

Migrating from a server to Dropbox Business

If you're transitioning off of a file server and onto Dropbox Business, congrats! Working together is about to get a lot easier, as you and your team will be able to access data and collaborate on files anywhere, anytime. This guide walks you through the process of migrating data from your server over to Dropbox Business, so you can get your team up and running in no time.

Data migration tips:

Before you actually start migrating data from your server, here are some best practices to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible:

- **Communication is key:** Let your team know that you are migrating data from your server to Dropbox. They should avoid making changes to files during the transition.
- **Work in batches:** To minimize business impact while you're moving files, we recommend moving data in batches.
- **Think about timing:** Consider starting the migration process over a weekend or overnight, when your team is less likely to be accessing business-critical files.
- **Prioritize:** Before beginning the migration process, it's important to think about which files your team needs and which files are simply backups or archives. Being strategic about which data you move over first will help the migration process run smoother in the long run.
- **Check your hard drive:** If you are migrating a large amount of data into Dropbox, make sure that the computer that you are using has enough space on the local hard drive to support the migration process. By default, Dropbox will save a local copy of each file to your computer's hard drive. However, after you migrate files into Dropbox, you can move any data you want off of your local hard drive using our Selective Sync feature.

How to migrate data from a server:

1. Install Dropbox on your server computer. Make sure you're accessing the server directly and not logging in remotely.
2. Note: We only recommend installing Dropbox on a server during the migration process. We don't recommend installing Dropbox on a server permanently.
3. On the Dropbox desktop application, log in with your admin account. This will create an empty Dropbox folder on the computer's main drive.
4. Now that the Dropbox folder has been created on your server computer, you can start setting up your new file system. For best practices on folder structure, please see our [Admin Guide](#).
5. Now that you've set up your new folder structure on Dropbox, you're ready to add files. Copy or move files or folders from your server into the new folders you've created on Dropbox. Start with the files your team accesses frequently and copy (or move) the data over in batches.

6. Make sure you are continuously logged in to the server computer until the migration is complete. Don't log out, change settings, or power off the device during the migration process. You can monitor your progress by viewing your sync status on the Dropbox desktop application. You can find more information on this in the [Help Center](#).
7. Once you've moved all your data into Dropbox, you'll want to unlink the server computer from Dropbox as soon as possible. Instructions are available in the [Help Center](#).
8. Your team can now begin accessing data on Dropbox. Remember, files on Dropbox are private by default, so your next step is to share files with your team members. You can do this by inviting individual team members or groups to the folders they need to access. You can learn more about sharing in our [User Guide](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I sync data to Dropbox as fast as possible?

Migration speed depends on your Internet connection and bandwidth. We recommend starting the migration process in the evening, or before a weekend. This ensures that you have the most bandwidth available, and that your team is less likely to be accessing the files. If you want to speed up syncing on your computer, you can [increase your bandwidth settings](#), which allows Dropbox to take up more of your Internet bandwidth.

Please keep in mind that syncing your files is a complicated process that includes more than just the transfer of the data. Each file is hashed, compressed, then transferred, encrypted, and stored on Dropbox servers. The time estimate for this entire process is included in the aggregate kB/s speed that is displayed in your Dropbox sync status. Remember, once all your data is migrated onto Dropbox, changes sync quickly, and your team will be able to collaborate faster than ever before!

What is the best way to stay productive while migrating files to Dropbox?

Every business works a little differently. Some teams find that it makes sense to migrate archived files first. For others, it might make more sense to start with active files, so your team can get started on Dropbox right away.

Either way, we recommend that you move your files in batches, preferably when the data is not being accessed. This will help make the Dropbox syncing process smoother and faster.

To avoid confusion or inconvenience for your team during the migration process, here are a few tips:

- Avoid editing any files in folders that are still being synced to Dropbox.
- At times, Dropbox is unable to sync files left open by certain applications. If this happens, close the application and Dropbox should resume syncing those files.
- When a folder shows a green circle with a check mark, you know it has synced to your computer. This means you can start working and collaborating within that folder.

Can I replicate my server's file structure in Dropbox Business?

There are a number of ways to structure your team's folders on Dropbox. We recommend taking some time to think through your ideal structure before migrating your files.

If your team has a large amount of data, we recommend that you set up your folder structure on Dropbox before moving any files in. After you've set up the folders, share them with your team while they're still empty, and then begin adding files as the last step.

Note: Keep in mind that all folders on Dropbox inherit the sharing properties of their parent folder. For more tips on setting up a folder structure, be sure to check out our [Admin Guide](#).

What if I don't have enough space on my local hard drive to sync to Dropbox?

Be sure to take advantage of [Selective Sync](#) during the migration process. With this feature, you can choose to store certain folders on Dropbox without syncing them to your computer's hard drive. This is great for teams with large amounts of data or with smaller hard drives. Here's how to use Selective Sync:

1. Move files to Dropbox in batches
2. Wait for each batch to sync to Dropbox
3. Use Selective Sync to remove them as needed from your local hard drive
4. Repeat this process until you've moved everything to Dropbox

Note: It's possible to use Dropbox with an external drive, but it has to stay connected at all times. The drive should be physically connected, not a Network Attached Storage (NAS) drive, and it needs to be properly formatted for the operating system of the connected device.

Dropbox Business is here to help

Learn More

- Check out your [Admin Guide](#) for great resources on getting started with Dropbox Business.
- For more detail, check out the [Help Center](#)

Get support

- Call or live support line or chat with us directly from your [Admin Console](#)
- You can also submit a support request [here](#)