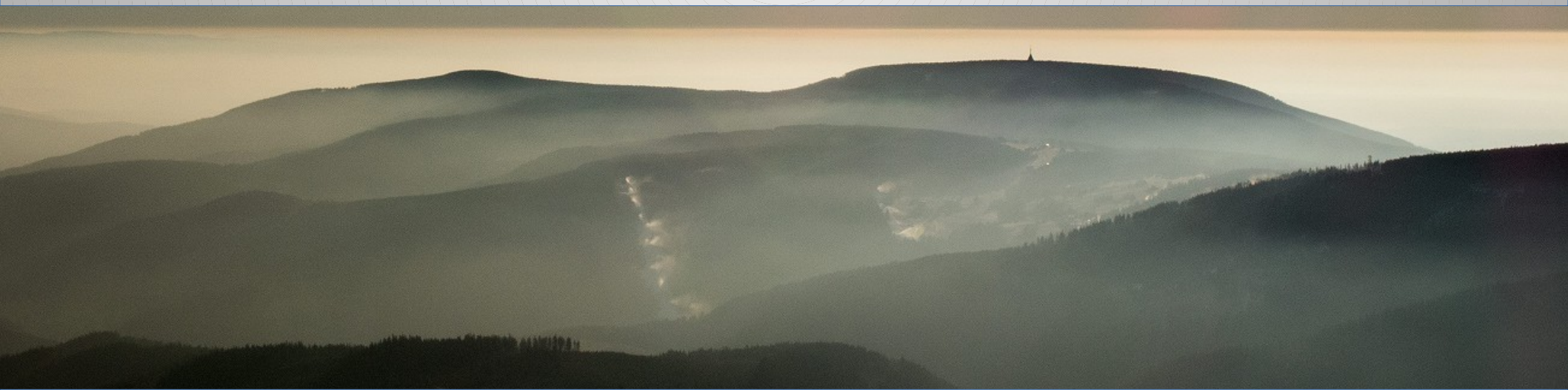# What is portable software?

An introduction from the www.portablefreeware.com community

- Licensed Creative Commons BY-SA

- Created using free and open source software: LibreOffice Portable and PhotoDemon.

the **PORTABLE** **FREEWARE** collection

# Portable like ...?

A lot of software calls itself "portable"

- **Runs on your smart phone or tablet computer**
- **Ability to move between Mac and Windows**
  - Most Adobe products
  - Microsoft Office
  - Blender animation
- **Between browsers**, such as running on both Firefox and Chrome
  - Many great add-ons like uBlock Origin and Lastpass
  - Most javascript and standard web development tools

For us, it's about how you personalize and configure your software.

# Portable like settings

The same program and the same functionality, whether on your machine
or from a connected device

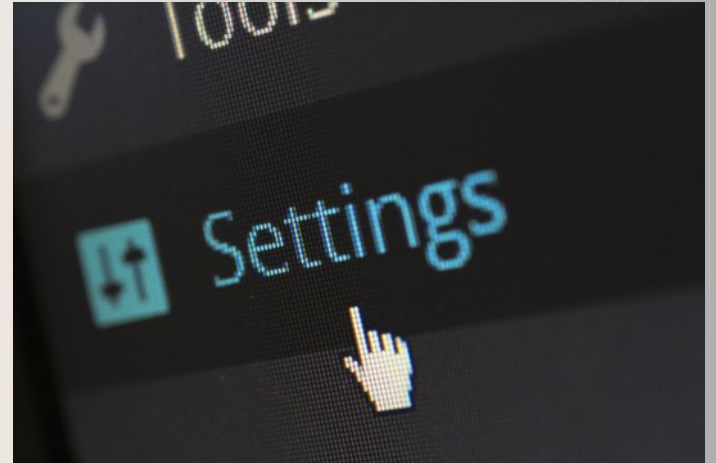| Cloud service | Secure Volume | USB drive |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|

# Take your settings and go

## Why would you want your settings to be portable?

Over the last 20 years, software has become extremely customizable. It's not just about frequently used elements at your fingertips or general productivity, you can also add additional security, intelligence, better battery-efficiency and much more.

Nowadays, it's easy to spend *hours* with a new device getting it to run how you want.

# Enter preferences only once

Moves to a new computer mean the loss of your settings, re-entry, and repeat at the next reimage/reinstall. What if you could setup your tools the way you like and then backup, copy or sync all your efforts at once?

What if you didn't have to install *anything*?

# Think local

*There is no standard for settings*

While many tools exist for this, one very simple option is just create or configure software to maintains all settings in the local folder. This saves time and energy chasing down information that's saved all over your device.

Welcome to portable software.

# But there's more ...

*Self-contained*

With all your settings in one place, an all-in-one program can move to any number of destinations without restriction:

- Take all your programs with you everywhere on a USB drive or cloud service

- Ease of backup / sync between computers

# But there's more … (cont')

*Self-contained*

- Doesn't require an Internet connection (unless only saved to the cloud)

- Doesn't clutter up your start menu

With the data storage explosion, there is practically no limit to the number of portable tools you can have on your computer for unlimited uses.

# Better security

- Easier to wipe all traces of a program
- Usually doesn't require admin rights
- Runs better in software sandboxes than installed tools.
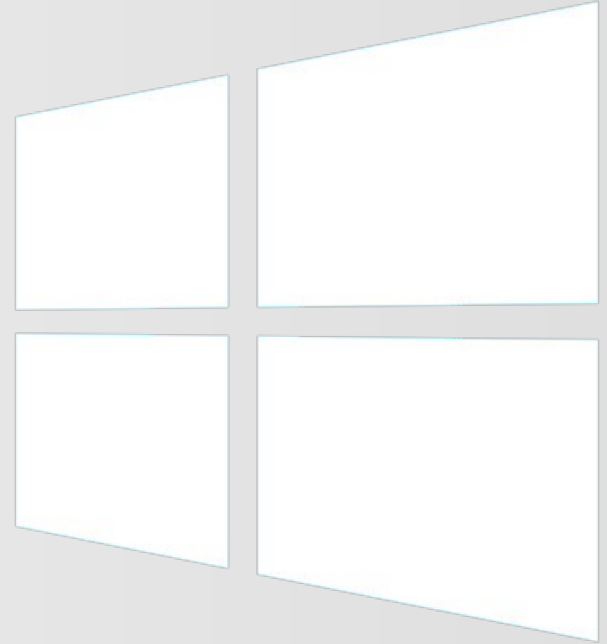- Easily run from inside an encrypted volume

# Issues

Portable software is not perfect. Some users prefer an installation that puts their software where they expect and makes it easy to update the base program.

- **Updates** - Getting your software to run the latest version can be difficult / confusing

- **Space hungry** - Being self contained means a lot of extra files on your machine

- **Security issue -** when connecting your programs to a computer you don't own, an infected computer can infect your software

Thanks to inexpensive hardware, up-to-date antivirus, all of these issues are manageable with some very worthwhile effort.

# Windows (mostly)

While many operating systems have some form of portability, Windows has strong backwards-compatibility and the most mature set of programs for this purpose. As a result, our site is primarily Windows-focused, but far from exclusive.

# Why not other app sync tools?

While there are tools to sync settings between devices, including iOS and Android, there are issues:

- Many apps lack functionality to share settings between devices

- Devices often require an App Store to share settings, which requires a login, developers willing to follow detailed App Store requirements, and an internet connection. App Stores also routinely abandon perfectly good programs for a variety of reasons

- Since programs require ongoing upkeep for operating system changes, these systems favor commercial over freeware tools

- There's rarely an ability to go back to a previous version of a program if you don't like the latest update

# The last word?

Portable software is ...

- Easier to add or remove (just delete the folder)

- Doesn't interfere with your current workflow or sideline your standard programs and tools

- Fewer registry writes over time that can slow down your system

- Works better across older operating system versions, and often within cross-platform tools like WINE (winehq.org)

- Can run multiple instances or even multiple versions of a program simultaneously

- Often saves *all* related your files to the local folder, making backup of important files and info simple and easy

# Portable software

## Why not take it all with you?

www.portablefreeware.com

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Special thanks to our users who've provided feedback on this intro:

Midas, Andrew Lee, SYSTEM

Images care of *free-images.com* and *flaticon.com*

# Backup slides

The following are optional

**Other portable benefits examples**: multiple copies of the same program

# Maintain two versions of the same program

- Two versions of a search program showing results only for a specific drive (e.g. a copy for your local computer and a separate, dedicated version for your connected USB)

- A version set to launch a specific function or profile to save time navigating through menus

# Maintain the old program version

- Run the latest version of a program while keeping the old version available in case you see something that was changed or removed. Some real examples:

- An interface that's convoluted and harder to use than the old program

- The publisher decides a feature isn't something they want to maintain, but you rely upon it for daily use

- A new caching feature takes up drastically more resources, slowing down the rest of your experience

Run two copies of the same program *at the same time*

- Your development editor: one for development and the other for keeping notes, each dilinenated with a different toolbar and unique themes
- The same chat client services to interact with both your friends and work teams

- An email client with different fonts and settings to help avoid confusing overlap between accounts

# Store ALL your data locally

- We increasingly rely on computers to maintain important information like names, addresses, accounts, and other details
- Most portable programs save not just incidental settings like colors and menus, but also your stored information
- Saving all your data to one folder means easy backup and restore, no need to wonder where your information is actually stored

*(Thanks to Midas for this suggestion)*