Backup Strategies - Top Tips

In fairly common, but unfortunate circumstances, **File Management** and **Backup Strategies** can mean the difference between handing in an assignment on time and losing your work forever!

The idea of Backup Strategies is very simple - it is about making and storing an extra copy of all of your important files / documents.

It is very **IMPORTANT** that you do this, that you do it regularly and you do it efficiently.

This can quickly become a complicated subject if you want to do a full system backup or if you want to automate parts of the process, but the information on this page is designed to help you make backups of your coursework and drafts in case you need a disaster recovery solution (computer dies, pendrive lost, flood, fire, earthquake, etc.).

Backup Strategies - Top Tips

The following Top Tips should help minimize any disasters that might affect your files.

1. Backup Your Work - prior to the final push for completion of an assignment.

2. Use the Cloud - wherever practical you should store your documents in the Cloud. This is more secure than your own computer and can be accessed from almost anywhere.

3. Store Backups Offsite - If you have made a hard-copy backup (i.e. on an external hard drive); then do not store this in the same house / building as the original. If a major disaster happens (fire, flood, burglary) - you stand to lose both copies of your files.

4. Archive Old Files - If you have files and folders that you do not access often (or ever), but want to keep (photos, old coursework, notes, etc.) - you can Zip them up and store in the Cloud. You can always get them back, but they won't be cluttering up your computer and they will be safe from harm.

5. Pendrives - These should only be used for temporary storage of backup files and **NEVER** used as the main (or only) location for your documents/files. Pendrives break and get lost easily - if this happens - your work is lost.

6. CDs Are Great For Backups - But… You should always store them correctly (away from direct sunlight). Never keep them with your computer. If you have important files that you need to keep for a long time (i.e. photos, certificates, etc.) make sure that you buy "Gold" CDs - these are guaranteed for up to 100 years.

7. The Rule of Three - In the computing industry; the advice is always to keep the Original, a Backup and a backup of the Backup. This might seem a step too far, but when disaster strikes - another copy wouldn't hurt.

8. The Computer Ate My Homework - This is not a valid excuse for not getting an assignment in on time.

- Organise your files and folders.

- Use suitable naming conventions.

- **BACKUP YOUR WORK**.

9. Test Your Backup - Going back to your File Copy or Backup, to find it is corrupted (won't read) is a whole new disaster. When you have backed up some files - test those files to see that they can be opened.

10. If In Doubt - Back It Up! - Storing a spare copy of your work will take up hardly any space, is quick and easy to do and may save you from a disaster.

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