it making any sort of weird noise, such as scratching, scraping, ticking etc?

If so, then your drive is physically damaged and the only hope that you have is to take it to a data recovery service where experts might be able to get your data off for you. These services are expensive and time consuming - so you need to make a judgement call as to the value of data on the disk:

If its only your saved game data or downloaded music files you would like back, youre probably better off kicking yourself for not backing up, and accepting the data loss.

If, on the other hand, its a book or other type of information product that youve been working on for years, then send it to a data recovery service for an evaluation and quote - it usually costs nothing.

If your hard disk sounds OK, then you stand a decent chance of recovering data yourself.

First youll need to download some software to help you out.

Unfortunately, the better software utilities are not free, but the good news is that many allow you to try them out to see if they can access the data. There are some freeware products available but generally speaking these are not easy to use - no user interface little documentation, or they are not very effective.

Your next steps will be based on how your hard drives were setup:

* If you only have a single hard drive that has not been partitioned or split into different logical drives, youll probably need to attach the hard drive to another computer that has enough space to store all your data. This can be quite technical so if you dont have the skills please get a computer savvy friend to help out.

Another option is to purchase an external USB hard drive case. You can then simply slot the hard drive into the case and plug it into another PC using a USB port.

* If you have a multiple drive setup and your computer boots up fine, then it will merely be a case of getting the downloaded software to read the files and then copy them to another drive - provided you have a drive with enough space on it. If not, youll need to attach the hard drive to another machine with enough spare capacity.

* The scenario where you have a multiple drive setup, where the problem drive is the one that contains your operating system files is more tricky.

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About the Author

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