

# California Computer Care

News,  
Views,  
Tips and  
Cool Techniques  
for CCC Members

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We  
speak  
Geek,  
so you  
don't  
have to.

# Backup, again

What is the call we fear most at California Computer Care? "Help! Something has happened to my hard drive and now all of my files are gone!"

*It will happen to you!*

It's inevitable. Hard drives break (they only last about five years on average), a file gets thrown away by accident, a file gets renamed and copies itself over another important file, your Mac gets stolen, lost or a power surge fries your machine. Ouch!

*Backing up means...*

making copies of all of your important files. If you would be unhappy to lose a file, back it up! It's best to back up to a removable disk like a DVD-R, CD-R, Zip disk or tape system. With removable disks or tapes, extra sets can be kept off site to protect against theft and fire. A safe deposit box is ideal (mine is full of Zip disks and DVDs).

*Huge drives.*

Modern Macs have huge hard drives making it possible for us to store gigabytes and gigabytes of photos, music, videos and other files. If you need to back up more than 5 gigabytes of files, a second, external hard drive may be your best choice.

If you decide to use an external hard drive for back up, choose one that connects using Firewire and USB. Also, be sure to get an external drive that has at least the same storage capacity as the hard drive that you are backing up. Get the largest capacity external hard drive that you can afford.

Storing an external hard drive in a safe deposit box may be inconvenient, so you'll still want to back up your most vital files to removable disks, *just in case!*

*Be Pro-Active.*

There are utilities like *TechTool Pro* that can sometimes recover erased files and modest-

ly damaged hard drives, but why wait until you have a problem? That's too risky. Get ahead of trouble by establishing a healthy Back Up Routine.

*Back Up Tools.*

There are dozens of ways to back up your hard drive. It doesn't matter which you use as long as you keep to a regular schedule.

If you have a calendar or appointment program, set it to remind you to back up. Daily back ups may be necessary if you produce lots of work each day, weekly is sufficient for most home users and light users may be comfortable with monthly back ups.

You may have an appointment application and not know it. Mac OS X comes with the free *iCal* application. *iCal* is easy to use and will organize all of your appointments and time critical to-dos and send you nagging reminders to do them.

Back ups can be accomplished by manually copying new or changed files to another disk as you create them. Unfortunately, few of us are disciplined enough to do this without fail (Murphy's Law says that if you forget to back up a file, that will be the file that will become damaged or go missing.). You can automate, simplify and speed back ups by using specialized back up software:

*Retrospect.* The king of all back up software is *Retrospect*: <http://www.dantz.com>. *Retrospect* supports all types of back ups and is popular with a wide range of users, from individuals to giant corporations.

*Retrospect* has a flaw that I don't appreciate: back up files created by *Retrospect* can only be used after passing back through *Retrospect*. In an emergency, you can't take your back up disks to your friend's Mac, school or Kinko's and use your files unless that Mac also has a copy of *Retrospect*. For this

reason I use back up software that mirrors the original files as perfect, usable copies.

*Synchronize* (find it at: [www.qdea.com](http://www.qdea.com)) is small, fast and easy to use. *Synchronize* can back up a single file or a full hard drive. *Synchronize* also makes incremental back ups, so that after the first back up, *Synchronize* will only copy new and changed files, making these back ups happen quickly. *Synchronize* is available for Mac OS 7–9 and Mac OS X.

*Déjà Vu* (find it at: [www.propagandaprod.com](http://www.propagandaprod.com)) is for Mac OS X 10.2 and 10.3. *Déjà Vu* integrates extremely well with the operating system, appearing in *System Preferences*. As such, *Déjà Vu* can be fully automated and works well across networks.

*ProSoft Data Backup* (find it on the web at: [www.prosofteng.com](http://www.prosofteng.com)) does all of the usual back up functions and adds compression, security and restore capabilities. *ProSoft Data Backup* is for Mac OS X 10.2–10.3.

*Carbon Copy Cloner* (find it on the web at: [www.bombich.com/software/cccl.html](http://www.bombich.com/software/cccl.html)) is Mac OS X only. The Mac OS X system cannot be copied onto another hard drive and have that hard drive be capable of starting your Mac. *Carbon Copy Cloner* can copy your Mac OS X system and turn the copy into one that can start up (boot) your Mac. This is must have software for anyone using Mac OS X with multiple hard disk drives.

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Like an  
auto club  
for your  
computer.

## Free Games

Every so often, you need to take a break and clear your mind. Nothing does this better than a quick computer game.

You can find all types of games for your Mac from huge \$50.00 shoot 'em ups to free classics like solitaire. Here are two excellent freebies:

*Big Bang Chess* is a first class chess simulator with a wide range of skills from beginner to tough enough to challenge Spasky. [www.freeverse.com/bigbangchess](http://www.freeverse.com/bigbangchess)



*Yahtzee*. The old cup and dice favorite is geared to single player fun. The dice simulation is very good and will leave you wondering why you are “throwing” five fours when you need sixes, darnnit! Get it from CCC here: [www.calcompcare.com/files.html](http://www.calcompcare.com/files.html)

## August Tip—

As usual, I have *iTunes* playing music as I write this newsletter. And, that reminds me. If you are an *iTunes* user, don't forget to de-authorize your Mac when you get a new one.

*iTunes* allows you to legally copy music purchased from the *iTunes Music Store* to four Macs other than your own. However, each Mac must be authorized with your *iTunes* user name and password. If you forget to de-authorize the old Mac, you may not be able to authorize your new Mac and, thereby, lose your music.

So, before you get rid of that old Mac, use *iTunes*' Advanced menu to De-authorize the old computer. Then, when your new Mac asks you to authorize it, you can.