

# Expert Backup Tips from Joe Kissell

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CrashPlan makes it easy to keep your data safe. The default settings will have you off and running in just a few clicks. However, in my 138-page ebook “[Take Control of CrashPlan Backups](#),” I detail the many ways CrashPlan's can be adapted to your individual needs. Here are a few of my favorite CrashPlan tips, further detailed in the book:

## Use multiple destinations.

Many people think of CrashPlan as strictly a front end for CrashPlan Central, Code 42's cloud-based backup service. In fact, CrashPlan can also back up your data to a local hard drive, another computer you own, a friend's computer halfway around the world, or any combination of the above. Using multiple destinations is smart because it protects you from various kinds of failures (dead hard drives, flaky Internet connections) that might make any single destination unreachable. Personally, I like to use both a local hard drive (for speed) and a remote destination (for security).

## Try peer-to-peer backups.

If you and a friend each have fast broadband connections and hard drive space to spare, you can use each other's computers as backup destinations. Because CrashPlan encrypts everything, your friend won't be able to read any of your files, but you'll be doing each other a favor by keeping the other person's data backed up safely offsite. (You can extend this scheme to include several friends, for that matter.)

## Take a break.

CrashPlan has built-in intelligence that keeps it from overwhelming your CPU, disk, or Internet bandwidth (default setting can be customized). However, sometimes you may want all your system resources focused entirely on a particular task. For example, when I'm using my HD webcam for a live presentation, I do not want my system to be sending files over the Internet. Backup can be paused entirely with easy, pull-down menu presets (an hour, a day, etc.) via the CrashPlan system tray icon (Windows) or menu extra (OS X).

## Backup to your pocket.

If you are running an iOS, Android or Windows Phone 7 mobile device, the free CrashPlan mobile app provides access to the files backed up from your Mac or PC to CrashPlan Central. That way, if you're out and about and suddenly realize you need a document that's on your computer, you can download it immediately.

## Test restorations.

It's not that you shouldn't trust CrashPlan with your data, but sometimes computers and humans make mistakes, and sometimes things break. You don't want to find out about a backup problem after you've lost data. To make sure everything's running smoothly (and to practice so you won't have to panic in an emergency), try restoring a few random files from time to time.