

Backup Recommendations

Version 4.0 and 5.0

Hard Drive Backups

We highly recommend that you back up your PastPerfect data every day to your hard drive. The program is designed to hold up to 30 data backups on each hard drive. The data is zipped to conserve disk space. Backing up your data only takes a few minutes, and it could save you a lot of time and effort if ever disaster strikes.

External Backups

In addition to the daily hard drive backups, we also recommend making an external backup (of data, images, and multimedia files) once a week. PastPerfect is capable of backing up to CDs, DVDs, flash drives, and external hard drives.

CD-Rs and DVD-Rs are the preferred external media for several reasons. Because they can only be written to once, the discs do not wear out over time and they help you start a progressive backup library. If you ever need to go back 6 months, you would have a backup available. We recommend labeling your discs with the date, program version, and what information is on the disc (data backup/image folder numbers/multimedia files).

Backing up to flash drives and external hard drives is still good (you can never have too many backups), but every time you make a backup to one of those devices it will overwrite the previous backup stored on it.

Backing Up Images

Images are usually larger than the data, so the program has broken down this section into subfolders. For instance within the Images folder, images are put into numbered subfolders (001, 002, 003, etc.) as you attach them to records in PastPerfect. PastPerfect also uses only one numbered folder at a time, so that all images attached during a specific time frame are all saved in the same location. Once the 001 folder is full (with about 500 images), it will create 002 and start putting images into the 002 folder. This continues to higher folders as more images are attached to your records.

This process allows you to have more control when backing up these larger files, by only selecting which folders you want to backup. The numbered folders make it easy to tell that images in folder 012 are much newer than images in folder 001.

PastPerfect stores the most recent images in the highest numbered folder. Images that were attached previously would be in lower-numbered folders. If you're using the default settings, PastPerfect will not add more images to a folder that is already full.

Once you are in a newer folder, the earlier folders (001-011, in this instance), could be backed up a final time and placed off-site, and you can focus on backing up a smaller, more recent folder. The older image folders are unlikely to change in the future**; the latest folder will always have new images added in until the next folder is

created. Folder 012 in our example can be backed up more regularly since the number of images inside will change often until it is full.

Backing Up Multimedia Files

Multimedia files are also broken down into subfolders.

In Version 4, these subfolders are solely based on file types (Audio, Campaign, Documents, Exhibits, Largeimages, Other, and Video). The files in these folders can continually increase as you attach more multimedia links. You should back up these folders regularly.

In Version 5, the Multimedia subfolders have been redesigned to be more like the Image subfolders. The starting subfolders have a number after each of them (Audio1, Campaign1, Documents1, etc). Once the Audio1 folder reaches a certain size (about 4 GB), the program will automatically create an Audio2 folder and start populating that newer folder. Similar to Images, once you move into a higher folder, you could back up the earlier folders a final time and place the backup off-site.** Then, you could just focus on backing up the smaller more recent folders.

In Version 5, your letters (Accession Thank You Letter, Mail Merge Letters, etc) are stored in the Multimedia files. Always be sure to back up your Letters folder.

Off-Site Backups

It also is a good idea to store at least some of your backups in a safe place outside of the building where your computer with PastPerfect is located. This can be as simple as having someone take the CDs home, or if the museum has a safety deposit box, store the files there. This will be beneficial if a disaster occurs at the museum; we can restore your data from that point forward.

**There are two instances where images or multimedia files in older folders may change:

- If you are editing images or multimedia files that were attached previously and are in an older folder, you will need to back up the older image or multimedia folders again.
- If you are upgrading your PastPerfect (for instance from Version 4 to Version 5), we recommend that you make a complete backup (data, all images, all multimedia files) to an external media before making the transition. Once you have upgraded, again make a new complete backup (data, all images, all multimedia files) in the new version to a different external media.

If you have any questions, please contact our Support Office at 1-800-562-6080 or email support@museumsoftware.com. Thank you for using PastPerfect!