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Making a full cPanel backup and downloading it

Making Backups

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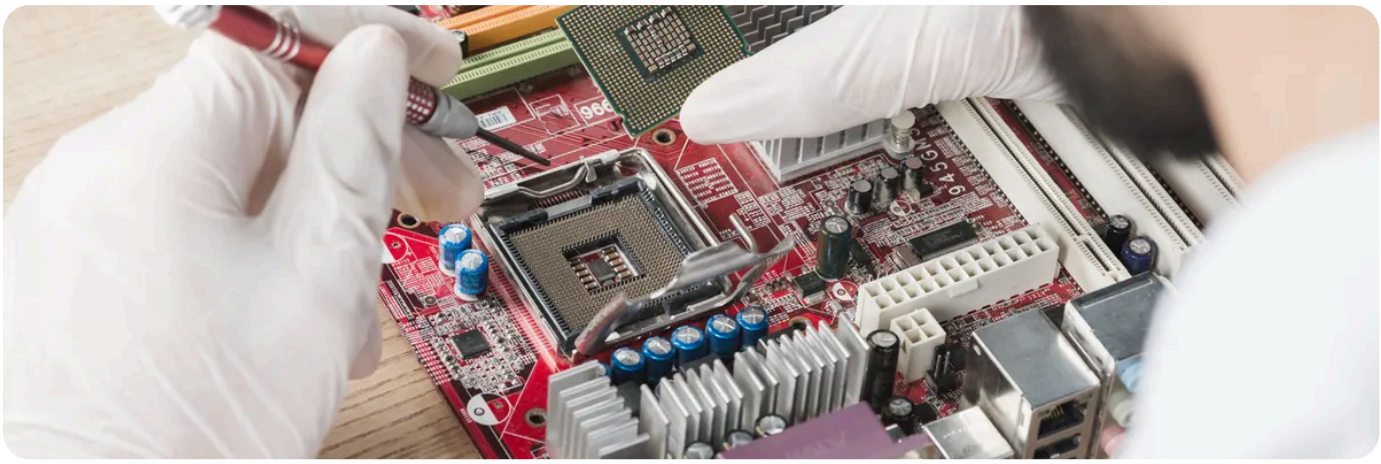
Making a full cPanel backup and downloading it

Making Backups Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



In cPanel, under **Files**, open **Backup** and choose to generate a **full account backup**. cPanel gathers everything into a single `.tar.gz` file in your home folder, and that is where you download it from. It gives you **a copy of your own, off the server**, on a day you choose, or a way to take the site elsewhere.

Which copy is for what

Copy	What it is for
JetBackup (automatic)	Runs every day before dawn and keeps 30 copies on active accounts. It is the one you use to **put back** a file, a database or an e-mail yourself. See **restoring your data with JetBackup**.
cPanel full backup (this one)	A picture of the account **now**, which you keep. It is for taking with you or for moving server. It is not the normal way to put things back.
Partial backups (files, one database)	When you need only a part. The same **Backup** page downloads the home folder, each database and the e-mail forwarders and filters separately.

Generating and downloading

1. **Check there is room.** The copy is written in your account and counts against the space you bought. Check the use under **Disk Usage**. If the account is already nearly full, delete old copies or files you do not need first.

2. Under **Files**, open **Backup**. In the full backup part, choose to download a full account backup.

3. As the destination, leave the **home directory**. You can give an e-mail address to be told when it finishes. Click to generate.

4. Wait. On a large account it takes a while. The file appears in your home folder, with a name that starts with `backup-`, carries the date and the account name and ends in `.tar.gz`.

5. **Download it**, by the link on the page itself or over SFTP (better for large files, because it can be resumed). See **SFTP instead of FTP**.

6. **Check the file** on your computer: the size cannot be zero, and it has to open. In a terminal, `tar -tzf file-name.tar.gz` lists the contents and fails if the archive is damaged.

7. **Delete it from the account** once you are sure the copy is good. It takes up space, and it holds everything, passwords included.

The full backup holds everything, so keep it as you would a key.
It contains files, databases and e-mail. Never put it in `public_html` (anyone could download it) and do not leave it on a shared computer or in an open service.

You do not put this copy back by yourself.
A cPanel user downloads the full backup but does not restore it from the account: to put things back, the route is JetBackup, or the partial restore of files and databases. The full copy is meant for leaving: for a move, see **bringing your site to us**.

There is a wizard too.
The **Backup Wizard**, in the same section, walks you through the backup and the partial restore. It does what the Backup page does, with more questions. On keeping copies of your own and testing them, **making and keeping your own backup**.

NEED A HAND?

Cannot see the full backup option on your account, or the file never appears? Tell us the domain and we will look together.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- How to restore your data with JetBackup →

- **How long we keep backups, and how to restore one**
- **Making and keeping your own backup, and testing that it works**
- **Moving a site by hand: files by FTP and the database**

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